

I AM AN IMPURE THINKER

Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy



INTRODUCTION BY

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CHAPTER 12

IMMIGRATION OF THE SPIRIT

*An Interview on Radio Bremen*¹



ANOTHER SCHOLAR WHO CAME back to Germany as a visiting professor at the University of Münster was Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy. When we made contact with him and outlined the major questions to be considered, he pointed out that the consequences of immigration, rather than those of emigration undoubtedly should be more heavily emphasized. He therefore considered our questions from this perspective.

Question: Professor Rosenstock-Huessy, you were a visiting professor at the University of Münster in 1958 and lectured one semester for German students. Was this your first visit since emigrating?

Answer: No. I left in 1933; in 1950 I was invited by my old law and political science colleagues in Göttingen to lecture on the history of German law or on another topic I might prefer. While selecting the topic for my lectures I deliberated unhurriedly over the subject matter I now treat in America. I entered into fresh territory when I left Germany, for my old specialty was inaccessible for Americans. By steps, in 1950, '52, '56, '57, '58, I learned to teach here in Germany the subject I had mastered in America. Thus, I laid down back here on German soil a roadway leading into the new field of learning founded in America. It was very arduous. It certainly is most difficult to appear at a former home in new clothes and to make manifest what one has attained in such a way that the expert knowledge

¹ Translated from "*Auszug des Geistes*," ("Exodus of The Spirit")? Radio Bremen, *Bremer Beiträge IV*, Verlag B. C. Heye & Co., Bremen, 1962, pp. 106-126.

people expect is overshadowed by what one has learned in addition.

All immigrants probably have difficulties in their relationship to the old world which focuses attention only on the moment of departure and says, "When he returns he'll be just the same." That's true only to a limited extent. Among the most important things I have learned in America is this: much of the German or European fund of knowledge is not suited for Americans. It is a great pity that the Americans in their humility, modesty, and intellectual unpretentiousness have had European cultural wares transmitted to them by specialists who continued to think in European categories. I was the first professor in my college who spelled out the American contributions to philosophy in a special course. In my other teaching specialties as well I took care not to simply continue speaking as I had in Germany, but rather to base my teaching on the entirely different conceptions of my students over there in the new world.

The world in which the American student who comes to me at about twenty years of age really has confidence is the world of sport. This world encompasses all of his virtues and experiences, affections and interests; therefore I have built my entire sociology around the experiences an American has in athletics and games. Through this approach I have found confirmed what stood in my earlier German sociology, stimulating no interest at all in Europe: people preserve their thousand-year-old experiences in the world of play. The law court proceedings of the old Germans still haunt the game of forfeits: "What should he do, whose forfeit have I in my hand?"

War, contracting a marriage, and every other significant act is similarly contained in some form of game. It is just played with. In Europe one may build a sociology on art, in America on sport. The experiences of the Europeans with Bach, Wagner, and Beethoven must be transposed so-to-say to athletic experiences. In America you can't make reference to the experiences a young man has with the fine arts, as you can in Italy. You can, however, very probably remind him that he learned to live lyrically while skiing, dramatically in football, epically through swimming, so that he suddenly recognizes that these

events he lived through unconsciously in a group represent his first philosophy. In short, he already knows quite a lot about life. If I had mixed in some sort of European esthetics, sociology, or romantics, my students would have had the feeling I was trying to plant a European head on their American heart. I guarded against that scrupulously.

Question: When you say that today, you're speaking from experience. But in 1933 when you made the decision to leave Germany and Europe, you certainly didn't know what to expect. Would you think back once again to this time and perhaps tell us what you left behind in order to go forth, and how you attempted to master all the new things you encountered?

Answer: That is a very serious question. My answer may sound somewhat immodest, but I'll tell the truth. When the war came to an end in 1918 I saw not only that the war was lost, but that Europe's position of supremacy in the world was also a thing of the past. Germany had lost its claim to sovereign national power, and this claim might be asserted in the future only through the permission of the whole world. I foresaw Hitler's advent and published and said as early as 1919 that we must attempt to survive him; after Hitler we would be forced for the first time to recognize the real results of the world war. In 1919 I really didn't think I had the right to leave conquered Germany. I had to stay at the wake, so-to-speak, and thought, since I loved the country dearly and had been its soldier and teacher, I had to hold out as long as possible and prepare for the future. I founded the work-service, I established labor newspapers, I abstained from exercising or hid my academic prerogatives as much as possible and tried to live with men who would have to live in the future without romantic, ideal, and patriotic models. I tried to make them capable and strong for life.

No handsomer compliment could have been given me on my seventieth birthday than that spoken by Walter Hammer, calling me the patriarch of the Kreisau-Kreis.² For many of the men of the Kreisau Kreis had been in the work-service camps we developed in the nineteen twenties in Germany. But when nothing helped, and when all I had predicted broke forth in

² A group of Germans who conspired against Hitler.

1933, I didn't hesitate long. I was convinced I was no longer required to stay indefinitely through the impossible. I went to the new world, not with some sort of plans or intentions, but with the feeling all those drawn toward America to become Americans share, and in the faith attributed to Abraham in the Bible. He too had known nothing more than that he should go out from the land of his fathers. He had no suspicion of what awaited him. I can assure you, it's the same when one lands in New York. One really doesn't know what's going to happen. One doesn't hope, but does have faith.

I took along from the old world into the new a readiness to give up my previous activities. For instance I immediately resigned the chairmanship of the World League for Adult Education in London, which I certainly didn't have to do. It was after all an international organization. I was probably very foolish to give up the only position I had in the whole world. I was elected in 1929 to this office *ad personam* by 400 delegates from throughout the world, from Australia to Timbuktu. After all, I was a professor in Germany, a respected man; but it would have been a breach of confidence for me to continue to serve in this office as a mere emigrant. By the resignation of this office you can see how radically I made the separation from my previous world.

If you would like to extract a possible moral for emigrants headed for America from this resignation, I'll try to help you. You see, at 45 I was already an established man, a clearly defined profile. I was listed not only in Kürschner³ but also in the *Konversationslexikon*. It was completely clear to me that America would simply not be able to admit such a fully developed character as an immigrant. America only had to extend me an opportunity to make a new beginning and then to see what I, with my particular gifts, might be capable of. I was ready to become a farmer or businessman or to remain a professor or to become a professor of something else. Everything remained to be seen. So in the first years, about seven, until the outbreak of the second world war, I let myself be carried

³ Kürschners *Deutschen Gelehrtenkalender*, a reference book or "who's who" of German scholars.

by the waves. I was knocked about quite a bit, then finally had the good fortune not to be stranded in the attic of the academic world, but rather to get solid ground under my feet. I am now living in the country. It is no accident, but a great blessing, for it has given me enough endurance and patience to be content without my official position in Europe.

Question: Was anyone able to help you in the first years? After all, you still had to live. You arrived in New York and, as you said, when an individual stands in that city he is faced with the question—what now?

Answer: I knew only one thing about America: New York is not part of America. I quipped at the time, "I want to go to America, but not to New York!" So I traveled further on the evening of my arrival, at least as far as Boston. From Boston I was pulled to New Hampshire and from New Hampshire to Vermont, deeper and deeper into the experience of the small community, independent of Europe. I learned that in America the power to conduct political affairs properly is formed and maintained in small groups, not in the big cities which so fascinate the foreigner. I would recommend to all my friends coming to America to go first of all to a town in Pennsylvania or New England before seeing a major city. For even though the Americans have built these big cities from the villages and towns, the cities are still not America, not even today.

Well, that's too far afield. I found, of course, infinitely great willingness to help, for example through an invitation to give a course at Harvard University without pay. I had to defray all expenses with my own means like a *Privatdozent*. I found friends through these lectures; some were very surprised that they found themselves involved at all with a man from Germany. A great Francophile told me in 1933, "You're the first German I've listened to since the world war." This very man contributed toward our future in America and helped us as only an American can. Just after the outbreak of the war for America in Pearl Harbor he sent to us in the country, quite out of the blue, the last washing machine he was still able to purchase in Boston. It came with the brief note: "During the war it will be hard for you to survive in your solitude. You

won't find help. Here is at least a machine that will make life easier for you and your wife." This was the man who, prior to 1933, hadn't spoken to a German.

Such stories must be told more often, but it must be added that the great "welcome-club" called America was still in business in 1933. Today, however, after the disillusionment it experienced through two world wars in Europe, it no longer reacts in the same way. Europe correlates American dates, the history of its soul, too naively with European history. When I landed in America in 1933, a European with so much education and learning was still as much of an object for exhibit as say in 1890. Even the First World War hadn't altered the readiness of Americans to let themselves be taught by Europeans. Now things are different.

Question: You just said you had been invited to teach at Harvard University, but weren't paid. What did they expect from you? Why were you given the chance and what did you live on?

Answer: That too is an amusing story. I had earned a reputation in Europe through work-camps for laborers, farmers, and students. They spread like wildfire from the original camp we established in Silesia throughout central Europe. An American professor at Harvard had learned of this through my dearest student who had co-founded these camps and was then studying at Harvard. This was something new and original, and he had one of his students write a small brochure on the camps as an example for America too. The student and the professor both came to Germany. I also invited this professor to give a lecture at the University of Breslau, and we became friends. Now since he had been in my house and had seen what I did and taught, and I had shown him hospitality, I could write to him on February 1, 1933: "My dear Sir, Germany has just spit out 400 years of higher education and statehood. I want to leave. Can you help me?" He wrote back, "I can extend an invitation to you, but it is too late to secure any sort of support."

Then I went to the ministry of culture in Berlin. This too may be worth some reflection historically. I found that the new possessors of power felt very unsure of themselves. They did not

yet have the security that seemed to distinguish them in later years. I don't know that they felt so secure. But in February 1933 they were as yet in a precarious position. I came before them and said: "You can destroy me or you can help me to start a new life over there. What's your decision?" To which the official said, "We'd prefer to help you build a new existence. I will transfer at least a small part of your salary to you in America." And that he honestly did for a year. It was little enough, only 150 dollars a month. Anyone who has been in America knows one can't live well on that, but it was possible to get by. Until 1941, until Pearl Harbor, I was on leave of absence each year. I emigrated, then, not at all like the poor people suddenly placed by a swift kick face to face with destitution. On the contrary, I retained throughout this whole eight or nine year period a comforting feeling from having made up my mind and made a decision concerning Hitler spontaneously, not under duress. I believe that was very good for my soul.

You'll be interested too in the fact that I returned to Europe once more in 1935. This is an unrecognized rule. I also had my son travel back to Europe again in 1937. Both of us then returned to our new homeland with great enthusiasm. Many who left missed this first visit back in the old European homeland, and this reconfirmation that one must henceforth pitch one's tent in America. They first landed in America at the last moment, in 1938 after the first pogrom, or even in 1939. They had to cling to the United States already torn by war; they were never really at home. They harbored a glowing desire for Europe in their hearts and then, in 1947 or 1948, they hurried back to a Europe which had been smashed to bits. This return then was mostly a very painful experience on both sides. Either they remained in Europe and set the American experience aside as radically as possible, or they remained disillusioned. I was spared that. During my visit in Europe in 1935 I travelled to Germany, met many friends, and that gave my farewell its finality. I would like to say I discovered a law of emigration: a man emigrates the first time with his head, will, and thoughts, and has to throw his feelings and irrational person over the hurdle in a second attempt. Well, it all worked out very nicely just because I did

not complain in 1933 about having to leave. Because I saw this misfortune coming so far in advance, I just said—that's it.

Question: After the lectures as a visitor, did you secure a teaching post at Harvard?

Answer: It's very noteworthy that you want to know the details. Since Harvard University was a very learned institution, it got around very quickly that I lectured on the European revolutions with great success and had a great following. The best men at Harvard, even President Conant, who later became known in Bonn as the American ambassador, took great pains to keep me there. First they gave me the Kuno-Francke Professorship for German Art and Culture. At that time this chair provided a one-year appointment for a visiting professor; each year it was to be given to another. So, surprisingly enough, I represented Germany in America, for that was my office as professor for German Art and Culture. I was transferred later to the History and Philosophy Department and did to complete satisfaction, I believe, all that could be required of one whose mother tongue was not English. But I had no difficulties: I had spoken English ever since my youth.

But then there cropped up at Harvard the same conflict I had had to fight through in Europe in agnostic modern colleges. I can't complain about this either. At Harvard they were just tuned in for doctrinaire positivists. That I spoke completely forthrightly in my lectures on the destiny of mankind and the history of salvation and the Lord God hurt me, since I didn't fit into the communist groove. The American intelligentsia in 1933 was interested in nothing but Russia. Today it is difficult to imagine to what an extent the youth of America held as un-modern a man who didn't profess himself to be a communist. I'm revealing no secret. I've said and published often that even the great old English philosopher Alfred Whitehead, who wanted to help me, gave me a private lecture in his house in which he said, "My dear friend, we all want to help you, but it would be so much easier if you were a communist. Then all these atheists who despair over you now because you trouble about religion would help you. Christianity is, after all, obsolete.

I can't become a communist any more," he said—he was seventy years old at the time—"but you still could be one." Well, as you can imagine, I didn't abandon my conviction so simply. He understood that.

Anyway, it came to a crash. A group of energetic young men went to President Conant and told him the reputation of Harvard would be disfigured if a believing man were to lecture on history, sociology, law, speech, and more besides. Then I was very delicately shoved into the department of theology, the so-called Divinity School, because they didn't wish me ill, but considered me an impossible thinker. That, of course, amounted to a first-class burial. I didn't want to be a theologian. I was and am no theologian. I was then helped as one who seems unsuited for Harvard is helped; I was referred to Dartmouth College in New Hampshire. People there were very happy to have a man who offered new courses. I was given a free hand and was able to fulfill my ideals, to speak on American themes for Americans. I lectured on American philosophy, taught about the family and sport, emigration and colonization and the accomplishments of the pioneers.

I founded Camp William James, a camp in the sense of William James, the greatest American thinker. He had already sensed in 1910 that the time of great wars must come to an end if mankind didn't want self destruction, and demanded that the warlike traits, the heroism in the life of each and every young man must be granted as his right without bloodshed and murder. Since I had already aspired toward similar goals in Europe, it was not difficult for me to inspire young men to found a work service with such a purpose in America too. Accordingly I moved to the country, for we directed our work toward the reconstruction of the declining state of Vermont. I've remained there, keeping a foot in the earth of the country. In the small community, in which I now live, I was accepted extremely slowly. It's been a long road. I believe that now, after 23 years, I'm one of the senior residents in the village. We have considerable moving and relocation. It's no exaggeration: now I belong more to the older inhabitants than to the newcomers. Well, one can't decide such things for oneself. At any

rate, I've reserved my cemetery plot in the oldest cemetery of the oldest settlement of the village.

Question: If you feel at home in your village today, it has been achieved through years of effort. If you with your intelligence had to take leave from what you once were, and are satisfied with what you are and have today, and have built an intellectual world you can call your own, then a thousand thoughts must have been rearranged in the process. You've attained another view of Europe from America, and probably have conserved and lived in other ways your European traits. And therefore, I think we still have to speak of the difficulties.

Answer: All right, I'll try, as far as that is possible and to the extent to which a European can have any conception at all of the position a teacher had in America. The teaching function in America, until recent years, had been women's work. All teaching up to higher education, therefore, had a completely different appearance than in Germany or even in France. The aggressive manly, forward-driving, innovative, revolutionary element in the whole art of teaching in the United States was lacking. Teaching was a quieting sort of ornament by which youth learned to associate with the beautiful, agreeable, and even true things of life of the great past. But it was all based on thinking back, not on thinking forward.

Europeans, hard pressed as they were by limited space, threatened by wars, envied by neighbors, have searched for the future in thought. The Promethean element, the ability to think in advance, has driven European science from one new feat to the next. Europeans have driven science in America forward, and we still don't know whether a tradition of genuine research can be built from many generations of Americans alone. I have my doubts on account of the excess of money available for "research." Money corrupts. If I have to solicit great foundations for money for my research, then I have to propose something which is already obsolete for me. I know no researcher who in the first moment of a new inspiration could have found the sympathy and approval of the establishment. Whether it's Galileo, Copernicus, Fichte, or I myself, it's always the same: the new thought has to break through in battle against the

vested interests, the power of the establishment, the conception of squandered money, against money itself—in short, against powers of all sorts.

Of course, when one has access to 200 million dollars a year for research, the great danger arises that the foolish, the pedestrian, the biased research, that which just goes along in the tracks others have laid, will be unfairly privileged at the expense of research that goes boldly forth on a brand new tack. Perhaps the Americans in brilliant carelessness may find ways to support dauntlessly the new as well as the trivial. Would you like to hear an example? In the first year of the Ford Foundation Paul Hoffmann, who then served as its president, had the brilliance and courage to say, "I'll support only projects that are already under way." He wanted to support the bold spirits who wanted to and were able to carry their own ideas ahead in the face of danger, want, indebtedness. The whole apparatus of his foundation, however, contradicted such a search for unknown talents. They just made up their own program and developed their own philosophy, as it's so fondly called in America.

I've seen terrible instances where young people have asked themselves, "What do I have to propose to get money?" A man who does that once in his life has ceased to be of any possible significance for science. He is corrupt. This great danger for the future of science in America distresses and oppresses me. It doesn't rest on anyone's evil will, but on the opposite; it is caused by too much good will, by the belief that spirit can be aroused by cash. Of course that's impossible.

I haven't been personally involved in all these things. I'm just telling of how difficult it is in America to really stick to and go further along the intellectual paths Europeans try to continue over there.

Each generation in America has been kept spiritually and intellectually alive either through visiting Europe or through importing Europeans. It's not clear how things may continue if the importation of European intelligence is now cut off, if the Americans say to one another in a completely understandable reaction, "We've brought over too many of these European

intellectuals. We can assimilate the poor Iranians, the Poles, even the Chinese and Japanese in California to a certain extent; but we can accept European scholars and artists only in very limited numbers." From 1933 until today we've provided something for the Americans—I'd like to mention again, I definitely consider myself one—something they haven't grasped. We've wanted to instruct them too with our judgments, theories, teaching, and taste. I consider myself a member of the last generation of emigrants in America who began with a clean slate and unfortunately, and applies to me too, exist too largely through the printed word.

America is in a critical situation today. The obvious objective intellectual supplies from Europe may be choked off before organs for a continual reproduction of the intellectual and spiritual life, a constant renewal, a free research, an aggressively manly, forward-striding, revolutionary upbringing of youth are developed.

Question: Have you had significant contact with other emigrants?

Answer: The greater the success of the emigrant, the more he has to attempt to cease being a European. You can ask all my fellow emigrants. The success of the emigrant depends directly on whether he manages to avoid becoming identified with all the others and instead is lucky and becomes more than just one of many, which is not so simple in America. How is one supposed to master his own destiny, become a person, experience what unique things can be achieved in this land as a member of a great group of foreign professors which has to be digested? This is probably the most marvelous thing about the emigration: through it one sheds various roles like snakeskins until finally one reaches a definite final hide. At my age one can no longer become an American, not in the sense of a native-born American. I have no illusions about that. Nor has that ever been my ambition.

But I have used up so much courage going through these changes. I shouldn't neglect entirely the comic aspects of these metamorphoses. When the war broke forth in 1941 I who had emigrated with the coming of National Socialism was con-

sidered in my village as an obvious agent of Hitler. These good New Englanders had no other Germans they might have reacted against. The pastor of my church congregation, being of German origins three generations back, told me quite simply I would undoubtedly understand that he couldn't speak with me during the war. Others pleasantly told me I had better not let myself be seen on the main street of the village for the next few years. Still other friends met in my home and deliberated on how they might drum me out. Then they published a very beautiful testimonial about me in the newspaper. They dug up old documents from my time at Harvard and found among them a protest statement from the student body at Breslau—naturally of a purely Nazi stripe—in which they protested against my betrayal of German culture at Harvard as Kuno-Francke professor. Well, that was proof for my neighbors that I was a respectable man, and with the help of this testimonial I remained undisturbed at Dartmouth College.

The second round had another visage. In 1947–1949 the great anti-communist McCarthy investigations began. Before this officially started, my son who was in government service as a doctor was attacked by a colleague who envied his career and accused him of being under the determining influence of a leading communist. This communist was supposed to be I. We had to go to Washington, there was a big trial, and I had to prove I was no communist. It's rather comical to be fought one time as a National Socialist spy and another time as a communist. To complete the farce or demonic tale: in 1934 a very famous emigrant—I won't name him, he's very renowned—traveled to Harvard and said, "Eugen, you must assure me convincingly that you're not a Nazi spy." I just laughed. We've remained good friends to the present, and he has probably long forgotten this incident.

But such mutually and totally incompatible situations do occur in the course of 25 years, and I was already accustomed to such afflictions in Europe. Consequently, I didn't consider these happenings in America tragic. Of course, when I was suspected of being a leading communist I really didn't know what to do. It's not so easy for one to prove one is not a communist,

since communists lie and disguise themselves, and therefore in the end even the Christian religious writings I had perpetrated might be dismissed as mere camouflage. Such situations in America are resolved through the courage of individuals. Completely unexceptional people suddenly step forward and support an accused man. The witnesses I was able to bring with me to Washington gave me the greatest feeling of happiness. In America new friendships and groups one could not at all have counted upon form and prove their worth again and again. And what came to pass then—in 1948 I think, but I'm not sure of the year—ended in the triumph of friendship and the willingness of good neighbors to help.

Question: May I come back once more to 1950, Professor Rosenstock-Huessy, to the time when you received your first invitation to return to Germany? What did you find in Germany? How did you react to Germany?

Answer: I was very lucky there, too. When I look back now from 1958, I was perhaps the slowest of those who returned. I was one of the first to leave and one of the last to come back. I returned in 1950 with a divided heart, because I knew I was being called back to an old cliché, to an office I had long since cast off within that of an historian of German law. I accepted because I was very indebted to my friend Hans Thieme who invited me. He knew of my struggles in Breslau because he had served there as a young instructor, and I knew he wanted me to come. But in the course of the semester I first had to convince the university as a whole that I was not just an unconditional returner, but rather I had led a new life filled with new content.

Fortunately, the matter didn't end there. I had friends in Germany outside the university who had continued my work of the nineteen twenties. First of all my friend Georg Müller revealed Bethel⁴ near Bielefeld to me. Bethel's founder, Bodelschwingh, demanded that Bethel stand firmer than the state of Prussia. And it did; I returned in 1950 to a Germany represented by Bethel which had had the power to survive even the destruction of Prussia. May I say that ever since, in these eight years, it

⁴ A great institution of the Protestant Church, caring for the sick and disabled, Bethel is a community of its own.

was a privilege to meet with circles of men and women who had been capable of surviving the political confusions through the strength of a higher sphere. It caused me to rejoice. A bent towards the powers that strengthen men in Europe as in America, completely independently of national character, was involved. Finally, I was even given an honorary degree, as doctor of theology. I have been really favored, for I can't ascribe to myself anything meriting this friendship I found in Europe.

In 1952 I was called to Germany by Bavarian public educators. They were kind enough to remember my actions between 1918 and 1933 in the area of public education and wanted me to instruct a new staff of educators. This I did. About 400 men and women came through these weeks of schooling which we lived together within small living communities. I'm glad I didn't miss that. The weeks in the poison gas shell storehouse in Traunreudt, that today has been transformed by Siemens into a factory, in particular belong with the finest experiences of my life. It was a pure, strong episode, different from Bethel, but still completely free from any kind of pains or remembrances, because the indestructible power of humane qualities was made manifest about us by the countless Sudeten and East Germans just beyond being refugees.

I never will forget the church service of the pastor in Siebenbürg in which our whole group participated. The situation was comparable to the American emigration experience. It is, I find, very pronounced in Germany today. One shouldn't talk on and on in Germany in a disparaging vein about Americanization. I see this too; German students of today aren't more brilliant than American students. But emigrants into West Germany have been managed in a way that has my greatest respect; nothing more could be wished for in comparison to the assimilation of emigrants in America. I only fear this success is credited too much to the national sector, as if only Germans had helped Germans. A refugee and emigrant has the right to be accepted whether or not he is welcome. That irrevocable right of the refugee created America and forced the native elements to condescend—yes, the word isn't very pretty—to condescend

more and more, to let down the barriers and to stop imagining themselves better than they are.

I find this aspect of the German wonder since 1945 something much greater than the economic wonder. I value the economic wonder only as a means to an end: to accommodate this influx of fourteen million emigrants from the east. I would get along with my German friends and especially with the German public, and Germans would care a little more for Americans, I think, if they didn't brag about their economic capabilities but said instead, "Now we understand Americans. We've carried through a corresponding achievement here. Oh, it was frightful. Many of these people become our competitors in the end; they elbowed for position. But we did our duty. At least we hope we've done our duty." A farmer in Traunreudt said to me, "What a blessing for Bavaria, that these people have come here."

Question: You saw Germany again in 1950. You drew conclusions, then had to go through another separation. Right at the beginning of our conversation you said that you now feel at home in your village. Haven't you ever wished to come back again to Germany?

Answer: You ought not ask. The question ignores the fate of the intellectual strata that emigrated, although they really were completely unable to emigrate, and of the strata that immigrated, although America didn't want any part of its brand of immigration. We are the generation which forces Europe and America together for the first time, which must force them together permanently. What forms will be assumed, only God knows. Only an individual entirely unpretentiously and without anticipating how far along he'll get in his lifetime can propose how the free spaces of America and the thickly clogged canals of Europe may accommodate one another so that the translated life of the mind and spirit of Europe can water and make fruitful these broad expanses of America. I may not give up the captured place in America. I don't know to what extent I can step back and forth over the dividing line. If I were now to simply put behind me these past 25 years, I would not be performing the service to which I know I've been called.