**Ernst Stadler** (1883-1914)

Ernst Stadler was a German expressionist poet, best known for his 1914 collection *Der Aufbruch*, selections of which were included by Kurt Pinthus in his ground-breaking anthology *Menschheitsdämmerung* (*The Dawn of Humanity*, 1919).

Born in the Alsatian town of Colmar, Stadler grew up in Strasbourg and began publishing poems as a teenager. He joined the “Stürmer-Kreis,” a coterie of writers hoping to rejuvenate artistic life in Alsatia, and in 1904 published an early collection of poems, *Praeludien*, which was strongly influenced by aestheticism. Stadler taught German and comparative literature in Strasbourg and Brussels before being summoned to his post as a reserve officer in the German army at the outbreak of the First World War. He was killed in Flanders.

Stadler’s best-known poem, the sonnet “Fahrt über die Kölner Rheinbrücke bei Nacht” [“Ride Across the Rhine Bridge at Cologne by Night”] showcases the expressionists’ characteristic preoccupation both with life and with its annihilation, and is written in “long verse” form, featuring iambic lines of greatly varying length that lend Stadler’s writing a breathless quality and epic scope.

Stadler was also an accomplished translator from the French.

**Key Works**

*Praeludien* (1904)

*Der Aufbruch* (1914)

*Francis Jammes: Die Gebete der Demut* (Translation from the French, 1913)

<Image 1: Photo of Ernst Stadler>