

Verbundkatalog Kalliope

[The other Germany. Stellungnahme.]

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2.)

The title of my book has a double meaning. First, it refers to a juncture in my personal life, the beginning of a new phase in my literary career, ~~and also, or above all, to the general situation.~~ ^{and also, or above all, to the general situation.} For this is my first book to be written in English, ~~a determined effort to liberate myself, even as an artist, from my German past.~~ But this personal crisis coincides - or rather, springs from - a more general emergency. Evidently, the historical hour we are passing through is one of pivotal ^{gravity} ~~significance~~. One thing is certain at least, in the midst of so many staggering uncertainties: the next step will carry us into new land with landscapes and conditions as they have never been seen before. Nobody can foretell whether things will be worse or better in this transformed world to come. The horizons which, from now on, will surround our lives may be brighter or darker than the lives we knew. But surely the light will alter.

4.)

We left Germany as soon as Hitler came to power, in March, 1933 - voluntarily, or rather forced away by our own disgust, our horror, our forebodings. We left because we knew Hitler and because we knew the Germans. We left because we could not breathe the air in Nazi Germany. The fear of suffocation is a plain, cogent reason for exile - isn't it?

6.)

There was nothing wrong with the literary and theatrical circles in Berlin, Munich, Hamburg, and the other cultural centers of the Weimar Republic. Many of ~~these were~~ those playwright, actors, novelists, painters, and composers were indeed remarkably talented. But they lived and worked in a social vacuum - disconnected from the German masses. That is why so many of us ignored or underrated the ~~ominous developments taking~~

gradual increase of the Nazi menace. When we finally realized what was going on, it was already too late to prevent the disaster.

8.)

No; I spent the first three or four years of exile mostly by zigzagging - except Germany, of course - Europe. There is hardly one European country where I did not stay for a while, in that period from 1933 to 1938.- But the center of my activities was in Amsterdam, Holland, where I edited, for several years, a literary anti-Nazi magazine.

10.)

Six Years - or rather, five, to be more precise. I arrived here in the fall of 1936, but was in Europe twice since, in 1937 and in 1938; each - staying there for about six months each time.

12.)

To tell the truth, I feel more at home in the United States, at this point, than I ever did in Germany. I know this country rather intimately - having crossed its whole width, from coast to coast, a dozen of times at least. It's very easy for me to imagine a life without Germany; but a life without America?.... Not for me.

18.)

And if that's true! In fact, the book is almost ready for publication, the Creative Age Press has scheduled its appearance for some date early next year. I enjoyed particularly writing it. For André Gide - undoubtedly the greatest man of letters now living in Europe proper - happens to be one of my oldest literary idols. He is not only a ~~man~~ genius but also

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16.)

Well, I try to, at least. Five or ten years ago, the idea of writing in a "foreign" language (that is to say, in any idiom except German) would have struck me as utterly absurd. But I came to realize - gradually, under the pressure of circumstances - that one must not cling, with stubborn nostalgia, to one's mother-tongue. The only thing to do, for a man in my position, ~~was, to~~ is, to learn a new idiom to communicate a new identity. It wasn't easy at first; but, then, why should life be easy? I want it rather to be difficult and uncertain and exciting...

a great character, as he proves now, once more, by his unyielding attitude toward Berlin and Vichy. Side - more than any other French writer of this time - represents indeed the finest French qualities and traditions.

20.)

If I answered your question in the negative, I might as well say that our civilization is doomed altogether. Germany has to be won over to a civilized way of life, or else there is no hope for a lasting peace.

22.)

What I said before, should make it clear that I believe - that I try to believe in the existence of "the Other Germany." But, On the other hand, I think it is dangerous ~~me~~, at this point, to overrate the practical importance of this Other Germany. True, the people that produced Goethe and Beethoven must have tremendous potentialities of a peaceful, constructive nature. But the people who have made Hitler their Führer and their fetish, must be defeated and disarmed. We may stick to the concept of "the Other Germany" as a comforting prospect - something that might become real and relevant in the future. At the same time, however, we ought to beware of wishful thinking. As long as the Germans allow Hitler to be their leader, there is only one Germany - Hitler's.

26.)

~~Frankly,~~ If there is ~~such a thing as the~~ ^a future German leader - within the Reich or outside - ~~Frankly,~~ he must be remarkably discreet and inconspicuous. I do not have the privilege of knowing his name or face. Maybe he has to hide from Hitler's Gestapo. Maybe he is an unknown refugee. Who knows? But whoever and wherever he is, this coming leader of a coming

German democracy - his future and the future of the world depend on
the strength and wisdom of the United Nations; their strength as fighters,
now; their wisdom as victors, tomorrow.