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The Book I want to write.

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THE BOOK I WANT TO WRITE

is to be an analytical survey of cultural tendencies in Europe after the Second World War. Tentative title: The New Face of European Culture.

When the war is over, and I ~~have been~~^{am} discharged from the Army, I would like to return to Europe as an independent civilian and stay for at least a year. This trip, as I visualize it now, would take me first to London and Paris, where I may spend some months, and from there to Barcelona, Madrid, Rome, Florence, Zurich, Vienna, Budapest, Prague, Warsaw, Moscow, Leningrad, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, and other European capitals and cultural centers -- including whatever may have remained of the big German cities.

The purpose of my journey will be, to find out whether European culture is still alive -- and presuming it is, what are its present tendencies and most recent achievements? Are there any new cultural values and directions in Europe's impoverished, disorganized countries? How has the younger literary generation reacted to the apocalyptic events of the past five years? Are there any new styles in the making? Have the artists discovered new formulas to express unprecedented experiences? Has a new philosophy emerged from the ordeal? Has Fascism left its traces on the intellectual physiognomy of the continent? Are the representative minds affected by the new wave of nationalism which seems to sweep Europe at the present moment? Is there, among intellectuals, a consciousness of European, or universal, solidarity? Are European artists and thinkers responsive to American influences? Will the Soviet Union become a new cultural center? Will Germany be able, or permitted, to contribute anything to a new concert of European voices?

I want to discuss these questions with European poets, novelists, critics,

(BOOK PLAN, continued)

philosophers, artists and musicians. My book is to present a résumé of such conversations, and also my impressions and evaluations of new European books, literary reviews, paintings, ballets, films, theatrical productions, symphonies, and so forth. Social and political problems -- although of course inseparably interrelated with the cultural situation -- are to be treated only in an indirect way.

What I want to describe is a sentimental journey -- the pilgrimage of a former European through the tragically changed continent. But, far from being purely emotional or anecdotic, my story is also meant to become a factual, informative report of a tour of intellectual exploration.

The question what the present crisis has done, or is doing, to the European genius seems significant and topical enough. The book I would like to write may not give the whole answer; but I hope that it could be useful by stimulating discussion and contributing some original views.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

I was born in Munich (Bavaria), on November 18, 1906, as the oldest son of Thomas Mann.

I went to school in Munich ("Humanistisches Gymnasium;" i.e. high-school including Latin and Greek), continued my studies at the "Odenwaldschule" (a progressive, experimental country school near Darmstadt), and finally attended lectures on philosophy and French literature at Heidelberg University.

At the age of eighteen, I worked in Berlin as a dramatic critic on the staff of a daily paper ("Zwoelfuhr-Mittagsblatt"). The same year (1925), I published my first book and, a few months later, appeared as an actor in my first play. During the following two years (1926-1927), I toured Germany and other European countries -- presenting a group of young actors (including myself) in my own dramatic productions.

In 1928, I made a trip around the world with my sister Erika -- visiting the United States, Japan, China, Russia, and so forth.

Back in Europe, I continued traveling, with a preference for France and French North Africa. At the same time, I continued writing, too -- not only books but also all kinds of articles and essays which I contributed to the leading newspapers and magazines of pre-Hitler Germany. Also, I was active as a lecturer and radio speaker. Without belonging to any political group or party, I participated as much as I could in the fight against German nationalism and reaction -- trying, in my own particular field, to promote liberal and cosmopolitan ideas.

In 1933, when Hitler came to power, I left Germany, as did my father and the rest of my family.

(BIOGRAPHICAL DATA, continued)

The Hitler regime acknowledged my literary anti-Nazi activities by depriving me of my German citizenship (1934) -- several years before my father was "expatriated." Subsequently, I became a citizen of Czechoslovakia, thanks to the generosity of President Edward Benes.

During the period from 1933 to 1938, I lived in various European countries -- mostly in France, Holland, Switzerland, and Czechoslovakia. For two years I edited a literary magazine with anti-Nazi tendencies in Amsterdam.

In 1936 and 1937, I spent several months in the United States, and settled down there permanently in 1938. Living "between New York and California," I continued my activities as a free-lance writer and lecturer -- ^{now}lecturing and writing ~~now~~ in English. In 1941, I founded a literary review in New York which I managed to keep going for 14 months.

In December, 1942, I joined the U.S. Army, and some months later I became an American citizen.

In December, 1943, I was assigned to overseas duty and sent to Italy. For one year I belonged to the forward team of the Fifth Army's Psychological Warfare Branch. Last February I was transferred to the Mediterranean staff of "The Stars and Stripes."

Klaus
Mann
Klaus Mann, /

Italy, April 28, 1945

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