

PAPER, REFUGE  
of all words

Don't write  
me off

Let yourself  
be inscribed  
by my pen

That  
donates  
its blue blood

As rescue

\*\*\*\*\*

We stand on an open field

I always thought that it's easier and simpler,  
especially when one feels this crack through which the world goes...  
one could give clear answers.  
I had to discover that these clear answers  
are truncated errors.

We stand on an open field

...Bridge...Is there this bridge over the abyss, is it available? Where does it lead?

...Bridge...Maintain your identity, maintain your life context.  
And that means constantly resisting a corruption that is extremely varied and  
ambiguous.

...Bridge...The step into uncertainty must be taken.  
And then we will see whether this bridge... is there

...Bridge... Maintain your identity, maintain your life context.  
...there is a kind of no-man's land, a journey into uncertainty.

...Bridge...And that means constantly resisting a corruption that is extremely varied  
and ambiguous.

We stand on an open field

...there is a kind of no-man's land, a journey into uncertainty  
... Maintain your identity, maintain your life context!

\*\*\*\*\*

PAPER, UNLINED

I prefer  
you;

Behind bars,  
ruled small or large,  
Is no place for  
my words

They have to  
breathe

\*\*\*\*\*

the tones – they don't sing, they don't scream, and they sure don't yodel

the tones – that come from the walls and don't knock on the door first, but are there,  
constant and light

the tones that come again and again, that can't be located or crucified. The tones that  
elude the wild blows and that don't go into retirement

They won't be brought under control by drowning them out shrilly and violently; nor  
shrewdly with "what lovely sounds" and the like, climbing up on compliments to the  
vulnerable spots.  
That will all fail.

the tones – they don't sing, they don't scream, and they sure don't yodel  
Only the usual, now slowly swelling laughter will make the wind skip and jump like  
the excited strings of a struck instrument.  
Slowly swell these tones, this laughter that registers lies in the conference halls

They want to pull down the tones

\*\*\*\*\*

Johannes Bobrowski

Language

The tree  
bigger than the night  
with the breath of the lakes of the valley  
with the whispering  
of the stillness  
underfoot

the gleaming arteries  
long in dust  
forever  
language  
dog-tired  
with the weary mouth  
on the endless path  
to the neighbor's house

Jürgen Fuchs  
Language (because of Johannes Bobrowski)

The whistle  
Louder than the word  
With the breath of the  
Animal keeper  
With the yelling  
Above the stillness  
The eyes  
Underfoot  
Their breaking call  
Long in dust  
Not forever  
Language  
Hounded  
Persecuted by whistles  
In the endless struggle  
Against people's silence

\*\*\*\*\*

But of course:  
Stenciled  
And in good penmanship  
No letter  
Steps out of line  
No word  
Leaves the straight and narrow  
They're all well  
buttoned up

And receive  
Praise

Only  
The truth  
Keeps drawing attention  
For its  
Disorderly conduct

\*\*\*\*\*

What is an IM, an inoffizielle Mitarbeiter?

An “unofficial employee”

Look up quickly in their dictionary

what they mean by such a worker!

An IM – unofficial employee – is, quote: “A citizen or foreigner who, out of positive societal conviction or for other motives, declares himself willing to work conspiratively with the MfS, the Ministry for State Security.” End of quote.

Students of all lands, take an interest  
in these strange materials!

In their secret dictionary “the unofficial employee is treated on twenty-seven pages, from 177 to 203, each of which begins with the two familiar expressions unofficial employee...”

Question from Lilo: Does “unofficial employee” really appear again and again in their dictionary?

Before every section? That often?

Answer: Yes. Here it is, read it. You thought some artist thought it up?

Quote: “the IMs are the main forces of the MfS in the fight against the enemy.” End of quote.

IM stock. That sounds charming, doesn't it, Sascha? In the open cattle stalls of the livestock, you remember? They stayed outside in the cold and rain to toughen them up. Sometimes at night, they would roar; it was a dark, then very high-pitched, long-lasting, plaintive tone.

\*\*\*\*\*

I shine

Spotlights

That attack me

Until they pass

And palely see me

And blinded

I understand them well

In their wrath:

Because I shine

Maybe dully

But they can't see through me

And I rob them of their sight

A little:

Not invisible

Not to be overlooked  
They have to reckon with me.

\*\*\*\*\*

love song

so far  
so far

never go away again, my love...

because the others  
who hate me  
remain here...

so close  
so close

\*\*\*\*\*

look through the peephole

When the guards looked through  
the peephole of Marlies P.'s cell,  
what did they want to see?

A young woman?  
Her blonde hair?  
Her fear?  
Her breasts?  
Her legs?  
How she weeps?  
How she sits on the chamber pot?  
How she washes herself?  
How she eats?  
How she loves herself?  
How she shows herself?  
How she dances?  
How she beseeches?  
How she screams?  
How she is taken off to interrogation?  
How she gasps for breath  
in the glass-brick shaft?  
How she sings?  
How she knocks?  
How she shivers?  
How proud she is?  
How she begs for cigarettes?  
How she wants a cup of coffee?

How she demands sleeping pills?  
How she stands in front of the mirror?  
How she laughs?  
How she is alone?

\*\*\*\*\*

## THIS FEAR

that halfway into a line  
my pencil  
will break  
before everything is said  
and  
who will hear me  
when I don't speak

\*\*\*\*\*

Those who are made to fall, who fall, want  
to be caught in arms. They want to weep and  
report on the danger, the violence, the pain. ...  
They want to be embraced, hugged, and praised:  
You are still alive!  
You good, brave people acted rightly.

\*\*\*\*\*

We're in Germany, right?

I first saw your dictionary in Gera,  
your dictionary of political-operative work ...  
We spoke about LTI, Klemperer,  
and about Primo Levi,  
who compared the language  
of the German Kzs\* with the Gulag expressions that Solzhenitsyn cited.

There were stage directions in all of that.  
In guidelines and official procedures, we recognized them,  
in their dictionaries, in their terms and their sentence constructions.

They wrote the >K< in capitals, the >z< small.  
But the letters >K< and >z<,  
written small and large or large and small,  
they have a meaning in Germany.

When we grasped the dimension of >Camp<,  
and of KZ and Pioneer Camp,  
when Solzhenitsyn spoke the word Gulag aloud,  
when Pinochet put on his dark glasses, later Jaruzelsky ...

we struck, sobbing. ...

Our strength chewed up, our lightness swallowed,  
our friendliness gone, our being-young,  
our nonchalance, the good feeling.  
But we knew where the dictatorship's Achilles heel was,  
and where the leaf lay that made Siegfried vulnerable.

What consequences does it have for our future if,  
in consideration of the crimes of National Socialism,  
the crimes of "actually existing socialism" are ignored.\*\*

It is unthinkable that two dictatorships in Germany have nothing  
to do with each other.

It is unthinkable that the context of justification, also the means,  
measures, and methods, also mental structures, can exist completely  
separated from each other within a small spatial and temporal  
"landscape". It's more probable that the proximity is what  
produces the outcry and the taboo. ... Where to find pity, empathy, from what  
corner, dug up from beneath what thoroughly paved-over streets?

How much of the world of the concentration camp  
is dead and will never return?

How much has returned or is about to return?

What can each one of us do  
so that, in this world threatened by many dangers,  
at least this one is exorcized?

We're in Germany, right?

\* "LTI" was the title of Victor Klemperer's book analyzing *Lingua Tertii Imperii*, the  
language of the Third Reich

Kz was the East German abbreviation for "Kennzeichen", the category numbers, 1.4.1  
to 1.4.3, that the Stasi gave to thousands of names of "political uncertainty factors". In  
a crisis. ...

KZ was the Nazi abbreviation for "Konzentrationslager" (concentration camp).

\*\* "actually existing socialism" is what the Warsaw Pact countries called their  
system, on the theory that, since they were only en route to communism, their deficits  
were not communism's deficits, but the remnants of preceding social orders

ca. 70 million dead at Mao's hand in peacetime

29-46 million dead in the Soviet GULAGs

1-2 million beat to death bestially in Cambodia

Millions tortured, enslaved, murdered in the North Korean concentration camps

Countless biographies broken by East Germany's Stasi "dissolution" measures

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I don't keep quiet

the future can be

shaped only as well  
as the past  
is worked through

\*\*\*\*\*

PAPER, MAKE YOURSELF  
light:

I will  
fold you  
And you  
will fly

As a dove

Very white  
very far  
to the people:

all without  
bombs

Just  
my words  
on board

\*\*\*\*\*

Life  
I wanted to live

run around, go on a trip, laugh, write,  
I wanted children, happiness, good times, success,  
to walk with Lilo on a country lane  
to walk with you on a country lane

...

Somewhere in the distance, behind their walls,  
the interrogator and denouncer pack.  
They conspire, instruct, corrode, but they reach nothing!  
They no longer reach us!

...

Life  
We stand on an open field.  
But they can no longer reach us.

Life  
I wanted to live  
Life