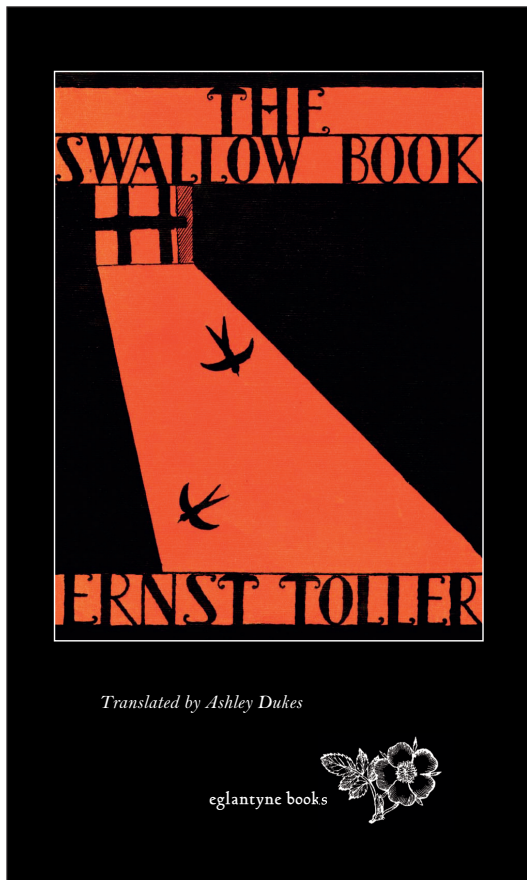


# THE SWALLOW BOOK

by ERNST TOLLER translated by Ashley Dukes

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## ASHLEY DUKES (1885-1959)

was an English playwright, critic, and theatre manager. He founded the Mercury Theatre in 1933 and wrote plays that appeared in the London West End and on Broadway. The Ashley Dukes Company was an important interwar promoter of serious drama and a training ground for actors.

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Poetry

Worldwide, English language

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*This important work appears here in English for the first time in nearly a century, it is one of the most moving testaments we have from a writer in prison.*

## ERNST TOLLER (1893-1939)

was one of Germany's best known playwrights in the first half of the twentieth century, and his works were produced all over the world. Many of his plays were composed in the five years he spent in solitary confinement as a political prisoner in the early twenties. During that time his only friends were a pair of swallows who flew in through the bars of his single high window and made a nest in his cell. He grew to feel that he was a soul-mate of the little birds and their young, and that they were all one family. Eventually the prison guards discovered the swallows, and waged war on them, destroying their nests (every time one was destroyed the birds tried to build a new one). This poignant, heart-breaking account of Toller's loneliness, of the swallows' lives, and of their tragic fate, is told in the form of a long, sustained and impassioned poem. It is one of the best loved of works of German poetry of the last century.

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