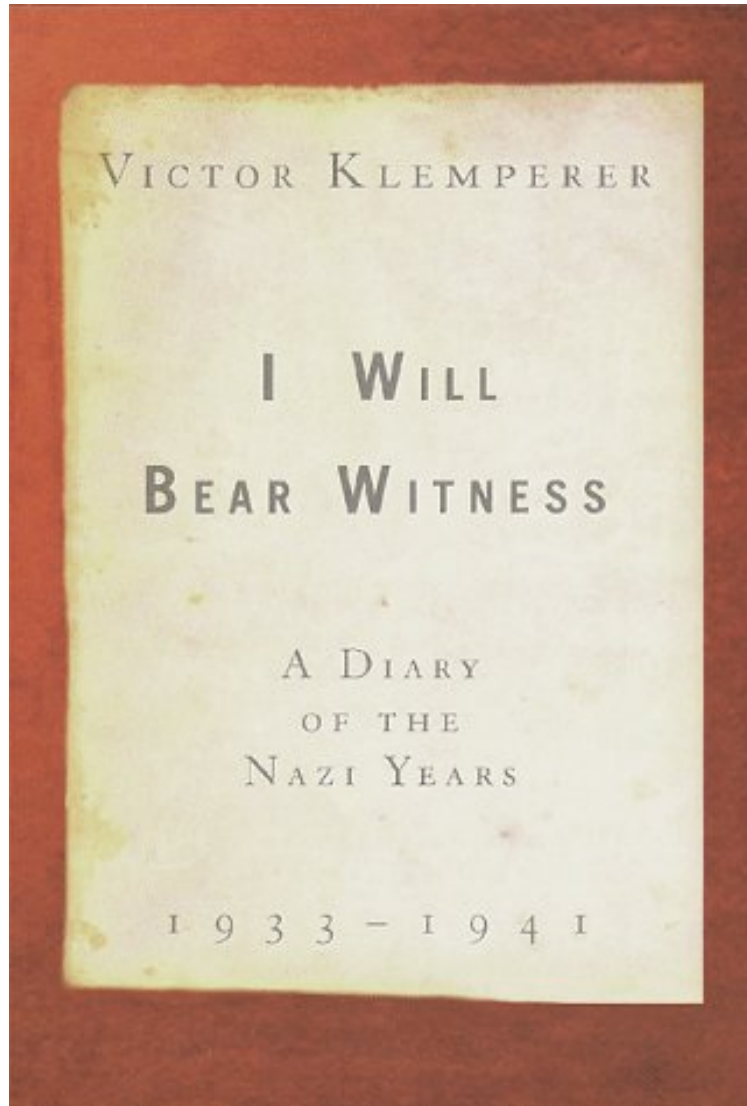


[Download ebook] I Will Bear Witness: A Diary of the Nazi Years, 1933-1941

I Will Bear Witness: A Diary of the Nazi Years, 1933-1941

Victor Klemperer

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Victor Klemperer : I Will Bear Witness: A Diary of the Nazi Years, 1933-1941 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised I Will Bear Witness: A Diary of the Nazi Years, 1933-1941:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Remarkable historical and humane accountBy Montana SkylineThese two volumes comprise a remarkable book, both as a historical document and as a compelling, humane account of the experience of living in Germany during the Nazi years. Klemperer has indeed "witnessed," not only by providing a telling, bottom-up history of the period and place, but particularly by showing how individuals of all kinds

struggle with accommodation, resistance and simple survival under a murderous, totalitarian regime. There are numerous, detailed reviews of the particulars, so I won't add to them, beyond saying: If you want to better understand the history of the period, and also approach an appreciation of human coping in such circumstances, I have not read a more compelling account and highly recommend Klemperer's diaries. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. At times unbearable to read. But must have been unbearable to live. By Laurie Pollack At times unbearable to read. But it must have been unbearable to live through! Details the small and large steps taken from oppression to outright persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany. We have heard of these events. This book tells how it FELT to live through it. Not a memoir but a diary, day to day life is detailed. Things that stood out. The increasing social isolation of Jews from other Germans which aided in their persecution. It seemed as if the two groups lived in two separate worlds. The fact the violation extended even to the changing of middle names. They had to add a middle name of Sara or Israel. I had read of this but the diary helps me imagine how it FELT to live under so much hatred. I quit reading for a few months. It felt too much. Then started again. I will not be able to read Part 2. But glad I finished Part 1. I finished this book with sadness for those lost and more determination to speak UP for groups oppressed in our current world. I do not want to be a "good American" who is silent. Never again to ANYONE! 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Rates up there with Anne Frank's diary. By Magda Denes Excellent reading, Victor Klemperer's book, I Will Bear Witness. Rates up there with Anne Frank's diary. It is an amazement to read his thoughts and daily trials whilst we, the readers, know the outcome... but at the time Mr. Klemperer was submitting his daily life to his diary, he did not know how his life and Germany were going to end. As each law passed he had his home taken from him, his car, his clothes became ragged without recourse to replacing them. Food rations were constantly lowered and taxes levied. A very touching and interesting read.

The publication of Victor Klemperer's secret diaries brings to light one of the most extraordinary documents of the Nazi period. "In its cool, lucid style and power of observation," said The New York Times, "it is the best written, most evocative, most observant record of daily life in the Third Reich." *I Will Bear Witness* is a work of literature as well as a revelation of the day-by-day horror of the Nazi years. A Dresden Jew, a veteran of World War I, a man of letters and historian of great sophistication, Klemperer recognized the danger of Hitler as early as 1933. His diaries, written in secrecy, provide a vivid account of everyday life in Hitler's Germany. What makes this book so remarkable, aside from its literary distinction, is Klemperer's preoccupation with the thoughts and actions of ordinary Germans: Berger the greengrocer, who was given Klemperer's house ("anti-Hitlerist, but of course pleased at the good exchange"), the fishmonger, the baker, the much-visited dentist. All offer their thoughts and theories on the progress of the war: Will England hold out? Who listens to Goebbels? How much longer will it last? This symphony of voices is ordered by the brilliant, grumbling Klemperer, struggling to complete his work on eighteenth-century France while documenting the ever-tightening Nazi grip. He loses first his professorship and then his car, his phone, his house, even his typewriter, and is forced to move into a Jews' House (the last step before the camps), put his cat to death (Jews may not own pets), and suffer countless other indignities. Despite the danger his diaries would pose if discovered, Klemperer sees it as his duty to record events. "I continue to write," he notes in 1941 after a terrifying run-in with the police. "This is my heroics. I want to bear witness, precise witness, until the very end." When a neighbor remarks that, in his isolation, Klemperer will not be able to cover the main events of the war, he writes: "It's not the big things that are important, but the everyday life of tyranny, which may be forgotten. A thousand mosquito bites are worse than a blow on the head. I observe, I note, the mosquito bites." This book covers the years from 1933 to 1941. Volume Two, from 1941 to 1945, will be published in 1999.

.com When the Nazis came to power in 1933, Victor Klemperer (1881-1960), honored as a frontline veteran of World War I, was a distinguished professor at the University of Dresden. A scant few months later he was merely a Jew, protected from deportation to a death camp only by his marriage to an Aryan. He suffered every other indignity to which German Jews were subjected, from losing his job to having his driver's license revoked to being denied permission to own a pet, and all are recorded with bitter clarity in his diary entries, which cover the years 1933 to 1941. (A second volume continuing through 1945 will be published in English in 1999.) The German edition of this book caused a sensation when it was published in 1995, and it's easy to see why: the relentless, quotidian nature of Nazi racism comes through forcefully in Klemperer's litany of daily humiliations and insults, a painful chronicle of situations in which readers can readily imagine themselves. Like Anne Frank, but with a more adult understanding of political fanaticism and human weakness, he makes the abstract horror of genocidal persecution very intimate, very personal, and very real. --Wendy Smith From Publishers Weekly In April 1935, Klemperer (1881-1960) was a Protestant professor of French literature at Dresden University and a front-line veteran of WWI. By early May, he was simply a Jew and, like other Jews, forcibly retired. His marriage to an Aryan gave him (precarious) protection, and by 1945, he was one of only 198 registered Jews left in Dresden. Through it all, Klemperer kept a diary (Vol. II, 1942-1945, is due out in 1999) that turns out to be one of the most important to come out of Nazi Germany. While his early entries are filled with work and health, as circumstances worsened his focus turns to the nuances of Nazism's

degrading influence. Small acts of kindness and solidarity from Gentiles were surprisingly frequent, yet pervasive isolation and lack of courage left real resistance a fantasy for everyone but the Wends (Catholic Slav peasants) and the Communists (whom Klemperer would later join). Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of this book is Klemperer's parallel record of the insidious progress of laws that stripped Jews of their rights and of the propaganda and censorship that stripped the Germans of their judgment. But through it all, Klemperer maintained his "commitment to Germanness," making his account more akin to the complexities recorded in Peter Gay's recent *My German Question* than Daniel Goldhagen's simplistic *Hitler's Willing Executioners*. The diaries weren't intended for publication. They are in part a mélange of notes for a study of Nazi manipulation of language and jottings regarding quotidian concerns about Klemperer's teeth, the cat's health or the price of supplies. This catch-all quality adds veracity to Klemperer's shrewd understanding of Germany's nightmarish decline, however, evincing the kind of clarity that usually comes with hindsight. First serial to the *New Yorker*; audio rights to Random, all others to Aufbau Verlag. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Library Journal*. This day-by-day secret diary of the Nazi period belongs with the best accounts of the era. Klemperer, a Dresden professor of Romance languages in his fifties when the entries begin, can be vain, brave, or eloquently despairing while always keeping his frustrated writer's eye on the increasingly ominous events around him. The record is his daily revenge as he slowly loses his rights, dons the yellow star, and watches his wife become nearly paralyzed with terror. "I feel shame more than fear," he writes of the early Nazi outrages. "I have truly always felt a German." More aware of outside life than the young Anne Frank, Klemperer gives us an extraordinary record that is like nothing else. (LJ Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.)