

## **Verbundkatalog Kalliope**

**Italy.**

**Mann, Klaus**

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## ITALY

Will the France of the future -- the liberated France -- recognize her genius and her drama in the words of those who ~~are~~ today her lovers and ~~heralds~~ <sup>champions</sup> in exile? It would be hazardous to make <sup>any</sup> predictions. <sup>primarily for answer</sup>

Was it not Ignazio Silone whom the international reading public acclaimed as the representative author of anti-fascist Italy? Silone's work -- hitherto unknown to his compatriots -- is now available in the liberated parts of Italy. Surprisingly, his master novel, Fontamara, was received without enthusiasm. The Italians, in Italy, don't seem to care much for exile Silone's Italian style, nor do they find his vision of Italy accurate or attractive. Of course, they appreciate the seriousness of his message, the integrity and penetration of his mind. Yet there is a curious lack of response. The opinion prevails that Silone does not live quite up to the great prestige due to his international successes.

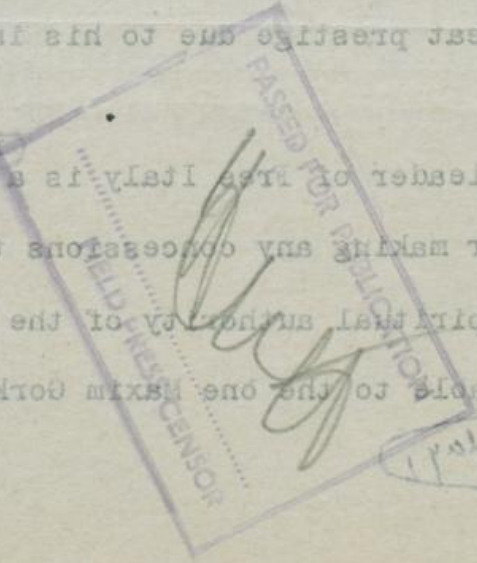
The undisputed intellectual leader of Free Italy is a man who <sup>remained in</sup> ~~lost~~ his homeland -- without ever making any concessions to the Fascist regime -- Benedetto Croce. The spiritual authority of the great historian, critic and philosopher is comparable to the one Maxim Gorki enjoyed in , in Italy today,



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the Soviet Union, during the last decade of his life. Croce, ~~in Italy~~ today, is much more than just a leading literary figure: he is indeed a moral, political and intellectual power.

That is why a new magazine founded under ~~his~~ <sup>his</sup> auspices, ~~of Benedetto~~ Croce, has a good chance of playing a significant rôle in the future ~~history~~ of Italian letters. Aretusa, Rivista di Varia Letteratura, the first number of which appeared in Naples this month, is not directly edited by the grand old man; but it is to his personal prestige and to his stimulating advice that the new venture owes its existence and its character.

Aretusa's editor, Francesco Flora, is one of Croce's friends and disciples; Croce's ~~talented~~ <sup>talented</sup> daughters, Elena and Alda, take an active interest in the new review: the first issue features an essay by Alda Croce on the Spanish ~~Garcilasco~~ <sup>poet</sup> Garcilasco de la Vega (whom she presents as "the Spanish Petrarca") and contains a book review by Elena. Other "Crociana" in the same number are an original article by Vincent Sheean dealing with Croce's friend and publisher, Laterza, in the City of Bari, and a paper by Francesco Flora, surveying Croce's recent political writings. Moreover, Croce's spirit is present in the editor's introductory message -- demanding and analyzing a constructive and determined humanistic philosophy as the basis of Italian intellectual life; rejecting Fascism as an "essentially un-Italian concoction of various barbarous doctrines" (including the "extreme romanticism of the bombastic and innocent Nietzsche").



Aretusa, No.1, is not startling or revolutionary, but it contains a lot of significant and sound material. One might have wished to find in the first issue of the first Free-Italian literary review some samples of creative writing in post-Fascist Italy. However, there are only articles -- all of them well-written and topical: a paper about the reconstruction of damaged historical monuments, a piece about Italy's place and function in the post-war world, an essay on contemporary Italian poetry, and an article about Surrealism, by the editor -- Francesco Flora. His approach is more critical and more detached than that of his colleague in Algiers: in fact, Signor Flora has serious objections to the "surrealist revolt against consciousness, common sense, history, and civilization." Yet one cannot help wondering why Surrealism -- that stale and pretentious hobby of yesterday's avantgarde -- seems to be such an attractive subject to the editors of Free-French and Free-Italian literary reviews.

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Fontaine, L'Arche, Aretusa -- these names may be forgotten in a few years ~~from now~~; or they may be remembered as the names of pioneers -- ~~foreshadowing~~, <sup>and, perhaps,</sup> preparing, inaugurating a new era of free literary life in a free Europe.

There will be other reviews in many liberated cities -- from Naples to Amsterdam, from post-Franco Madrid to post-quisling Oslo. There will be creative efforts, bold experiments, discussions, controversies, symposiums, esoteric feuds and coteries, lyrical outbursts, striving talents, masterly achievements. There will be



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Italy, July, 1944





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