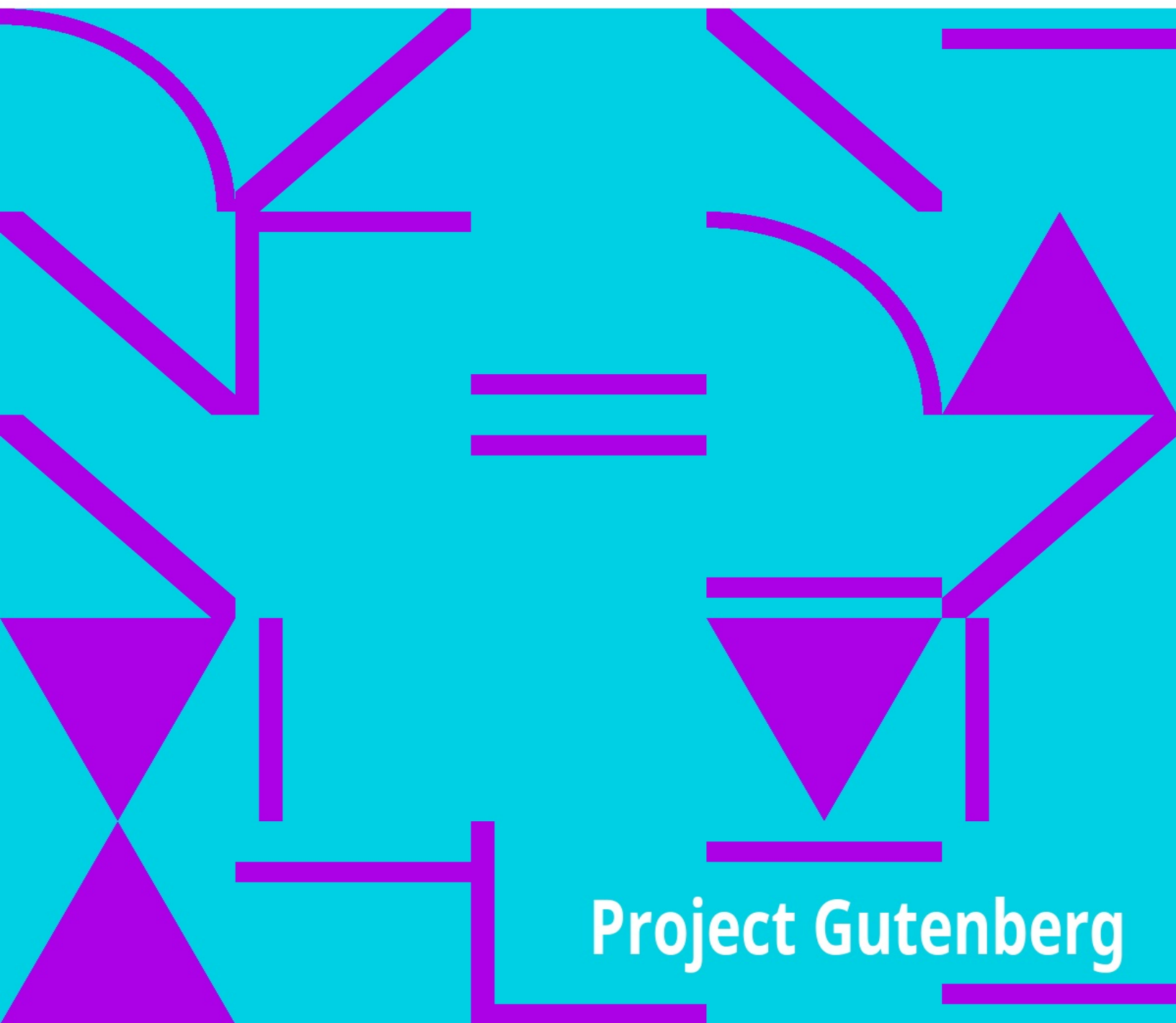


# In Memoriam Ernst Stadler

Kasimir Edschmid



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## *In Memoriam Ernst Stadler.*

Heute weiß ich nichts mehr von seinem Gesicht. Schmerz und Tränen haben es hinweggeschwemmt. Ich kann die Züge nicht mehr zusammenbringen. Sturm geht über die Dächer meiner Stadt und würgt die letzte Brut der Blätter im Gebüsch.

Gestern Abend kam der Schlag und hieb zu.

Gestern Abend kam dein Sterben über den dunklen Flur zu mir herauf.

Ich hatte, als die Anzeige bei mir war, die Lampe gelöscht. Und nun war nichts in meinem Zimmer als dein Tod.

Da sah ich dein Gesicht: der schmale Kopf, ein wenig vorgebeugt, die schöne Stirn mit knapp hineingescheitelt dunklem Haar, der Mund bitter und froh, der die Worte nach den Seiten hinunterstreute und dem Sprechen etwas wie leises Schlürfen gab, und dann der Augen vergeblicher Versuch, den nervösen Vorhang des Gesichtes zu durchbrechen.

Heute weiß ich nichts mehr von diesem Gesicht. Schmerz und Tränen haben es hinweggeschwemmt. Ich bin erschüttert und traurig allein in meinem Haus.

Die dünne Scheibe von zwei Tagen lag noch vor dem Krieg, als ich in sein Haus kam nach einem wilden Morgengang durch die Gärten seiner und meiner Stadt Straßburg. Noch liegt die kleine Karte mit seinem Namen vor mir, noch zittert die schmale Handschrift seiner Einladung auf dem kalten Weiß: Sleidanstraße 27, eine Straße voll Sonne, eine der letzten Barrieren der Stadt vor der entfesselten Süßigkeit der Orangerie.

Auf der Treppe ein Mädchen, das fragt: „Wissen Sie Bescheid?“ Dann der Gang, die Biegung, sein Zimmer mit Büchern, Säbel, halbgepackte Koffer, sein rascher Hereintritt, der schlanke Körper

geschnellt, von vielen Spannungen überflutet . . . . — wie dieses Unscheinbare unvergeßlich ist und aus der Zufälligkeit zurücktaucht in ein umschlossenes Sein. O es ist grausam, wie jedes Wort, wie jede Bewegung in unendliche Beziehungen zusammengefaßt nun vorüberzieht und seltsam schmerzt. Wie ist seine Stimme so nah jetzt, ein Deuten zum Fenster, zufälliges Streichen der Hand übers Haar . . . — und doch nur unfäßliche Leere, an der Zorn und Tränen grenzenlos zerbrechen.

Wir sprachen von den äußersten Peripherien, mit denen wir uns berührten an diesem Tag und zuerst viel von dieser Stadt, die wir beide so über alles liebten. Das Elsaß wird erst später wissen, was es an ihm verloren hat. Es war Selbstverständlichkeit, daß wir von den Herren, die uns nahestehend, schreiben und verlegen, redeten und von der Wissenschaft, die uns stark verband, und es war schön, wie wir von den Rändern unserer Beziehungen hinunterglitten zu den tiefen Brennpunkten innerster Sympathie und aus unzähligen Umwegen zurückschweifend hemmungslos wieder von uns sprachen, ja besonders von uns. Stadlers Leben war in dieser Woche zerrissener, als das der meisten, und die schwere Ungewißheit lähmte ihn da, wo sie ihn später hochriß. Zu viele Dinge, die nebeneinanderlaufend irgendwie in den nächsten Tagen sich vereinigt hätten, stürzten nun fassungslos ineinander.

Er fuhr den Sommer zwischen Brüssel und Straßburg hin und her. Noch in die letzten Tage spielten die Brüsseler Prüfungen hinein. Dazwischen las er in Straßburg zwei Kollegs. Für den ersten September bereitete er seine Reise nach Amerika vor, deren unerhörte nun nahe Weite ihn berauschte. Vor diese Wege, die halb getan waren, fast vor der Vollendung standen und wieder schrankenlos lockend vor ihm lagen, schob sich der Schatten des Kriegs, von dem ich ihn lachend wegzuwenden suchte. Er sagte nicht, daß er an ihn glaube, aber eine böse Spannung hielt ihn vibrierend fest und peinigte ihn innerlich. Er freute sich auf seine noch nicht erschienenen neuübertragenen Verse des Francis Jammes, aber in sein Lächeln fiel

wieder die Sorge um die noch nicht ganz vollendete graue Uniform.

Er sprach von feinen Dingen schlicht und adlig. Nichts war ihm ferner als Ästhetentum. Es kam, daß er strahlend von der Wanderbühne erzählte, die er besonders schützte: einen wilden jungen Schwarm von Kommilitonen und Studentinnen, die auf Leiterwagen das Elsaß durchbrachen und in Buntheit, Jugend und Kostümen den Bauern feste Sachen vorspielten. Wie gerne hätte er sie noch nach Gebweiler gehabt, wo sein Bruder war.

Es gab eine feine Schar wilder Jungens, die ihn mit knabenhafter Ritterlichkeit verehrten. An den Schützengräben aller Fronten, sie werden einen schweren Augenblick aufzucken vor seinem Tod.

Ich hörte noch seine letzte Rede, den Schluß des den Sommer über dauernden Vortrags über die neue Lyrik, den er von den Naturalisten her in die heutige Zeit hinüberzog. Hier zerteilte er den Strom in dreifaches Geäst: Heym, Werfel, Schickele, von denen der letzte seine besondere Liebe war. So wölbte sich über seine letzte Tätigkeit als Gelehrter das breite Fresko unseres Tages in der Kunst, die ihm teuer war und brennende Geliebte, die neben seinem Herzschlag lag und nahe war der großen Schönheit seines Gedichts.

Am ersten Tage der Mobilmachung sollte Ernst Stadler ausrücken. Ich weiß nun, daß ich dicht an der Schwelle dieses reichen Lebens Gefäß gewesen bin manchen späten Frohseins, eines nicht wiederholten Gedenkens, vielleicht letzter Sorge. Wie dies nun nachklingt . . — selten erreichen wir es, und es kostet selbst dann den tiefsten Schmerz, aber dennoch, manchmal Brüder, stehen wir nah an der Grenze der Unendlichkeit.

Wie nun mein Zimmer atemlos durchflossen ist von den langen silbrigen Kaskaden seiner Verse, den Strophen, die wie singende, strahlend geschliffene Degen hineinsausten ins Herz der Welt. In der dunklen Frühe eines der Tage, die gestaltlos hinschwankten zwischen Herbst und Winter, ist er gefallen, jener Tage, die so ganz Traurigkeit sind.

Traf eine Kugel die Brust oder seine schöne Stirn, oder hat ihn der

feurige Schmerz einer Granate ganz hinweggenommen? — Ich weiß es heute nicht, und ich will es nicht wissen. Es ist genug so um die lichte Trauer und nichts soll ihr weh tun.

Denn Sterben ist keineswegs nur Hinweggehen.

Ist Bleiben und Vermächtnis.

Und wer möchte dies Bild ganz ertragen, ohne von ihm beerbt zu sein für unendliches Edele:

Die königliche Schlankheit des jungen Dichters, in fremder und so geliebter Hülle der kriegerischen Geste, den Kopf verschnürt mit Sturmband und gekuppeltem Helm, Säbel und Revolvertasche, grenzenlos verklärt gestorben an einem dunkeln Morgen, als Feuer und blutige Brunst der Schlacht über seinen Traum hinbrach.

Nein, nichts von Blumen oder solchen Dingen. So allein soll nach dem zornigen Schmerz die seltsame Rührung dieses Bildes über uns sein. Und möge uns helfen in dieser Not und die Traurigkeit lösen von dem Zimmer, das ganz voll ist von Tod.

Ich konnte dich nicht Freund nennen. Wir hatten uns nicht lange genug gekannt.

Du bist, reiche Ernte, reichere Verheißung von Dreißig, zu früh gegangen. Es ist so: ich habe selten Tränen gehabt, ich erinnere mich kaum.

Als der Tod des Leutnants Stadler in mein Abendzimmer kam, habe ich wild geweint.

Nun bist du mein Freund. Lebewohl Ernst Stadler. —

Da . . . als wir Abschied nahmen, damals, auf der Gartentreppe seines Hauses, brach Blau des Himmels in alle Fenster. Wolkenwimpel lagen im Weiten endlos. Täubender Sommer schwoll glänzend gegen das Haus.

Wir standen gegenüber.

„Sie werden mir oft nach Kanada schreiben.“

Ich nicke.

Wir sehen uns an. Wir geben uns die Hand.

Doch wie wenig Gegenwart lag auf seinen Lidern.

*Kasimir Edschmid.*

**Anmerkung zur Transkription**

Quelle: Die weißen Blätter, Verlag der weißen Bücher, Leipzig, 1915, pp. 122-124.

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