

Lionel Gossman

# **Brownshirt Princess**

*A Study of the “Nazi Conscience”*

Appendix A2:

*A translation of *Gott in Mir**

Cambridge

OpenBook  
Publishers 

2009



40 Devonshire Road, Cambridge, CB1 2BL, United Kingdom  
<http://www.openbookpublishers.com>

@ 2009 Lionel Gossman

Some rights are reserved. This book is made available under the Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial-No Derivative Works 2.0 UK: England & Wales License. This license allows for copying any part of the work for personal and non-commercial use, providing author attribution is clearly stated. Details of allowances and restrictions are available at:

<http://www.openbookpublishers.com>

This is an Appendix to Lionel Gossman's *Brownshirt Princess. A Study of the "Nazi Conscience"* and is made available as a pdf file only, which can be downloaded free of charge from

<http://www.openbookpublishers.com>

The title itself can be read online free of charge, or printed editions can be purchased, from the same website.

ISBN references for the various editions of *Brownshirt Princess. A Study of the "Nazi Conscience"* are:

ISBN Hardback: 978-1-906924-07-2

ISBN Paperback: 978-1-906924-06-5

ISBN Digital (pdf): 978-1-906924-08-9

Acknowledgment is made to the following for generously permitting use of material in their possession: Archiv Böttcherstraße Bremen; Princeton Theological Seminary Library; Princeton University Library; Marquand Library of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University.

## Appendix A2:

### A translation of *Gott in Mir*

---

The earliest pages with text (numbered 9-15) are presented as autobiographical: the poet reflects on her life and on her struggle to escape her conventional family background and to leave home in search of Truth, Freedom, and a New Life.

P. 9: Wherever I look, nothing but chains – chains and gigantic, unscalable walls. Above everything hangs unrelenting darkness, heavy silence. Not a single ray of sunshine from the high heavens. My suffering does not keep you all from complaining. I know of a land where love and friendship dwell and where joy reigns in springlike warmth over everyday life, where everyone helps the other to bear the burden. Oh, let me leave here without having to beg for permission. I am of no use to you and your faith, and I will not allow my guiding star to be taken from me. Why should I remain any longer among you?

P. 10: How lovely it must have been to dream one's way over there, before weakness became the mistress of my strength, before weariness overwhelmed my mind and baseness triumphed once more. This struggling and suffering undermines all one's courage; seeing the pain of the poor family, hearing their pleas and their threats as they struggle to save their child is so heartbreaking. – But you were endowed with your own free soul! You were made to be the judge of your own self. So you are also free to choose to go away if you so wish. Oh, go, you child of royal birth. It is nobler to die than to live a prisoner.

P. 11: Oh tempt me not! Get thee behind me, Satan! I feel as though the eyes of a world that awaits redemption are on me. If I lay down my arms

and go faint-heartedly from hence, thinking only of my own happiness, it will be a betrayal. From every bush, from every twig and every leaf I hear the anxious whispering of Nature: "Is this soul strong enough in the end to become a victorious conqueror?" No, I must keep faith and bear the burden, I may not think of my own peace and quiet! Great Spirit that floats through the entire Universe, send down new strength to your child, so that she may find the path of thorns that leads to the goal!

P. 12: I was a child, lonely and ignorant, like Parsifal, who set out to seek God. One thing only was grasped by my scarcely awakened mind: that God, to be sure, is Love, but strict and harsh, reconcilable only through the blood of his Son; that beauty is sin, unnaturalness morality; that there are clear boundaries between Right and Wrong. The command "Thou shalt" was to be my guiding star and law.

P. 13: I heard it clearly, and yet, small as I was, it entered my ear, but never my heart. It was as though none of all that concerned me and I continued obstinately to seek my God. Today I stand, after long and fervent struggling in jubilant humility before his throne. The compelling command: "Thou shalt" has become "I will." And this today I know: God is good.

P. 14: I lived a dream-life for so long, not knowing in what direction to turn my wavering steps, so that I might not stumble. Everything I did was trivial, without significance. Often my hands, raised to God in fervent prayer for strength, sank, weary and despairing, to my side; I was a plaything on the ocean of Time. Every wind blew me toward a different shore. And yet a prescient spirit drove me to keep seeking: "Your hour must, must come!"

P. 15: It came. And as a flash of lightning from heaven illuminates a fearfully dark nocturnal landscape, so that the smallest blade of grass can be distinguished, an understanding flashed through my heart: a titanic belief in the God within Man, the God that is first unfolded by the human spirit itself, so that it becomes a blessing, light in the darkness! And so I threw off all weakness and timidity and felt gigantic powers growing in me. The sacred duty, bearing the divine child, did not oppress me: it drew me heavenwards! –

The text now moves toward more general reflections on the difficulty of finding one's true way in a world that fears the light of Truth and jealously guards its habits and conventions. This part of

the poem ends on the evocation of a heroic, rather than suffering Christ.

P. 16: When the Lord sends a human being down from the eternal solar heights, he breaks off a piece of the World Soul, lovingly forms it in his hands until in their gentle warmth it dreamily opens its eyes. And then God tells it in a soft whisper of the mission of redemption that waits to be fulfilled on earth, and says: "How you carry it out, child, let that be entirely left to you. I can only determine the hour when I shall recall the life I gave you, when, delivered from your earthly shell, you will be permitted to return, blissful and free, to your origin, to your father's heart."

P. 17: And on the beloved child's brow he presses the hot glow of a flaming kiss, and the soul sinks into sleep, so that it does not feel the pain of being separated from its luminous star-filled home.

P. 18: There are men and women who wander along their road, strangers and alone, their whole lives long. "Why am I not like all the others?" is the question in their fearful eyes. "How does it come about that I must bear the burning pain of a deep wound in my heart, that no one in my world understands me, and that there is no one to whom I am willing to tell my pain?" Ah, the pain! – I hardly know myself what it is I so ardently long for! A tear often falls from my eye and my entire life is like a dream.

P. 19: These are men and women who have heard the call and who do detect the spirit of God within them, but who are too slothful to bestir themselves and too weak to move toward the goal.

P. 20: There are men and women who, scarcely born yet, have already lost the proud strength needed for struggle and turn only on their own axis. They saunter apathetically and aimlessly through life. These are people who, blinded by earthly desire, have long forgotten their divine mission.

P. 21: I saw men and women who sallied forth and engaged in the struggle for existence with glowing pride. They bore life's hardships playfully because their hearts had already flown far out ahead of them and because they were open to every form of beauty. And at every new bend in their road, they thought that they were about to enter the last stretch – and jubilantly sought to grasp the goal! – – –

P. 22: But the rocks piled ever higher ahead of them, the climb become

steeper and steeper. A deathly silence fell on them. They sought friends and found none. They heard a voice calling from the depths: "Come back, you poor, weary soul. We forgive your youthful error! Blessed is he who can sleep away all pain in his own home. You cannot change the world or lift it off its hinges, take the advice of age and wisdom! Desist from the insane acts of your youthful arrogance and we will welcome you home!"

P. 23: I saw men and women, wending homeward, because the drive toward higher things had abandoned them; men and women who are loved, but hate themselves because they failed to fend off the temptation. Ah, the same thing is true of all of them – that those who at first set out joyfully to work and then, their hand on the plough, looked backwards, are not made for the kingdom of God. – – –

P. 24: I know of one whose magical eyes had strange and mysterious depths. He looked with wonder on the bustle of the world, he put his ear with wonder to his own soul; he did not complain that he was not like the others, only that there was no one around him who resembled him, for where the others saw barren steppes he saw gardens of paradise. One thing alone tormented him and gave him no rest – his incessant seeking and the questioning that never left him: "To what end am I on this earth? What was God's wish when he sent me here?" – And people called him distracted and scolded him as a person of perpetually shifting moods.

P. 25: He took it without complaint and struggled silently within himself. Only one faith kept him going, that a certain memory would return to him. And behold, the memory did return to him. He heard the voice whisper once more the words it spoke at his creation: "Fight for the divine empire of Love." Speechless, shattered, he fell to his knees: "God, my God, where shall I find the strength?" Whereupon he heard the divine voice admonish him gently: "Dear child, the world must otherwise perish!" – Then warm currents coursed through his veins and his spirit turned to fire, his whole soul swelled up in compassion and in humility he proudly took up the burden.

P. 26: But when the stupid people saw that he had suddenly become different, that he knew for sure whither the road led and that this road led away from them, they raged and threatened, pleaded and beseeched him by all that is dear to turn back from his devious path. But he only shook his locks mildly: "Let me be, I must follow the divine voice, for I

am a part taken from it! My soul has been endowed with power over the highest things in heaven and on earth. Oh, you men and women, may you come to understand that you too are parts of God's heart, – not servants, but children of royal birth, – and that you too must travel the same road!" –

P. 27: But they chided him for being an arrogant fool and wrung their hands in anguish. He in turn suffered with them, for he felt that they could never understand him. And most painful to him was that even those who loved him and called him "Master" often tried to make him waver, because they did not understand his sacred duty and feared for his beloved life.

P. 28: The day came when the henchmen took him, and his dearest friend basely betrayed him. And they beat him and scorned him and they hung him on the sinners' wooden cross and did not know how they could inflict enough torture on the hated brother. Calmly and in silence he bore all the suffering. This hour, which his earthly body had feared so strongly, found him invincible.

P. 29: Thus the blind crowd killed Christ himself, the shining messenger of Truth, because they could not bear his love. And he had no anger. He had long known that he would have to suffer such pain in order to bear witness in the world to the splendor of God's glory, before which earthly suffering and joy fade into insignificance. And his dying was so proud and joyful, – for he did not pass over like a poor sinner, but victoriously and regally, with words of holy love on his lips and in the knowledge that it was his own pure strength that had enabled him to follow the road right to the end. –

p. 30: Blank

There follows a meditation on death, which is seen as part of the eternal cycle of becoming, of creation and recreation, and on the important place in life of heroic sacrifice. A virile, decisive religion of struggle and action is called for to replace a passive religion of dreaminess and inaction.

P. 31: When the lord calls such a human soul home to the solar heights, his heart swells in joyful pride that his creature was so splendid, that he remained so free and victorious against a world of hate and temptation, and warmly and fervently he kisses the soul that has come home, sheltering it in his fatherly heart, whence he had once sent it out into the world! – –

P. 32: Blank

P. 33: Grinning, the grim Reaper spoke to the body: "Friend, what is to become of you? Your final hour has come!" "Let me burn, blazing on a funeral pyre, so that the flames rise up all the way to heaven and are seen throughout the land! Even in death, I wish to make a glorious offering to the Spirit, to which I have offered up my entire life, and to which I have dedicated all my strength and all my love!"

P. 34: Blank

P. 35: Grinning, the grim Reaper spoke to the soul: "Friend, what is to become of you? Your final hour has come!" "You who rule only over the transitory, you do not have the power to deal with me! – I return in silence to the world soul, from which a creator's hand once took me and which rests upon the eternal heart of God."

P. 36: Blank

P. 37: Since you lighted the red flame of sacrifice in my heart, so that it can never be extinguished, scorches everything petty, timid, and wavering around me, illuminates, glows, and burns, rising ever higher toward the golden halls of heaven, and brings down your blessing on it – since you lighted the red flame of sacrifice in my heart, I have become lonely as in death, for all the tender wings around me were burned away in its heat.

P. 38: Blank.

P. 39: This is the grandeur of our joyful faith: the undivided mind is offered, the whole heart and every drop of blood are offered in sacrifice for a meaningful life. The slightest movement that trembles in our breast is measured in the gigantic scale of the ages to determine whether it holds up in the eyes of the God. The power to become a bearer of eternal glory has been placed in your hands. You no longer live for yourself. Your own being, with its little pains and little joys is woven into the fabric of this new Earth. Gentle, blissful dreaming has come to an end! Let every word be spoken, let every deed be done in full consciousness of its weight. You are only a workman, and your reward reads: Give of yourself! The only dream that should crown your soul is the miraculous dream of immortality.

P. 40: Blank



P. 41 Away with your weak, moody dreams, your dull, sick symphonies of color, feelings unconscious of their endless vacillating! Away with them. Let a fresh storm wind blow! Let the ideas of your mind be clear, sharply drawn, and the glow of your colors burn bright and shed light! Let a bold and virile spirit enter you all! You were born for struggle, not for dreams.

P. 42: Blank.

P. 43: This is how we should relate to each other: upright and firm in unbowed love, never tiring when we are drawn in by the daily round; strength to strength, unlimited in our demands, for the greater our demands, the higher our energies will grow. We know who is our friend by his marching in step. Yet let us spread our hands tenderly and gently under the weary feet of our weak brothers. The laughter on our lips should not be arrogant. Strength is goodness, not presumptuous boasting. May our entire life radiate goodness.

P. 44: Act with goodness! Not because a Lord on high commanded that we love even our enemies and promised us eternal bliss if we believed his word with childlike faith! Act with goodness! Act not either because we will be met with a tearful look of gratitude from eyes filled with happiness! Woe to them who are so poor and so small that they must be bought by promises of earthly and heavenly reward. No! Act with goodness only out of Titanic inner strength and tireless world-consuming love, out of creative will and joyful strength, which, possessing everything, would give everything away, which does not think about what was and what will be – an unstoppable stream that none can hold back and that springs from the feeling of deepest loneliness: no one would be there to offer similar help! And then, just as after a stormy night a cloudless blue sky unfolds, let oblivion settle in as though no good deed had been done.

P. 45: And let not the heart only feel and the lips only form words. Truly both are good, feeling and words, but they do not require much effort of you. He is great whose heart is so strong that it seals feelings and words with life-enhancing deeds.

P. 46: Yet you can perfect yourself only through your own strength and not through another's. You stand alone! – – That word is like a thunderclap! Learn to understand it and you will grow ever taller! – – As a human, you are a pitiful drop in the huge universal stream. When the drops are fused

into one, how quickly you will be washed away and lose knowledge of your own self. Washed away to where? – Into the deep valley! Learn to understand this and you will grow ever taller! – Do not throw yourself away, warm-hearted child of love! Follow the example of him who trod distant paths and, sanctified from on high, glowed from within. He sojourned among us notwithstanding: alone, and yet bound in love to the world. Be you also alone in the midst of the community! – Learn to understand this and you will grow ever taller! Learn to understand it – and you will fall humbly to your knees! –

P. 47: And let yourself not be driven into narrow ways by the petty quarrelling of the vulgar mass! – What do they know of Right or Duty? They cling to words and to their fears. Fear is cowardly and the word a stolen coin. What you recognized as Right in the dark night when you endured all the earth's sins and, despairing, struggled with your God – – “I will not let you go until you give me your blessing” – that is Right! Be not swayed from that conviction.

P. 48: Yet one more thing – a closing word. Dying is nothing, transitoriness is nothing; it is only a moment, like birthing. Existence is nothing and life is a game, a tiny grain of sand in the divine hourglass of the universe. He alone may lay claim to Being who each day experiences anew ‘dying’ and ‘coming into being,’ – who each day feels anew the great miracle that he has been ordained to bear the sacred torch in pure, sacrificial hands before the people and, while the crowd crawls dully in the dust, to view the eternal goal in its rosy radiance. Let not the sacred flame be extinguished; it will burn your hands only as it goes out – inflicting wounds that, alas, will never heal! – The great light leads the way to the throne of stars, closing the ring, and God's voice speaks[:] in “becoming” – “being” – “dying” – the command to fulfill.