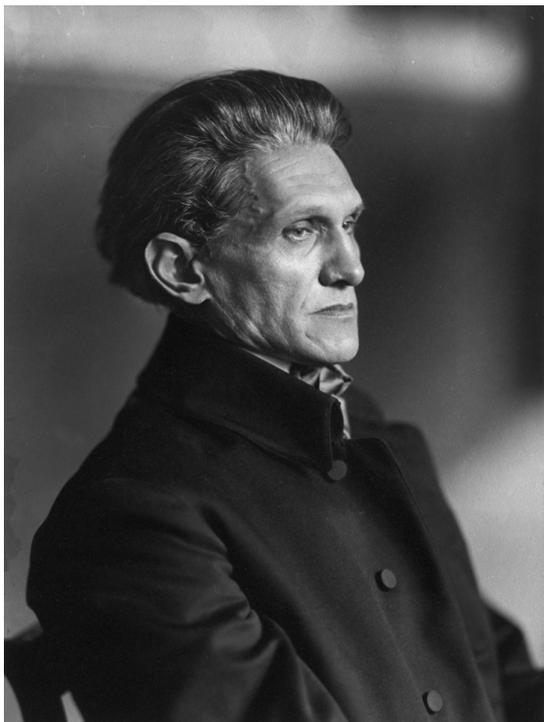


Stefan George (n.d.)

Abstract

Stefan George (1868-1933), who espoused an elitist poetic ethos hostile to mass culture, is remembered chiefly as a proponent of *fin-de-siecle* aestheticism and for the small circle of devoted followers he cultivated known as the George Circle [*George-Kreis*]. The literary magazine he founded in 1892, *Blätter für die Kunst*, was the principal organ of his French symbolist inspired "*l'art pour l'art*" aesthetic program and catered to an exclusive, members-only readership. George's popularity reached its peak in the years after WWI, and the themes of his later work, heroism, chastity, and the creation of a hierarchical moral spiritual social order inspired many leading intellectuals, officers, businessmen, and political figures. Later Joseph Goebbels would offer him the presidency of a new Academy of Poetry. George, who had declined the invitation to join the original Sektion für Dichtkunst der Preußischen Akademie der Künste in 1926, refused. Alluding to the George-inspired ideal of a "New Reich" [*Neues Reich*] led by an elite, moral-spiritual aristocracy, Claus Schenk Graf von Stauffenberg, who was a member of the George Circle, is said to have shouted "Long live secret Germany" [*Es lebe das Geheime Deutschland*] before his execution by firing squad for the attempted assassination of Adolf Hitler.

Source



Source: Stefan George, ca. 1928, photograph: Atelier Müller-Hilsdorf.
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