Mathematical Publishing in the Third Reich: Springer-Verlag and the Deutsche Mathematiker-Vereinigung

In October 1937 the Freiburg mathematician Wilhelm Süss (1895–1958) was chosen president of the Deutsche Mathematiker-Vereinigung (DMV). When the members of the DMV board, Helmut Hasse, Conrad Müller, and Emanuel Sperner, were looking for a suitable candidate in August 1937, they found strong arguments in favour of Süss. He was known to take interest in DMV affairs and they believed his views coincided with those current at the DMV board, in other words, with their own. Süss had been a pupil of Ludwig Bieberbach (1886–1982), who in the Third Reich propagated an anti-Semitic, racial theory of Deutsche Mathematik and led a group of National Socialist mathematicians strongly opposed to the DMV. The DMV board hoped that Süss might be able to reconcile his former teacher with the DMV, or at least safeguard it and its politics against the threat of political attack from Bieberbach’s faction. In addition, Süss had recently become a member of the Nazi Party (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei) and was thought to have good relations to the Ministry of Education and Research, which, accordingly, approved Süss’s election in October 1937.

Süss grew to be one of the most influential representatives of the German mathematical community in the Third Reich, and collaborated closely with Nazi authorities particularly in the Ministry of Education and Research. In the course of this collaboration the DMV’s professional policy became closely entangled with issues that stood at the very core of the Nazi state, notably its anti-Semitism and its anti-internationalism. The Ministry of Education and Research was dedicated to transmitting these values to the sphere of the sciences. The collaboration of the DMV board and especially of Süss in this program, which in its consequences lay beyond their control, was a precondition of their influence and successful professional policies during the war [10].

During his DMV presidency, which lasted until 1945, Süss was repeatedly at odds with Springer-Verlag. Springer was amongst the leading scientific publishers in Germany, and their mathematics branch enjoyed a worldwide reputation. After World War I Springer had enrolled outstanding mathematicians to launch a first-class publication program in mathematics. Felix Klein, David Hilbert, and Richard Courant stood for the Göttingen influence in this enterprise. Springer’s yellow books were soon known in the most remote places and often alluded to as the yellow plague, which no mathematician could escape. The many instances of conflict between Süss, as the representative of the DMV, and Ferdinand Springer and his main mathematical adviser Friedrich Karl Schmidt (1901–1977), can serve well to illustrate how the independence of scientific publishing was shaken under National Socialism.

Süss and the Mathematische Zeitschrift
On March 3, 1938, Süss, as president of the DMV, went to Berlin to meet Dr. Dames, who was responsible for math-
matical community. Süss reports that when he called Dames’s attention to the role of Jewish mathematicians in mathematical publishing, he gave a “personal opinion” about the situation in the editorial boards of the *Mathematische Annalen* and the *Mathematische Zeitschrift* (MZ), both published by Springer-Verlag. He stated that German journals should not be represented by Jews any more, although Jews should still be allowed to publish, and he hoped that his personal stance on this matter was clear to Dames. Dames, for his part, promised to put pressure on Springer, so that authors would no longer be compelled to negotiate with Jewish editors.

Although this was what he said in the circular to Hasse, Müller, and Sperner, Süss had evidently been more explicit in his conversation with Dames. When he wrote to Dames a few days later, he came back to problems, as he saw them, of the editorial organisation in Springer-Verlag. He described the arrangements for Richard Courant’s “yellow series” *Grundlehren der mathematischen Wissenschaften in Einzeldarstellungen*, which had F. K. Schmidt as general editor and the Jewish émigré Courant as editor for the “Anglo-Saxon domain.” He saw similar arrangements being developed for the *Mathematische Annalen*, whose managing editor, Otto Blumenthal, was Jewish. According to Süss, Springer was looking for a co-editor in England. Süss’s opinion was that in the interest of the “German reputation,” all means should be used to prevent foreigners having influence on “this leading journal founded by our champion Felix Klein.” As an example of what was already happening, he pointed to the case of the *Zentralblatt für Mathematik und ihre Grenzgebiete*, which was now being managed from Copenhagen by the émigré Otto Neugebauer.

Concerning the *MZ*, according to Süss, things were better. But he reminded Dames that he had asked him and the ministry, “to oblige the publisher, to remove Professor Issai Schur from the *MZ* board.”

On March 1, 1938, two days before his meeting with Dames, Knopp had written to Süss, inviting him to join the *MZ* advisory board (*wissenschaftlicher Beirat*), which throws a somewhat ambivalent light on Süss’s strivings to Aryanise Springer’s editorial boards. There had been an earlier offer from Knopp, but Süss had declined because there were two Jewish members on the *MZ* board, Edmund Landau and the aforementioned Issai Schur (1875–1941), who was a co-founder of the *MZ* in 1918, along with Knopp, Leon Lichtenstein, and Erhard Schmidt. Edmund Landau had died in February 1938, which changed the situation, and, as Knopp explained to Süss, this induced him to renew...
the invitation. It is open to speculation whether Süss had already read Knopp’s second invitation by March 3 when he spoke to Dames demanding that Schur be removed from the MZ board, but he did not mention the question of Schur in his report to Hasse, Müller, and Sperner at the DMV, nor in his subsequent reply to Knopp. In this reply, he gives an account of his conversation with Dames; but it is a different version from that given in his report to Hasse, Müller, and Sperner, and from that in his earlier letter to Dames. To Knopp he implies that it was the Ministry of Education and Research that had taken the lead concerning the role of Jewish mathematicians in mathematical publishing, and he says that he understood from the Ministry that they would see to Schur’s expulsion from the MZ board. He did not, however, mention that it was he himself who had explicitly demanded this course of action. His main concern, as portrayed in the letter to Knopp, was the possible restriction of his freedom to implement DMV policies concerning Springer if he joined the MZ board. Knopp reassured him that this would not be the case, and regarding Schur, he would welcome the ministry taking a hand in the matter, as he too did not consider it practicable any more for Jews to participate officially in mathematical journals.5

In April the Reichsschrifttumskammer, a division of Goebbels’s Ministry of Propaganda, whose function was to control writers and publishers in Germany, demanded to know from Springer why there were still Jewish editors on the boards of the Mathematische Annalen and the MZ. The Reichsschrifttumskammer referred specifically to an inquiry made by the Ministry of Education and Research. By the end of April, it was clear that Schur would have to leave the MZ board. When Knopp reported this to Süss, the invitation to join the MZ board was finally accepted. Schur’s name did not appear on the title-page of the MZ in 1939, and he emigrated in the same year.

But this was not the only pressure put on Schur. In late March 1938 Bieberbach in the Prussian Academy of Sciences had found “it surprising that Jews are still members of academic commissions,” meaning Schur. The mathematician Theodor Vahlen (1869–1945), a long-standing Nazi and close ally of Bieberbach, had asked for a change, and Max Planck had promised to take care of the matter. Within a week Schur had resigned from the commissions [12, p. 122].

Zentralblatt and the Schmidt affair

Süss’s report on the relations between Jewish mathematicians and Springer-Verlag, and his denunciation of Issai Schur in March 1938, were not his only attempts to intervene in mathematical publishing and to attack Springer in particular.

Springer had entered the scene of mathematical reviewing in Germany in 1931 by publishing the Zentralblatt under the auspices of Otto Neugebauer and Richard Courant. From the beginning the Zentralblatt stood in direct competition with the traditional Jahrbuch über die Fortschritte der Mathematik published by the Prussian Academy of Sciences in Berlin. The Jahrbuch was notorious for its constant delays in reviewing, whereas the Zentralblatt was soon known to be more efficient. By 1939 the Jahrbuch was having to cope with the constant ideological interventions of Ludwig Bieberbach, who had installed himself as spokesman of the Academy’s Jahrbuch commission. The Zentralblatt also had problems with Nazi racial and nationalistic policies. It had non-Aryan members on the editorial board: the Italian mathematician Tullio Levi-Civita for example, who had to be expelled in October 1938. Its managing editor, the émigré Otto Neugebauer, resigned in November 1938 as a result of the Levi-Civita affair. In addition, the journal was explicitly international in character; and Schmidt had reported to Springer in December 1937 that collaboration with the Zentralblatt had been held against a mathematician in negotiations about a professorship because of this.6 Given these circumstances, it might have seemed reasonable for the two journals to have formed some kind of alliance, if it had not been for the economic competition between the respective publishing houses, de Gruyter and Springer, and the ideological incompatibility between Bieberbach at the Jahrbuch commission and Springer. By the end of the thirties, however, a fusion or at least a co-operation of the Zentralblatt and the Jahrbuch was under discussion.

In late 1938 the news spread in the German mathematical community that a new journal, the Mathematical Reviews, was about to be founded by the American Mathematical Society in the United States. Naturally this caused a stir among German mathematicians and publishers, Nazi or not. In January 1939 Bieberbach urged de Gruyter and Springer to consider a fusion and even made detailed suggestions as to the procedure. Also in early 1939, the DMV, that is to say its president Süss, tried to put direct pressure on de Gruyter and Springer in order to induce them to fuse [12, pp. 167ff], [9, pp. 327–333].

It has been argued that Springer considered the idea of a fusion in January 1939 and still as late as May 1939 [12, p. 168–170]. But Springer definitely had plans of his own, which were to discuss the situation with the Americans first and, if possible, to bring about a co-operation between

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the Zentralblatt and the Mathematical Reviews. Ferdinand Springer discussed the founding of the Mathematical Reviews with Oswald Veblen in December 1938 and proposed to send his main mathematical adviser, Schmidt, to the United States as a spokesman for his interests in mathematical reviewing [9, p. 331]. Süss learned about this in March and immediately pressed Dames in the Ministry of Education and Research to refuse Schmidt permission to travel, so long as Springer left Süss in the dark about his motives. Süss also suggested to Dames that both his superior in the ministry and the Reichsschrifttumskammer be informed of Springer’s plans. When Süss found out in April that Springer had procured the Ministry’s permission for Schmidt to go to the United States, he wrote to Dames’s superior, Ministerialrat Kummer, and again strongly opposed Schmidt’s journey. He pointed to the competition between the Jahrbuch and the Zentralblatt and the DMV’s interest in their fusion. Süss expressed his fear that Springer’s contacts with the Mathematical Reviews would run contrary to this idea, as they actually did. To strengthen his argument, he characterized the Zentralblatt as an organization of “a group of Jewish mathematicians and their friends” and emphasized that Springer still had close ties to Jewish emigrants, especially to Richard Courant. Therefore it was to be doubted that “the German cause would be represented at all in America by a spokesman of Springer.” Finally he suggested that Schmidt’s travel permission should be revoked immediately as he intended to leave for the States the following week.

Two days later, on April 29, Süss phoned Ministerialrat Kummer in Berlin to inquire how things stood. When Kummer informed him that Schmidt had already left, Süss told him that to his knowledge Schmidt was only on his way to Bremen to board the ship, which was due from America on May 1 or 2, implying that Schmidt could still be stopped. Kummer did not take this up, but explained that his superior in the Ministry of Education and Research had definitely decided to let Schmidt go, as he was not only to discuss Zentralblatt matters, but also to evaluate the atmosphere among American mathematicians and if possible to soften their minds. At this point Süss lost his temper and berated Kummer that this was an unsuitable job for Schmidt and that the ministry would have done better to consult an authoritative source before allowing Schmidt to go on this mission, because to send this particular man was asking for trouble.

After his return from the United States Schmidt convinced the Ministry of Education and Research that the collaboration of at least some of the American mathematicians could only be secured if the fusion of the Zentralblatt and the Jahrbuch were prevented. He argued that the fusion would nourish anti-German propaganda and promote the foundation of the Mathematical Reviews. Apparently the ministry was impressed by Schmidt’s report, as it wrote to Springer in late July 1939 that the fusion of the Zentralblatt and the Jahrbuch was not considered “advisable,” taking into account that the situation of German scientific literature outside Germany should not be made more difficult than it already was.

Whatever Schmidt’s activities in the United States, the committee of the American Mathematical Society decided in May 1939 to commission Veblen to launch and supervise the Mathematical Reviews [9, 332f]. Word of this soon reached the German mathematical community and put Schmidt, who had reported that the foundation of the Mathematical Reviews could still be prevented, in an awkward position. In a letter of September 22—three weeks after the declarations of war—Süss, who had just learned about the ministry’s decision of July which ran contrary to his own plans, accused Schmidt of having given false information on his return from the United States. He explained that the foundation of the Mathematical Reviews and the outbreak of the war had considerably changed the situation. As a consequence he no longer saw the necessity to consider the American and most of the foreign countries’ positions with regard to the fusion of the Zentralblatt and the Jahrbuch.

One day later, on September 23, Süss gave Springer and de Gruyter an ultimatum to consider the fusion [12, p. 223]. Süss’s course of action was fully approved of by Bieberbach and Vahlen. Bieberbach wrote to Süss that the Jahrbuch commission of the Prussian Academy of Sciences had decided to publish a preprint journal which was to include the most recent reviews in order to find a remedy against the Jahrbuch’s slowness in reviewing. De Gruyter had consented to this plan, but the war and the ensuing shortage of paper had stalled it. Springer, on the other hand, had not given his consent. His aversion against a fusion had been backed by the Ministry’s letter from July, but, according to Bieberbach, had been known long before. The war having changed the circumstances, Bieberbach now proposed to pursue further the idea of a fusion with the committed Nazi Harald Geppert as managing editor, and to add the name of the Zentralblatt to the title of the preprint journal.

Springer for his part replied to Süss’s ultimatum, which had set October 3 as a deadline, on October 4. He explained that he could not respond to inquiries which were combined with an ultimatum; and that Süss’s letter indicated that he had insufficient knowledge of the publishing business. He declined to discuss the fusion as long as he did.

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1Excerpt from a letter of Süss to Dames, March 24, 1939, UAF, C89/36.
2Excerpt from a letter of Süss to Kummer, April 27, 1939, UAF, C89/36.
3Süss to Hasse, May 1, 1939, UAF, C89/36.
4Süss to Hasse, May 1, 1939, UAF, C89/36.
5Ministry of Education and Research to Springer, July 27, 1939, Springer Archives, ZS 29; this interpretation of the Ministry’s decision disagrees with [12, p. 170].
6Süss to Schmidt, September 22, 1939, UAF, E4/78.
7Bieberbach to Süss, September 25, 1939, UAF, E4/78.
not know whether the Ministry's position had changed—alluding to the July letter.13

When Süss wanted to talk about the Zentralblatt and the Jahrbuch in the Ministry of Education and Research in Berlin on November 3, he was informed that the Foreign Ministry had forbidden all fusions of scientific journals during the war as a propagandistic means to keep up the number of scientific publications.14 Thus the actual fusion of Zentralblatt and Jahrbuch was out of the question, in spite of the new situation after the outbreak of the war and the launching of the Mathematical Reviews. However, it was decided to bring about a collaboration of Zentralblatt and Jahrbuch along the lines Bieberbach had proposed, and which Süss had also discussed with Geppert. The reviewing principle was to be speed with the Zentralblatt and completeness with the Jahrbuch. On November 15, Bieberbach, Geppert, Schmidt, Springer, and representatives of de Gruyter met in Berlin to agree on the reorganization of the Zentralblatt and the Jahrbuch under a joint editorial office (Generalsredaktion) in Berlin with Geppert as managing editor [12, pp. 224–226], which came near to the fusion that the DMV, Süss, and Bieberbach wanted.

Reorganization of Mathematical Journals
Springer's independence as a publisher had not only been threatened by the Zentralblatt and the Schmidt affairs, but also by Süss's intentions to reorganize the system of mathematical journals as a whole.

After the Nazis' rise to power, there had been discussions about reducing the number of scientific journals in order to put an end to fragmentation as the Nazis saw it, but nothing specific had been done [3, p. 418]. In particular, the physicist and Nobel prize winner (1919) Johannes Stark, who had joined the Nazi party in 1930 and stood for the German Physics movement along with Philipp Lenard, had in vain called for a reorganization of the scientific literature in physics under a joint editorial office (Neuordnung des physikalischen Schrifttums) in autumn 1933 [11, 329–331].

Probably in spring 1939, Bieberbach drafted a detailed proposal, highly reminiscent of Stark's 1933 plans, of how to reorganize the systems of scientific journals, a copy of which he sent to Süss.15 He chose mathematical journals as an example to illustrate his ideas. He deplored, what had earlier been conceived of as fragmentation, namely that articles belonging to specific fields of mathematics were scattered in more than half a dozen journals, which was neither effective for the scientists interested in the field nor for the editorial offices. In addition this had the negative economic effect that personal subscriptions were rare. Bieberbach's proposal of reorganization, which by the way included Zentralblatt and Jahrbuch, culminated in the idea to centrally supervise the journals, with the DMV as a supervisor.

Süss was in favour of Bieberbach's initiative. When he met Ministerialrat Kummer in the Ministry of Education and Research in November 1939 to discuss Zentralblatt and Jahrbuch, he also talked about the possible restructuring of the production of mathematical journals.16 Notwithstanding the Foreign Ministry's order against fusions of scientific journals, Kummer and Süss discussed a new organizing principle, that mathematical journals should be specialised. This would have put an end to the traditional journals of broad mathematical variety, for example the Journal für die reine und angewandte Mathematik (Crelle's Journal), the Mathematische Annalen and the Mathematische Zeitschrift. Bieberbach had suggested that Crelle's Journal specialize in algebra and number theory, Mathematische Annalen in analysis, and Mathematische Zeitschrift in geometry. Süss had immediately pursued this idea and decided to negotiate with the managing editors.17 Hasse, the managing editor of Crelle's Journal, felt sympathetic towards Bieberbach's idea, and thought it "good and healthy," though "a bit stormy, as always with Bieberbach." But, apparently stalling for time, he pointed out that the plans would be "difficult to realise practically."18

Süss also discussed the fate of the Mathematische Annalen with its managing editor Heinrich Behnke. Behnke, however, was not very enthusiastic about Bieberbach's and Süss's plans, although he professed readiness to "theoretically discuss a desirable reorganization of the German mathematical journals." He reminded Süss that Erich Hecke and B. L. van der Waerden were his seniors on the Annalen board and that they would never consent to Süss's plans. DMV board member Emanuel Sperner personally explained the plans to Springer, who flatly refused to discuss the envisaged reorganization and any intervention with his independence as a publisher.19 However, whatever these aspirations, eventually they were to be thwarted during the course of the war.

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13Ferdinand Springer to Süss, October 4, 1939, UAF, E4/68: 1) Ich bin grundsätzlich nicht in der Lage, auf Anfragen näher einzugehen, die mit einer ultimativen Fristsetzung verknüpft sind. 2) Ich bin solange nicht in der Lage, zu den Fragen der Vereinigung der beiden Organe Stellung zu nehmen, als ich nicht weiß, ob das Ministerium seinen bisherigen Standpunkt aufrechterhält oder ändert. Ich darf Ihnen anheimgeben, hierüber zunächst Klarheit zu schaffen. 3) Ein weiterer Hinderungsgrund für mich, auf Ihr Schreiben näher einzugehen, ist die Tatsache, daß es nach Form und Inhalt auf mangeldene Kenntnis der Stellung des wissenschaftlichen Verlegers im allgemeinen, der Aufgaben und Pflichten im speziellen schließen läßt, die in dritem Reich dem deutschen Verleger auferlegt sind.
14Süss's report to Hasse, Müller, and Sperner, November 11, 1939, UAF, E4/68.
16Cf. Süss to Kummer, May 26, 1940, UAF, E4/45.
17Süss to Sperner, December 14, 1939, UAF, E4/76.
18Hasse to Süss, December 8, 1939, UAF, E4/76: Im Grossen und Ganzen finde ich die Bieberbachschen Vorschläge gut und gesund. Sie scheinen mir nur, wie alles was von B. ausgeht, etwas stürmisch, und es dürfte schwierig sein, sie in die Praxis umzusetzen.
19Behnke to Süss, February 17, 1940; Süss to Behnke, February 27, 1940, UAF, C89/42.
Much more could be said about Süss’s and the DMV’s ideas on mathematical publishing and mathematical reviewing, and the ideological background, but it is clear that they were not content to hold these ideas merely as points of view, but decided to pursue them actively in order to gain control over mathematical reviewing and publishing. Against this, Springer Verlag was in an awkward position because of its close ties to Jewish mathematicians and the international mathematical community, and the fact that Ferdinand Springer himself had Jewish ancestors [11]. Therefore the DMV and Süss could not only openly oppose Springer’s policies and his representative Schmidt, but in doing so could take recourse to what the regime offered, as shown for example by Süss’s behavior concerning Springer’s editorial organization, his denunciation of Schur in 1938, and his attempt (in this case unsuccessful) to stop Schmidt on his way to America after he had already left for Bremen to board his ship.

The DMV’s professional policies had in fact become closely entangled with issues that stood at the very core of the Nazi state: its anti-Semitism, its anti-internationalism, and its striving for autarky. The objective of the Ministry of Education and Research was to transmit these issues to the whole sphere of the sciences. Although its ultimate consequences lay beyond their control, the collaboration of the DMV board and especially of Süss in this program was rewarded by their influence and the success of their policies during the war [10].

Conflicts in World War II
In late 1941 the physicist Dr. Johannes Rasch sent two memoranda to the Reich Research Council (Reichsforschungsrat), a government office charged with the organization of scientific research in Germany. Rasch, who worked as an engineer with the Siemens & Halske company, complained about the lack of mathematical reference-works for the use of physicists and engineers in industry. He pointed out the better situation in other countries, especially in the United States [7, pp. 115f]. Rasch’s memoranda were reacted to quickly, and in early 1942 the Reich Research Council initiated a program to procure important mathematical reference-works and literature for the interested parties. Most of these works were to be obtained by specially commissioning mathematicians to produce them, and the publication program was entrusted to Süss. In the preceding years he had repeatedly, but always in vain, tried to get the Reich Research Council to be more interested in mathematics, and in particular to found a special department for mathematics, which was then only represented in the Council via the department for physics. Rasch’s initiative had provided a welcome opportunity to bring about a “practical liaison of the Reich Research Council and the DMV,” and naturally Süss sought to profit from this sudden chance “in the interest of the status of mathematics.”

But although Süss had an official task from the Reich Research Council, he had not yet obtained sufficient funding to carry it out. He tried to interest Hermann Göring’s powerful Aviation Ministry and its resources in the program, but problems arose. In the Forschungsführung of the Aviation Ministry, questions pertaining to mathematics were under the charge of the Freiburg mathematician Gustav Doetsch (1892–1977). Doetsch, who worked closely to the demands of engineering, especially as formulated by the aviation industry, had already started a similar publication program, albeit on a smaller scale, and he had himself worked on a book on Laplace Transforms [2]. Doetsch and Süss had seriously quarrelled in the early years of the war, and it was extremely difficult for them to cooperate, even on matters of obvious importance [10]. Notwithstanding, they met to discuss their respective ideas in September 1942. In this meeting Süss announced that he had now raised his funds from the recently reorganized Reich Research Council and he could therefore follow his own plans. Nonetheless, they agreed at least to coordinate what they were doing, and in that sense their activities coexisted during the remaining years of the war. Süss’s program was clearly the more ambitious one and, in terms of the number of projects and monographs printed or ready to print by the end of the war, also the more successful [7, p. 115].

The rivalry of Doetsch and Süss in mathematical publishing was reflected by their choice of publishers. Doetsch intended to collaborate with his own publisher Springer, whereas Süss, following a suggestion of Behnke, began

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working with the Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft in Leipzig, although Georg Feigl (1890-1945) had begged him to negotiate also with Springer. Doetsch on his part, visited Springer in October 1942, and discovered that some of Springer’s projects would fit perfectly into his own program: a formulory by Wilhelm Magnus, books on elliptic functions by Wilhelm Magnus, on conformal mappings by Albert Betz, on developments by real functions by Georg Feigl and Erhard Schmidt, and a table of integrals by Walther Meyer zur Capellen. Magnus’s formulory appeared in 1943 [4], and Springer eventually published the books by Betz, Magnus, and Meyer zur Capellen some years after the war [1], [5], [8]. In the meantime, Süss included the monographs of Magnus [5] and of Feigl/Schmidt in a list of works he commissioned in April 1944. The latter was never published.

Springer’s mathematical adviser, Schmidt, was well aware of the competition between Doetsch and Süss, and was partisan in his views of them. Süss kept the tactics of his far-reaching plans for mathematical publishing strictly to himself, which made Schmidt anxious, especially with regard to the independence of Springer’s publishing policies. Aside from these fears, Schmidt considered Doetsch more factual and businesslike than Süss, so in any case, if there was a choice, he believed him to be a better partner for Springer. But Schmidt clearly recognised that Süss was in a strong position and that Doetsch would need Springer’s support against him.22

In early 1943 Doetsch’s influence in the Forschungsführung drastically diminished, and Süss obtained a practical monopoly on the commissioning of mathematical monographs [10]. Springer saw the danger that their predominance in the field of mathematics might collapse, especially because simultaneous work by mathematicians on the particular topics was virtually impossible during the war, which ruled out the possibility of direct competition. Therefore Schmidt was to negotiate with potential post-war authors regardless of Süss’s activities. By September, Schmidt became more optimistic about Springer’s future. The Aviation Ministry had accepted three projected monographs of Walter Brödel, Gerhard Damköhler, and Eberhard Hopf as being important to the war effort, which allowed the authors to start working on them. When Süss had reported on his publication program at the DMV meeting in Würzburg, it seemed clear that Süss was to work with the Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft exclusively. Schmidt formed the impression that Süss’s projects would be of little relevance after the war. Therefore Schmidt again proposed that Springer should concentrate on plans for the post-war years in order to safeguard its position in the long run.24

Süss’s various attempts to interfere with the system of mathematical publishing since 1938 were somehow like trying to bring about a planned economy. The DMV was to become the absolute center of all professional influence in mathematics. He made this perfectly clear in a letter to Georg Feigl in April 1941: “I have the imperialist goal to gain exclusively for the DMV all rights and responsibilities for mathematics.” Naturally this ambitious goal was not compatible with Doetsch’s influential position in the Aviation Ministry. But the course the publication program took was an unmistakable sign of Doetsch’s deteriorating power base and Süss’s seemingly ever rising star. In February 1944 Süss even became official “censor for mathematical publications” for Goebbels’s Ministry of Propaganda and Speer’s Ministry of Armaments. This meant that all applications to put mathematical works in print required his approval, which increased his influence in mathematical publishing even more.

Springer and Süss After the War

In June 1946 Maria Feigl, the widow of Georg Feigl, wrote to Schmidt that Süss had inquired about Feigl’s book. In particular he was eager to know whether she had a contract with Springer. Süss told her that he himself was about to publish a series of monographs, in which Feigl’s book could well be included. This series materialized as Studia Mathematica, published by Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht in Göttingen.

Schmidt enclosed a copy of Maria Feigl’s letter when he wrote to Springer in July, asking him to send a letter of recommendation to the University of Münster where Schmidt was being considered for a professorship. In the new post-war political situation, it was obviously important that his attitude during the Nazi period be made clear. He suggested that Springer mention that he had been known to cooperate with Jewish mathematicians as late as the end of 1938, and that his journey to the United States in May 1939 had been heavily opposed. In his letter of recommendation to the University of Münster, Ferdinand Springer, who had been exasperated with Süss’s attempt to lure Feigl’s book away from Springer-Verlag, followed Schmidt’s outline, but

23 Memorandum of a conference at Springer Verlag on February 9, 1942, Springer Archives, C408, Hasso: Professor Schmidt berichtet über die Schwierigkeiten, die durch die Aktion von Süss entstanden sind. Dadurch, dass das Gesamtgebiet der Mathematik im Hinblick auf die Kriegswichtigkeit aufgeteilt und zur Bearbeitung an verschiedene Autoren abgegeben wurde, besteht die Gefahr, dass ein Einbruch in die Vorherrschande Sprangers’ auf dem Gebiete der Mathematik entsteht. [. . .] Es wird empfohlen, dass Professor Schmidt, ohne Rücksicht auf Süss, diejenigen Autoren mit Ablieferungstermin nach dem Kriege verpflichtet, die ihm am besten zu sein scheinen.
25 Süss to Feigl, April 3, 1941, UAF, C69/51: Für die DMV habe ich das imperialistische Ziel, ihr allein alle Rechte und Pflichten für die Mathematik zu verschaffen.
26 Süss to Heisig of the Teubner publishing house, February 3, 1944, UAF, C69/21.
whereas Schmidt did not mention Süss as an interested party, Springer did.\textsuperscript{28}

In September the story reached the rector of Freiburg University, who immediately demanded details from Springer;\textsuperscript{29} as Süss was held in high esteem in Freiburg after the war and had only been suspended from his professorship for two months in summer 1945. In spite of the many “good deeds” credited to Süss during the denazification, it was particularly important to him, naturally enough, that the scope of his collaboration with the Nazis not be generally known, either in Freiburg or within the German mathematical community, even if most of those who may have known about these things, had no interest in dragging them to light [10].

Springer replied to Arthur Allgeier, the rector of Freiburg University, in October, accusing Süss of having tried to have Schmidt arrested in 1939 on his way to the United States and of having denounced Springer in the Ministry of Education and Research for his contacts with Jewish emigrants, especially with Richard Courant. Schmidt also wrote to Allgeier, saying that when Springer’s partner, Törjes Lange, tried to secure his travel permission from the Ministry of Education and Research, Ministerialrat Kummer told him that Süss strongly opposed his journey because he still held close ties to Jewish emigrants, and that Süss had suggested that he himself should go to the United States instead.\textsuperscript{30} Süss denied all of the charges Springer and Schmidt brought against him. He was questioned by the Freiburg Committee of Denazification (Selbstreinigungsausschuss) and completely exonerated.\textsuperscript{31} He testified that he had not mentioned Springer in the Ministry of Education and Research at all, prior to the discussion of the fusion of the Jahrbuch and the Zentralblatt in late 1938. And further, Süss characterized Kummer as an ally of Springer and accordingly as an unreliable witness, without giving any proof. Naturally he did not volunteer information about his meeting with Dames or his denunciation of Schur in March 1938.

Springer was notified by letter in late January that Süss had been exonerated. Enclosed with the letter was a copy of the report of the Committee of Denazification, which suggested that Springer himself had distorted the facts, which Springer firmly repudiated. But nothing came of his protest.\textsuperscript{32}

In the post-war years, relations between Springer and Süss showed no sign of improvement. In summer 1946 Süss pursued the plan to publish a new mathematical journal. The journal was to be edited by the Mathematisches Forschungsinstitut Oberwolfach, which Süss had founded in late 1944. Schmidt and Springer considered the new journal an overt competitor for the MZ. When Süss looked for a suitable publisher, his friends pressed him to negotiate with Springer. Süss evidently preferred not to collaborate with Springer. The new journal eventually came out in 1948 under the title Archiv der Mathematik, published by the Verlag Braun in Karlsruhe, and was taken over by Birkhäuser in Basel in 1952.

**Concluding Remarks**

The history of mathematics and mathematicians in Nazi Germany is often highlighted as a history of extremes, exemplified by Bieberbach and Deutsche Mathematik or the abolition of the Göttingen mathematical tradition. But these phenomena, however depressing, were only those of high visibility. The threats to Springer’s independence in scientific publishing on the other hand, could not generally be seen by the public, nor did they result from official directives. Rather they stemmed from everyday collaboration with Nazi party and government officials. This collaboration, however motivated, was essential to the purposes and functioning of the Nazi bureaucracy. From this point of view the story of the conflicts between the Springer-Verlag and Süss and his colleagues at the DMV is not just a curi-

\textsuperscript{28}Springer to Schmidt, July 30, 1946, Springer to the Dean of the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences of Münster University, July 30, 1946, Springer Archives, C031, Schmidt.
\textsuperscript{29}Rector Allgeier to Springer, September 30, 1946, Springer Archives, C1039, Süss; most of the correspondence is also to be found in UAF, B34/74.
\textsuperscript{30}Springer to Allgeier, October 21, 1946; Schmidt to Allgeier, December 6, 1946, Springer Archives, C1039, Süss.
\textsuperscript{32}Correspondence von Dietze-Springer, January to May 1947, Springer Archives, C1039, Süss; cf. UAF, B24/3919.
ous collection of passing historical details, but illustrates how mathematicians’ professional policies and Nazi policies actually interacted.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Mathematical Olympiad Challenges

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