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Sommario/riassunto	Between 1918 and 1939 Ernst Toller was one of Germany's prominent left-wing intellectuals. He was a leader of the German Revolution of 1918-1919, famous playwright of the 1920s and best known spokesman against Hitler during the 1930s, writing about a country unsuccessfully balancing between survival and annihilation. This study, the first comprehensive analysis in two decades, shows the influence that intellectuals can have in of a troubled society and asks what qualities make leaders effective.