



## ORPHEUS FROM HELL

A selection of songs from the concentration camps performed by  
Aleksander Kulisiewicz

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Jani Kovačič, singer-song writer and prof. of philosophy in Gimnasium Ljubljana, have selected 23 songs by Aleksander Kulisiewicz: 15 songs from the CD Songs from the Depths of Hell (1979), 7 songs from the record Ballads and Broadside: Songs from Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp 1940–1945 (2008), one song from the record Chants de la deportation (Songs of the Deportation, 1975) and one from the book Adresse: Sachsenhausen, Literarische Momentaufnahmen aus den KZ (Address: Sachsenhausen, Literary Records of Moments from the Concentration Camp, 1997). Simona Klemenčič and I translated them from Polish and German. From the records and pre-war recordings, I transcribed the tunes and fitted them with harmonies. Each nation has its own story of pogrom and suffering in the Second World War. This one is from the life of Aleksander Kulisiewicz. Kulisiewicz adapted folk songs and schlager of that era to the situation, the theme and the text. The prisoners also sang these songs in their own way. Last but not least, Kulisiewicz also dictated and wrote down by his memory. He played the guitar, so I also decided to play it myself. I compared the songs to the original tunes and arranged them according to Kulisiewicz's performance. The performance is dedicated to the human will to live and to eternal optimism, though it may seem dark at times.

**Keywords:** Holocaust, concentration camps, Aleksander Kulisiewicz, Orpheus, music, songs, singer-song writer, WWII.

### Introduction - Dark optimism

All the disasters caused by wars are similar. But when faced with the numbers and the amount of the dead, displaced and oppressed, we are astonished. Didn't we learn anything? Is life really worth that little?

The Germans described the war with their bureaucratic accuracy – World War II. These are cold administrative facts. The numbers are horrifying and the suffering so great that it was written into genes. There is no pride in pain. The memories are too painful and the man himself is not capable of bearing them. Is man really the worst thing that can happen to people?

But every war is like this. It is just that no other war has been so accurately documented so far.

All this “unbearable lightness of being”, this restriction of liberty, this apparent security, false well-being, anxiety about the poor who threaten us, fear of fleeing refugees, superficial ad-herence to fascism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, plastic seas ... All this puts us in front of a propaganda wall, where they kill us with commercials and convince us that there is no choice. The spoiled rich people, filled with cocaine, seek excitement, demand adrenaline for their limp senses; they want blood and games of death. From their police-guarded quarters they drop upon us their precious toys, which are operated by soldiers – guardians of their privileges. They want confirmation that they have purchased better destroying machines than their ancestors. Three hundred years of witch-hunting shall happen again, if...

When the masks will fall and the media stops spitting out blotchy fabrications and chameleon lies, we will look back and start to see. We will know that we have found ourselves in a concentration camp, in a lager, in a KZ – in this waiting room of death. The banality of evil will swallow up all written rights. Now we are fencing ourselves and we have voluntarily chosen our oppressors. Are we really that foolish?

And everything Aleksander Kulisiewicz sings about will happen again: charred corpses, cre-mated people, ruined landscapes, poisoned land...

Billions of people have evaporated, their ashes carried by the wind up to the clouds which are nothing else, but a mixture of corpses and the rain is made of their tears. Let them water the soil with the hope that they will not disappear in vain, that something better and smarter will spring from them.

And yet – why despair? We still have the gallows humor and the dark optimism, because if we survive – we will survive!

### **On the music and songs of the concentration camps<sup>1</sup>**

In the records of music in the concentration camps we find an interesting duality: on the one hand, music as consolation and rebellion, but on the other hand, as coercion. The official lager orchestras served the Nazis for their entertainment and for glorification of German songs.

Often, they also made fun of other songs, forcing prisoners to sing them publicly while at the same time deriding them. In doing so, they terrorized the spirit of the prisoners, seeking to eradicate the power of the memory of domestic habits and

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<sup>1</sup> I [Jani Kovačič] would like to draw your attention to the remarkable work of the Italian musicologist and tireless collector of music produced in the lagers–FRANCESCO LOTORO (1963). In the KZ MUSIK Collection (Encyclopedia of Music Composed in Lagers, Lotoro&others, Musikstrasse-Membran, 2011), with the help of his wife, GRAZIA TIRITIELLO, he performed a truly fascinating oeuvre of music produced in concentration camps on 24 CDs, which he recorded with various ensembles.

places<sup>2</sup>. That is why the rebellious song was kept hidden and was only nurtured at illegal meetings.

- To begin with, they wanted to preserve the memory of the folk songs, as it was the only thing they brought with them<sup>3</sup>.
- Singing in secret was the next level<sup>4</sup>.
- Writing texts on old tunes about life in the concentration camp was the next step, which already represented raising awareness of the prisoners and their quiet rebellion.
- As the highest level, I consider newly written poems about the struggle for survival, of both mind and body.
- Alexander Kulisiewicz represents precisely these two highest levels of resistance.

### **Aleksander Kulisiewicz**

Alexander Tytus Kulisiewicz (1918–1982) was a talented singer, writer and performer who was imprisoned for more than five years at the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp near Berlin. As a witness and a victim of the Nazi concentration camps, Alexander Kulisiewicz created, collected and preserved one of the largest collections of music and songs from the Nazi camps.

He has composed at least 54 songs himself. This remarkable collection touches upon the fundamental existential themes of life and is important and valuable not only to musicians but also to researchers of contemporary European history, as well as to musicologists and historians of pogrom in the World War II and the Holocaust.

Alexander Kulisiewicz was born in 1918 in Krakow, Poland. The family then moved to the village of Karwin. His mother died in 1922 when he was barely four years old. He later moved to Cieszyn along the Czech border together with his father, where he spent most of his youth.

From early childhood, he was interested in music. He started playing the violin at the age of seven. Almost a year later, he discovered Gypsy music which deeply

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<sup>2</sup> BRAUER, JULIANE, How Can Music Be Torturous?: Music in Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camps, *Music & Politics*, <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/mp/9460447.0010.103?view=text;rgn=main>.

<sup>3</sup> An example: At the time, sixteen-year-old JUSTINA MAROLT was writing down Slovene folk songs in her secret notebook. The notebook entitled *Pesmarica slovenskih pesmi* [A Songbook of Slovenian Songs] is kept at NUK. Available at d-lib: <https://www.dlib.si/results/?euapi=1&query=%27keywords%3djustina+marolt%27&sort-Dir=ASC&sort=date&pageSize=25>

<sup>4</sup> GUIDO FACKLER writes about orchestras and choirs in his articles: *Des Lagers Stimme – Musik im KZ*, pp. 130-151 (1933–1936), 157-161 (choirs), 329-340 (1936–1945); and *Lied und Gesang im KZ, Lied und populäre Kultur* [Song and Popular Culture. *Jahrbuch des deutschen Volksliedsarchivs* 46 (2001), pp. 139-196. English translation in *Music & Politics*: <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/mp/9460447.0001.102/--music-in-concentration-camps-1933-1945?rgn=-main;view=fulltext>.

impressed and fascinated him. This marked all of his continued activity and his pleasure in performing the then popular and folk music. He started performing with a local Roma ensemble. In an accident in 1928, electricity burned the fingers on his left arm, making him no longer able to play the violin. He even forgot to speak at the time due to severe shock and was stuttering extremely hard. He was treated by a Romanian hypnotist, who told him: "You will speak, you will recite, but you will have to try at least twice as hard as the others. Write it down first, and then remember it. Repeat out loud and in your mind and you will no longer stutter." This method and singing helped him to speak again. Thus, he managed to train his memory to an incredible extent which earned him the reputation of a living archive in the concentration camp.

Because he could no longer play the violin, Kulisiewicz became good at "artistic whistling," a skill that was highly regarded by the audience at the time, and performed on stages across Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Austria. After graduating from high school in 1936, he travelled with a group of friends and classmates to the Balkans, and then returned to Poland. In 1937, he began studying law at Jagiellonian University in Krakow. He loved to perform for which he used every opportunity and spent more and more time singing. He had a talent for imitation as he could interpret quite well the various vocal styles of the then popular Polish singers from Mieczysław Fogg to Tadeusz Faliszewski. Imitation also earned him his first engagements at the Bagatel Theater in Krakow and even a singing role in the Belgian documentary *Les noires d'sirent*.<sup>5</sup> His theatrical appearances were increasingly frequent, so he took on the nickname of Alex Alikuli. The summer before the outbreak of World War II, Kulisiewicz joined a travelling circus. He fell in love with a handsome teenager from the circus and in order to be as close to her as possible he worked as a clown helper. Shortly after the German occupation of Poland in September 1939, he was imprisoned by the Gestapo in October for an anti-fascist article published in the student newspaper ZPDM (Związek Polskie Młodzieży Demokratycznej). His exclamation, "Heil Butter, genug Hitler!" [Hail butter, enough of Hitler!]<sup>6</sup> reflects Kulisiewicz's anti-Nazi belief. When he was 22 years old, he was imprisoned and tortured by the Gestapo and then deported to Sachsenhausen in Spring of 1940. At the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp, Kulisiewicz became a concentration camp troubadour – Lager singer – poet, actor and composer. There, Kulisiewicz collected and sang mostly songs of rebellion which depict in a sharp vocabulary the shameful images of inhumanity that exposed the grotesque conditions in the Nazi concentration camps. His repertoire also included ballads that often described his native Poland in a nostalgic and patriotic manner. He had a remarkable sense of humour which saved him in the most difficult moments. This was also the reason that he proclaimed himself a clairvoyant, a mystic and prophesied defeat of the Nazi oppressors in a feat of crazy courage. With his singing, he defied the terror and

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<sup>5</sup> I [Jani Kovačič] have not found any information about the documentary *Les noires d'sirent* (probably made in 1937–8) so far.

<sup>6</sup> A. KULISIEWICZ: *Adresse: Sachsenhausen ...*, p.14.

hopelessness in the concentration camp. His songs were performed at secret and illegal meetings, helping prisoners to cope with hunger and despair, raising morale and sparking hope for survival.<sup>7</sup>

In addition to these spiritual and psychological reasons, Kulisiewicz was convinced that a concentration camp song was a document. "In the concentration camp," he wrote, "in all circumstances, I tried to create verses that would serve as direct poetic reportage. I used memory as a living archive. Friends came to me and dictated their songs."<sup>8</sup>

The decisive moment for him at the concentration camp came when he met the Polish-Jewish choirmaster Rosebery d'Arguto, which was the artistic name of Martin Rozenberg.<sup>9</sup> At the time, he finally decided to be a "reminder," a witness and collector of concentration camp songs.

When Kulisiewicz first heard the clandestine performance of d'Arguto's Jüdischer Todessang (a parody of an old Yiddish song), he was thrilled and shocked. He promised him that he would remember the song and sing it wherever possible if he survived. Thus, he committed himself to his mission.

He spent six years of horror in the concentration camp. Let me just mention an episode from 1943, when he was injected with the diphtheria bacillus as part of scientific experiments.

Afterwards, the doctors "neutralized" the consequences at the hospital. Such events in the camp resulted in songs full of gallows humour and black humour, of sensitivity toward fellow human beings and a strong desire to survive.

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<sup>7</sup> After the war, the composer SZYMON LAKS (1901–1983) conducted a concentration camp orchestra in Birkenau from 1942–44, in order to survive. He described this in a book with REN. COUDY: *Musiques d'un autre monde*, Paris 1948. (Polish translation *Gry oświęcimskie*, Oświęcim 1998.) Because he was forced to play in a concentration camp orchestra, he saw nothing liberating and heroic in music, but only a struggle for bare survival – music is subject to force. To him, it was all a grossly irrational grotesque. Kulisiewicz believes in the survival power of music. Interesting consideration: A trained musician loses faith in music, but a traveling musician doesn't? This dilemma pervades many articles on the subject (e.g.: BARTOSZ DĄBROWSKI: *Kategoria groteski w opisach muzyki z obozów koncentracyjnych "Gry oświęcimskie"* Szymona Laksa, *Narracje o Zagładzie*, Katowice 2016, no. 2.) PASCAL QUIGNARD (1948) also mentions Laks and Primo Levi in his book *Hatred of Music (Sovražstvo do glasbe, Študentska založba, Ljubljana 2005, p.127-152)*, who calls this music hellish. Kulisiewicz believes in the survival power of music. Interesting Consideration: A trained musician loses faith in music, but a traveling musician doesn't? In Slovenia, doctor JANKOKOSTNAPHEL (1924–2011) dealt with these problems of war traumas in Slovenia. Let me just mention *Zakaj vojna (Why War, 2007)* in *Z vojno po vojni (With War After War, 1994)*.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.ushmm.org/collections/the-museums-collections/collections-highlights/music-of-the-holocaust-highlights-from-the-collection/music-of-the-holocaust/aleksander-kulisiewicz> (23 May 2019).

<sup>9</sup> ROSEBERY D'ARGUTO – MARTIN MOSZEK ROZENBERG (1890–1943) was a pre-war choirmaster in Berlin. Due to his socialist views and Jewish origins, he was arrested and imprisoned in 1939. In 1943, he was killed in a gas chamber.

The concentration camp songs ridiculed the Dance of Death – *d.nse mac.bre* – strengthening the will to survive and the psychological stability of the detainees. Purification of songs of its ironic, satirical, grotesque, obscene and primitive terms as well as metaphors robs the song of its directness and paints the Lager as an idyllic camp rather than as a cruel prison.

“If you delete these terms, all the suffering of the prisoners was in vain.” stated the writer Adolf Gawalewicz<sup>10</sup> in 1968.

Alexander Kulisiewicz was freed on 2 May 1945, during the march of death, as they called the forced evacuation from Sachsenhausen. After his release, he remembered his songs, but most of all those he had learned from other prisoners. He dictated all this to the nurses when he was lying in a hospital in Krakow immediately after the war due to tuberculosis. The sisters filled seven hundred pages (the information mentions 716 pages) with songs, recitations, stories, names, anecdotes and music in the languages that were spoken and mixing in the concentration camp. Of course, most of them were in Polish, but also in German, followed by Yiddish, Czech, Russian, Italian... in short, in all the languages spoken in the concentration camp Babylon.

Kulisiewicz survived and recovered. He married, had children and got a job as a Prague correspondent for the Warsaw newspaper *Dziennik Polski*. But as he himself often said – “he never left the camp.” The images and sounds of the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp haunted him, and so he began to gather materials and put together a library of literature and artistic expression of various genres and forms in concentration camps. In contact with the survivors, he collected their testimonies and, in particular, the poems.

In the 1960s, he joined Polish researchers Jozef Ligęzaj and Jan Tacini in a project to collect written and recorded interviews with former prisoners about music in concentration camps. He also held a series of public recitals, radio broadcasts and recordings featuring a repertoire of prisoners’ songs which he greatly expanded to cover material from at least a dozen Nazi camps. Kulisiewicz’s monumental study on the cultural life of the concentration camps and the important role played by music for the survival of many prisoners was published only after his death. The archive he created is the largest collection of music produced in the Nazi concentration camps and is now part of the archives of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C.

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<sup>10</sup> In his article *Polish Camp Songs, 1939–45*, A. KULISIEWICZ cites the writer ADOLF GAWALEWICZ (1916–87) and his book *Refleksje z poczekalni do gazu: ze wspomnień muzułmana* [Memories from the Crematorium Waiting Room], Krakow, 1968, as well as the typescript which is kept in the archives of the Gedenkstätte und Museum Sachsenhausen museum.

According to some sources, his archive includes 52,000 meters of recorder tapes, 13,000 pages of documents, 10,000 micro films, memories, secret correspondence, and especially Polish songs and songs from deportation.<sup>11</sup>

He has performed extensively – from Rome to Moscow, from Tokyo, London to Mexico. According to his testimony, he also performed in the former Yugoslavia. But most often in the then DDR – East Germany. He made many appearances after the war, as he considered it to be his mission. Alexander Kulisiewicz himself stated: "I do not sing for money or for glory. I only execute the will of my unhappy comrades whose voice has been killed in the hell of Nazi concentration camps. I heartily wish and fight that never again and nowhere in the world will songs be created such as Burning Mother or Lullaby for a Son in the Crematorium."<sup>12</sup>

In 1965, he had an extremely successful tour of Italy. First in Bologna and then in Turin, where 60,000 people gathered for the 20th anniversary of the victory over fascism at Piazza SanCarlo. There were two high-profile appearances in West Germany, at the Burg Waldeck Festival in 1967 and at the Internationale Essener Songtage international festival (IEST 68) in 1968. It was not until 1969 that he held his first concert in Poland in Gdansk, although in 1964 some of his songs were recorded by the Warsaw radio. This happened thanks to the Academy of Arts of the DDR (Akademie der Kunst – AdK, DDR) which at the time was collecting poems produced during the war, as evidenced by the correspondence between them and the Warsaw radio. Eight documentaries have been made about Alexander Kulisiewicz (Soviets /1971/, Czechs, Swedes and Germans)<sup>13</sup>. He toured Europe and fully committed himself to the mission and fulfilment of the oath he had given to his dead fellow sufferers in the Nazi concentration camps. He concludes his biography as follows: "I live and work for the millions killed by fascism. I will fight to the last tone, as long as I am able to hear it."<sup>14</sup>

### ***About Orpheus from Hell***

Poland was the first victim of Nazi Germany in 1939. The ruthless confrontation with political opponents and the racially impure ended in concentration camps. Aleksander Kulisiewicz was among them. In my research of sources, I was surprised by the lack of Polish sources. Even the survey of connections accessible to me and my

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<sup>11</sup> A more detailed inventory is available at:

[https://www.ushmm.org/search/results.php?q=Kulisiewicz%2C+Aleksander&q\\_\\_src=&q\\_\\_grp=&q\\_\\_typ=&q\\_\\_mty=&q\\_\\_sty=&q\\_\\_lng=&max\\_page\\_docs=25&start\\_doc=1](https://www.ushmm.org/search/results.php?q=Kulisiewicz%2C+Aleksander&q__src=&q__grp=&q__typ=&q__mty=&q__sty=&q__lng=&max_page_docs=25&start_doc=1) (23 May 2019).

<sup>12</sup> A. KULISIEWICZ has repeated this thought many times in interviews and records. For example: A.KULISIEWICZ: Addressee: Sachsenhausen ... p.168. Broadcast on the BBC: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/w3csy58x>.

<sup>13</sup> I [Jani Kovačič] was unable to find more information on the matter. A more in-depth research would probably have uncovered these documentaries:

[https://www.ushmm.org/search/results.php?q=Kulisiewicz%2C+Aleksander&q\\_\\_src=&q\\_\\_grp=&q\\_\\_typ=&q\\_\\_mty=&q\\_\\_sty=&q\\_\\_lng=&max\\_page\\_docs=25&start\\_doc=1](https://www.ushmm.org/search/results.php?q=Kulisiewicz%2C+Aleksander&q__src=&q__grp=&q__typ=&q__mty=&q__sty=&q__lng=&max_page_docs=25&start_doc=1) (June 2019).

<sup>14</sup> A. KULISIEWICZ: Addressee: Sachsenhausen ... p.38.

acquaintances did not bear fruit. Not even the people who were supposed to deal with this period knew him. The Jews have contributed the most in this area, and therefore their suffering is best known. However, the tenths of millions of Slavic victims of this pogrom slowly fade into historical memory. Are we mute? Are all these nameless victims really in vain? I myself have drawn from German, Italian, American and English sources. We need to talk about these pogroms, but without sentimentality and Weltschmerz. If we want to prevent the eternal returning of war, we cannot be emotional, but we must be wise.

### **Songs**

1. Konzentrak / Lager [Concentration Camp], melody by Jan Stefani, text by Aleksander Kulisiewicz, translated by Simona Klemenčič

1  
Konzentrak wredny, wredny pies.  
Diabelska jego sława!  
Ach, na c.z trupom pański gest,  
w pasiaku wszystko chała!  
Dyplomu tu nie trzeba,  
i biskup scheisshaus zamiata.  
Czyś ciura czy generał,  
(Cha cha! cha cha cha!...)  
nie będziesz pępkiem świata.  
(Hm...hm...hm...)  
I biskup scheisshaus zamiata  
i ja też zamiatam!  
Jumpą, dididą, dididą, dididą  
Jumpą, dididą, jum-pą!  
Czyś ciura – czy generał,  
nie będziesz pępkiem świata!

Prisoners in the Nazi concentration camps included many aristocrats, generals, bishops, and high officials of the church and state. The satire on equality was written in 1940 or 1942 at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. The song oozes with sarcasm on equality in those miserable conditions and it was first performed in a secret meeting to which once important individuals were invited, who, like all other prisoners, were dressed in camp rags. Among them was the Dutch general Eugen van Strick.

Interpretations of certain terms used: scheissenhaus – latrine, toilet, literally: shitehouse; purš – servant, man servant to a military officer; pucflek – dependent man, servant.



2. Graue Kolonnen / Siva kolona [Grey Columns], melody after Fritz Sotke's Wilde Gesellen, text by unknown prisoner (perhaps Ernst Busch), translated by Jani Kovačič

1

Graue Kolonnen ziehen ins Moor,  
Arbeiterreihen ohne Ende.  
Posten zur Seite, Posten davor,  
Posten am Zugesende.

2

Geht auch der Tod uns dauernd zur Seit',  
Geht es auch drüber und drunter,  
Braust auch der Wind durch finstere Heid',  
Uns geht die Sonne nicht unter.

3

Fern von der Heimat, dem Freundeskreis,  
Trennen uns Draht und Gel.nde;  
Und doch spüren wir erdenweit  
Helfende Bruderh.nde.

4

Geht auch im einsamen Moor unsre Strass'  
Endlos bergauf und bergrunter,  
Keiner von uns die Heimat vergass  
Uns geht die Sonne nicht unter.

5

Graue Kolonnen ziehen ins Moor,  
Arbeiterreihen ohne Ende.  
Posten zur Seite, Posten davor,  
Posten am Zugesende.

6

Doch strahlt im Osten uns ein Morgenrot,  
Aufleuchtend hell, wie ein Wunder,  
Kündet uns allen ein Ende der Not.  
Uns geht die Sonne nicht unter!

It is probably a song of the prisoners of the first Nazi concentration camps. The melody was taken from the then known and popular Wilde Gesellen [The Wild Ones] by Fritz Sotke, composed in 1921. Originally intended for the Jugendbewegung (German Youth Movement). Sotke later became an ardent Nazi and leader of the Hitlerjugend. The verse was also used to name the collection of poems for the Nazi Youth School (Uns geht die Sonne nicht unter: Lieder der Hitler-Jugend [The Sun Never Sets for Us: Hitler Youth songs]). Its "parallel history" as a song of rebellion or as a basis for songs

of rebellion begins with the first Nazi concentration camps such as Oranienburg, B. rgermoor, Papenburg ... The comparison with Die Moorsoldaten (B. rgermoorlied; Das Moorlied) is obvious. The famous German actor and a sworn anti-Nazi Ernst Busch (1900–1980), who fought in Spain in the Th. Imann Brigade, labeled the revised Wilde Gesellen as a rework. Above all, all reworks removed anti-Semitic verse from the original. The Kulisiewicz version is, of course, a variation of Sotke's tune. There are also several variants of the text. It is exactly this poem that highlights the prisoners' sarcasm towards the Nazi's frequent and humiliating coercing to sing, because sarcasm remained the only weapon in the camp's existential nonsense.

3. Szymon Ohm / Šimon Ohm, melody after a Polish-Yiddish folk song, text by Leszek N. Translated by Simona Klemenčič

1

Na Nalewkach mieszkał Szymon Ohm  
Stary, siwy – handel trzymał on  
Co dzień w synagodze  
wielbił Jahwe srodze  
A trefnego nie jadł wcale on

2

A raz się zlitował dobry B.g  
Zesłał mu c. reczkę w jego pr.g  
Na imie Rachele o tak cudnym cieie  
Że się ubiegało chłopc.w stu

3

I spiewali  
Rachele, ty moje bombele,  
Wybieraj z nas jednego p.ki czas!  
Bo usta tve jak mak  
Dla chłopc.w mają smak  
I na Nalewkach wyśpiewują  
Oj-laj, laj, laj,  
Laj laj, laj laj  
Oj-laj, laj, laj,  
Laj laj...laj...

4

Aż pewnego razu nastał czas  
Na Nalewkach wojna, wojna - wrzask!  
Trwoga – rajwach – trwoga!  
Getto, głod, pożoga!  
Rachele umiera, słodki ptak  
Joj...meczyje

5  
Rachele, ty moje bombele,  
Bombele moje!  
Przepi.reczko ma  
Twe usta tak jak mak  
I milczą,  
milczą-ach!

In late 1939, Leszek N. (last name unknown), son of a wealthy Warsaw industrialist who hated Jews before the war, fell in love with the Jewish girl Rah.la from the poorest Warsaw district, Nalewki. He affectionately called her bombela which in Yiddish probably means a tassel. When all Jews were imprisoned in the ghetto in 1940, the young Pole, without his father knowing, obtained false Aryan documents for Rah.la and her family. However, he was betrayed and sent to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. Leszek had a deep, sonorous baritone voice. He often sang a song for friends, based on the Yiddish folksong by Szymon Ohm, which he learned before his captivity. In April 1943, when the news of the tragic end of the Warsaw ghetto uprising spread, Leszek desperately added the second stanza. In March 1945, a group of prisoners dug up unexploded Allied bombs in Berlin's Lichterfeld district. He was killed by an explosion of one of the bombs.

4. Im Walde von Sachsenhausen /V gozdovih krog Sachsenhausna [In the Forest of Sachsenhausen], melody after a Russian folk song, text by unknown prisoner, translated by Jani Kovačič

1  
Im Walde von Sachsenhausen  
Ein Barackenlager steht  
Hier warten einige Tausend  
Dass die Schutzhaft zu Ende geht  
Hier warten einige Tausend  
Dass die Schutzhaft zu Ende geht  
2  
Wir sind schon lange gefangen  
Waren erst im festen Bau  
In uns allen lebt das Verlangen  
Nach Hause zu Kindern und Frau  
In uns alle lebt das Verlangen  
Nach Hause zu Kindern und Frau.

The melody dates from 1936. In 1942, when Russian prisoners of war began arriving in Sachsenhausen, they have edited the Russian folk song lyrics and added many new verses. Interestingly, Kulisiewicz remembered the German version he also

sang. The song was considered one of the favorites among the concentration camp prisoners in Sachsenhausen. In the German version, the song has several stanzas (see, for example, Volksliederarchiv); Kulisiewicz sang only two of them for the record.

5. Muselman – Kippensammler / Muzelman – Čikober [Muselmann, butt collector], melody is a variation of Zulejka (Szanghai) by Menashe Mieczysław Oppenheim, text by Alexander Kulisiewicz, translated by Simona Klemenčič

1

Laszek jestem ja poganin,  
Wszyscy mnie tu maja za nic,  
Poga-poga-poganiaja mna...  
KtataH!

A ja zasie, mily draniu,

Mam ich w d-dużym p-powazianiu,  
W du-du-d-du-du...w

dużym powazianiu ich mam....  
KtataH!

2

Z przodu ja mam winkiel czerwony,  
Z tytu ziGtty-ten! — sraken-kreuz!

3

Muzulman, muzulman,  
W morde bym ci dat:  
Kippy zbierasz pan!  
Muzulman, muzulman,  
Kopnieć mabo, duzo chleba,  
Že sie zežrečani nie da.  
Hei -li, hei-li, esiu- esiu !  
Trajluj dali fihr-esiu....  
Bože, czyž mi zle?!

4

Cholera, psiakrew  
Na mego vorarbeitra!  
Niech go ma krew zaleje dzis!  
Muzulman, muzulman,  
Jakiš wielki pan,  
Jakiš wielki pan.

5

Za drutami stotice swieci,  
Za drutami skacza dzieci,  
A na drutach czarny, smutny trup ....

U-u uuu...

Cienki jestem, cieniuteniki  
I lekutki, gtupiusientki,  
W brzuchu burcza puste flaki — tu  
U-u uuu!

6

Može jestes ty Italiano,  
Može lwan lub Moisie ty?

7

Muzulman, muzulman!  
Bracie, pyska daj —  
Bracie biedny moj.  
Muzulman, muzulman,  
Oczy gasna, wargi sine,  
Z dziecka-popigl! ...Boga nie ma!  
Hopaj - siupaj, potamaficze,  
J-jupaj-siupaj! Jo se tarice!  
Rzygam ciepta krwia.

8

Patrzycie na mnie,  
Patrzycie ludzie —  
I posrod ludzi ... Podty m6j skon.  
Muzulman, muzulman,  
Mama, moja mama,  
Cicho umrzeč daj.

Muselman (also Musselman; plural: Muselmänner) literally means a Muslim. In Auschwitz, the word acquired a specific meaning and it was used for those who have constantly bowed, either picking up cigarette butts or in expressing humility and subordination. These were desperate men who no longer had the will to live – the living dead – in short, strangers to all who have painfully strived to survive. Such prisoners failed to work and lost all sense of reality. The Germans considered them to be nothing but ballast that needed to be disposed of. The Italian writer and chemist Primo Levi (1919–1987) de-scribed them as weak, exhausted and doomed. A Muselman was inert and dehumanized; he didn't care what would happen to him. He usually refused food and thus starved himself to death. He was without memory and immensely desperate, as if unconscious. They were called Asozial und Arbeitsscheu [Aso-cial – unsociable and indolent] but their camp designation (Ger.: Winkel) was usually a black triangle. The

harsh satire that Kulisiewicz calls a “tragic parody” refers to a prisoner he knew. He was otherwise marked with a red triangle, which meant a political prisoner, and a yellow Jewish sign. At that time, the camp seemed to him like a topsy-turvy circus full of sadists and disturbed persons.

He called the melody “Shanghai Tune,” because that’s what they called this tango-slow fox trot-orientale before the war. The melody reminded him of his youthful days when he worked in a circus, as a performer in the following act: he was a clown lying dead on the floor while another clown hit him with a huge rubber hammer and made him jump up – a classic circus gag. His fellow prisoners in the camp seemed like these clowns to him, except that the violence was real and “no one had to pretend to be dead.” The melody itself was known as Zulejka or, more specifically, Zulejka – hanum attributed to Menashe Miec-zysław Oppenheim. It was created in 1935/6 and was written in Polish by Wiktor Friedwald. The song was thoroughly adapted by Kulisiewicz and was first performed in July 1940, in Cell Block 65. In 1943, several hundred Italians were brought and at that time this version of the song was produced.

6. Mister C / Mister Č, melody and lyrics by Aleksander Kulisiewicz, translated by Simona Klemenčič

1

Roczek wtóry, mój ty Boże,  
Bryka sobie Hakenkreuz.  
Żadna siła go nie zmoże,  
Bo inaczej, to – Kniebeug!

2

Taki strasznie wielki Führer,  
Taki z pędzłem Räuber-goj,  
We łbie pluszczą mu pomyje,  
Blödes Volk mu ryczy: Heil!

3

A Mister C cygaro pali,  
Mister C cygaro ćmi,  
Europa się nań wali,  
A on giełdę ma i spleen.

4

Mister C cygaro stłumi,  
Adolfowi plunie w “Sieg”,  
Pogrzeb fundnie mu na Rugii,  
Może w dziewięćset czterdzieści trzy.

5

Może, ach, może...ach, może,  
Oj, któż to wiedzieć może?  
Morze głębokie, nieboże,  
Angielskie zwłaszcza morze.  
(Dunkerque! Dunkerque!)

6

Jum-pą tiu, di di di, di di di,  
Jum-pą day, di di di you!  
Może, może — któż to wiedzieć może? Może wschodni wietrzyk mu pomoże?

Winston Churchill (1874-1965), the British prime minister known for his cigar smoking, was personified as Europe's last hope of stopping and defeating the Germans after the fall of France and before the United States entered World War II. Shortly after the news of the Allied evacuation from Dunkerque reached Sachsenhausen in May 1940, Kulisiewicz first sang the song Mister C at a random music evening in Cell Block 3, where he performed it in several languages, according to his own accord. Kulisiewicz remembers pantomime rowing and whispering "Dunkerque" while performing the last verse of the song. The phrase "breeze from the East" in the last verse mentions the possible assistance of the Soviet Union, even though the Hitler-Stalin Pact or the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact was still in force at the time. The reference to the German Baltic island of Rügen (Latin: Rugia, Slavic Rujan) recalls the ancient conflict between Slavic and German interests in this border area.

Some more translations for the younger ones: Hakenkreuz – a crooked cross; Kniebeug(e) – kneeling, bending the knee; firer/Führer – leader; räuber – robber; goj / goy (Hebrew; plural: goyim) – a nation or all non-Jews, servants who works on holy days what Jews were not allowed to do in those days; räubergoj – servant to robbers, translation in Slovenian is sharper; spleen – fatigue, melancholy, boredom.

7. Hekatomba 1941 [Hecatombe 1941], melody of unknown origin, text by Alexei Sazonov, translated by Simona Klemenčič

1

Żal, żal...żał mój płynie Krematorium czarne dymi  
Ból, ból – ból straszliwy  
Ogień czeka mnie!

2

Hej! Hej! Hej! Bradiagi  
Jam przed śmiercią siny, nagi  
Dym, dym...dym plugawy  
Zdusi łkanie, krzyk

3

Błagam ciebie, matuleńko  
Bym nie zdychał pomaleńku  
Dym, dym...niechaj zdławi  
Was, germańskie psy!

Between 1941 and 1942, more than 18,000 Soviet prisoners of war were killed at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. Among them was a seventeen-year-old volunteer, a car mechanic from Gorky – Alexei Sazonov (≈1925–42). SS assigned him to work at a shoe factory where he was met by Kulisiewicz. At the end of November 1941, the cremated corpses of Sazon's comrades reeked everywhere. Not far from where the Soviet soldiers were killed was the shoe factory. The young Russian knew that he would soon end the same himself. He wrote this song the night before he was dragged into isolation and from there to death. The concentration camp doctor, the prison inmate Stanisław Kelles-Krauz, wrote the original Russian text on scraps of paper bags despite the danger. A few days after Sazonov's death, Alexander Kulisiewicz translated the poem into Polish.

8. Das Todestango / Smrti tango [The Death tango], melody is a variant of Plegaria Tango by Eduardo Bianco from 1930, text by unknown author, written down by Anna Muzycka, translated by Jani Kovačič

1

Hörst du wie die Geige schluchzend spielt?  
Blutig klingen ihre Töne!  
Hörst du wie dein Herz sein Ende fühlt?  
Das Todestango spielt.  
Hab' kein Angst, mein Lieb'!

2

Sand wird deine Leiche decken,  
Sternenkerze dient als Brenner  
und als Polster dient dir nur ein Stein,  
doch glücklich wirst  
du sein so ganz allein

3

Schüsse fallen, Kugeln knallen,  
Segregieren! Gift! Nur spielen  
und der Tod packt dich in Hand,  
d'rum sei fertig und bereit.

Jews are waiting to be executed at the Nazi extermination camp in Lemberg (in Polish, Lwów – then eastern Poland, now part of Ukraine). They were forced by order of SS Lieutenant Stephan Rokita to listen to Plegaria Tango. Plegaria means prayer and



the song in the original speaks of a soul, in short, of death, which is why it was also called Tango de la muerte [Death Tango/Tango of Death]. Some authors state that the author Eduardo Bianco also played this popular tango to Hitler in 1939. The famous fiddler Schatz was forced to play this pre-war tango at the concentration camp. The then prisoner Anna Muzycka remembered this and described this event. She later wrote down the text of an unknown author. The source was Kulisiewicz himself, who remembered the song; he only edited the last verse. The text talks about the conditions in the camp, especially the second stanza. It was this Todestango or Todesfuge that Paul Celan (Paul Antschel, 1920–1970) published in 1948, because quite a few tangos are found under this heading.

\*summarized after: Tango Lessons: Movement, Sound, Image, and Text in Contemporary Practice, p.29.

9. Jüdischer Todessang, oder Zehn Brüder / Judovska posmrtnica ali Deset bratov [Jewish Death Song or Ten Brothers], melody after German-Jewish folk song Zehn Brüder, lyrics by Rosebery d'Arguto (Martin Rozenberg), translated by Jani Kovačič

1

Bom bom bom bom... bom bom bom bom Bom bom bom bom... bom... bom...b  
om Li-lay, li-lay... li-lay  
La-la-la-la-la-la  
Li-lay, li-lay... li-lay  
Bom bom bom bom... bom bom bom bom Bom bom bom bom... bom... bom...  
bom

2

Zehn Brüder waren wir gewesen, haben wir gehandelt mit Wein.  
Einer ist gestorben,  
sind geblieben neun.  
Oy-yoy! ... Oy... yoy!

3

Yidl mit der Fiedel, Tevje mit dem Bass, Sing mir mal ein Liedel, müssen wir ins  
Ga-a-s!Yidl mit der Fiedel, Tevje mit dem Bass, Sing mir mal ein Liedel, Liedel ...  
Müssen wir ins Gas!Ins Gas!  
Ins Ga-a-s!

4

Bom bom bom bom... bom bom bom bom

5

Ein Bruder bin ich nur geblieben,  
mit wem ich weinen soll?  
Die and'ren sind ermordet!  
Denkt ihr an alle neun?

6

Yidl mit der Fiedel,  
Tevje mit dem Bass,  
Hört mein letztes Liedel,  
Ich muss auch ins Ga-a-s!  
Yidl mit der Fiedel  
Tevje mit dem Bass,  
Hört mein letztes Liedel:

7

... Zehn Brüder waren wir gewesen,  
Wir haben keinem weh getan,  
Weh getan.

8

Li-lay, li-lay... li-lay ...

In September 1939, the famous Jewish-Polish composer and choirmaster from Berlin, Rosebery d'Arguto (Martin Moszek Rozenberg, 1890–1943), was sent to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. In 1940, he organized a secret four-part choir, consisting of 25 to 30 prisoners. When the Jews of Sachsenhausen found out in 1942 that they would be "moved" to Auschwitz-Birkenau, which meant certain death, d'Arguto composed a "Jewish obituary" on the tune of an old Yiddish folk chant about Ten Brothers. He purposefully wrote the text in German for other prisoners to understand the song-accusation. At the end of October 1942, 454 Jewish prisoners, including d'Arguto and his choir, were sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau. The next year, they were all executed. Rosebery d'Arguto and this song marked Kulisiewicz the most and guided him to his mission – to be the voice of the people killed in the concentration camps. The folk tune is different from the d'Argut choir adaptation; this is most evident in the introductory onomatopoeitic syllables. Kulisiewicz sings d'Argut's adaptation. Yidl (Jidl) and Tevje are the names of the brothers mentions in the song. In some variants, the name of Moysche appears instead of Tevje.

10. Stoi nocka / Črna noč [Outside stands], melody after Polish folk song text by Zofia Karpińska, translated by Simona Klemenčič

1

Stoi nocka, czas ucieka, kwitną bzy,  
kwitną bzy  
A za siódma górą, rzeką jesteś ty,  
jesteś ty  
Stoi nocka, czas ucieka – wojna trwa,  
wojna trwa,  
Za drutami, za drutami czekam ja  
czekam ja.

2

A ode mnie, ach do ciebie długo tak,  
długo tak,  
Nie doleci, nie dofrunie żaden ptak  
żaden ptak,  
Stoi nocka, czas ucieka – wojna trwa,  
wojna trwa,  
Za drutami, za drutami zdycham ja,  
zdycham ja.

Zofia Karpińska (1908–1973) was a popular poet at the camp, who despite all wrote love songs at the Majdanek concentration camp. One of them is this one which dates to 1943. She was born in Lvov. After the occupation of Poland, she worked in the Polish political underground and was a member of the PPR (Polish Workers' Party). In 1942, she was captured and imprisoned. In 1943, she was interned at the Majdanek concentration camp (near Lublin in eastern Poland), where some of her poems were preserved. In 1944, she was first sent to Auschwitz-Birkenau and then to Ravensbrück. She survived and lived in Warsaw after the war.

11. Czarny Böhm / Črni Böhm [Black Böhm] melody is the concentration camp adaptation of I szumyt, i hudyt (Ruthenian folk song) text by Aleksander Kulisiewicz translated by Simona Klemenčič

1

Czy to w dzień, czy to w noc,  
Trupy wędzę-wesół, hoc!  
Puszczam czarny, czarny dym,  
Bom ja czarny, czarny Böhm.

2

I kobietki i staruszki,  
I dzieciaki chciałbym też,  
Sto kominów bym tu miał,  
So genau jak w Birkenau.

3

Hulaj dusza! Czort-Katiusza!  
Aber Juden sind nicht da!  
ejku, bo w czterdzieści trzy  
I esmany będą szły!  
Cha! Cha! Cha! Cha! Cha!  
4  
Wtenczas zdrów i wtenczas hoc,  
Wędził będę w dzień i w noc.  
Tłusty, tłusty pójdzie dym,  
A z nim....czarny, czarny Böhm

Cha! Cha! Cha! Cha! Cha!

Called "Czarny" / Black / Böhm, Wilhelm Böhm was among the more feared inhabitants of the Sachsenhausen camp. Low and humped, with long monkey arms, the Böhm camp cap was a cremation specialist. Böhm did his job enthusiastically, shouting at passing prisoners: "Come to Böhm! I'll cross your path soon, come know, why not right now!?" Kulisiewicz reports that Böhm helped cremate some 18,000 Soviet prisoners of war killed in Sachsenhausen in the years 1941–1942. He also stated that Böhm probably died of a contagious infection in 1943. Böhm may also mean in German a gypsy, a resident of Bohemia, and consequently day-to-day lifestyles, disregarding social norms.

Kulisiewicz first performed the Czarny Böhm song in a cabaret secretly prepared by prisoners from Cell Block 23 for the New Year 1942.

Birkenau or Auschwitz II was the main killing site and crematorium where at least one million people were murdered in gas cells. Before the end of the war, SS units demolished it to cover up evidence of their crimes. Jews were mainly deported there. The Slovenes were mostly confined to Dachau, Mauthausen and Ravensbrück.

12. Pożegnanie Adolfa ze Światem / Adolfovo slovo od sveta 1943 [Adolf's Farewell to the World] melody Za Ebru falą folk / polish song text by Aleksander Kulisiewicz, translated by Simona Klemenčič

1  
Nad Wołgi falą goniąc Moskala,  
szlachetna trup-pa zwiewała,  
Und immer naprzód, und immer weiter,  
a szkopów Rasijska gnała.

2  
Żegnaj mi Moskwo, żegnaj Samaro,  
mój Leningradzie daleki!  
Oj, jubel minie, kiedy na Krymie  
zerzną mnie w portki na wieki..  
Ja, ja – ist stimmt das ...

3  
Żegnam was góry, góry Uralu  
i ciebie z twoją armadą.  
Ty jesteś Stalin – Stalin ze stali,  
ja jestem impotent – Adolf ...

4

Praszczaj więc wdzięczna mi Europo  
za moją Arbeit und Freude!  
gdzieś w siódmym niebie, pod siódmym płótem,  
–może za żonę cię pojmem.

5

Adieu też wszystkie śwabskie dziewice,  
Któraż mi karty rozłoży?  
Chłopak ja byłem dumny i święty,  
bom nigdy nie cudzo-włożył.

6

Sieg Heil, General mój Gównier-nament,  
dobroci dzieło ogromne.  
Emeryturę sutą dostaniesz  
za goebbelsiowski mój Bromberg.

7

Gitara brzękła, Germania jekła,  
Victoria zmarzła wśród tundry  
a oś Adolfa jak Bardia pękła,  
i został znów bezprizorny...

On 1 May 1944, the Soviet prisoner of war Andrei Sarapkin attended this remarkable recital in Sachsenhausen. He later wrote an article for the Moscow newspaper Izvestia. Here is a short paragraph: "In those days, the whole camp was excited by the news of Russia's victory over the German army at Stalingrad. Aleks sang a wreath of Polish folk songs. Then, as a lightning bolt, he sang Hitler's Farewell to the World. We only found out the title of the song much later. He performed it by tapping his fingers on wooden beams. It's amazing that in the middle of Sachsenhausen, in the realm of Hitler's SS, someone can sing such a song. For every such verse or stanza one was immediately hanged. In the dire conditions of the camp, Aleks's love for song and life turned the poem into a banner and a weapon."

To commemorate the winners at Stalingrad, Kulisiewicz used some Russian words in the lyrics of his poem: "прощай / proshchay – goodbye" means saying goodbye, farewell; "беспризорный / besprizorniy – homeless" is what they called abandoned children living on the streets. In the word "trupa-pa" [troop] stuttering links the "noble" German army (in Polish: trupa [group]) is similar to backside (in Polish: dupa [bottom, ass]). The Russian city of Samara was an important industrial evacuation center during World War II. "Seventh Heaven" alludes to the verse of a sentimental poem popular in Nazi Germany, while Freude und Arbeit [Joy and Work] was the name of a propaganda newspaper published by Germans in several languages (including Polish) in the 1930s. Kulisiewicz changed the title into Arbeit und Freude.

The gawker tries to catch Kulisiewicz's word game Government into Gównernament. Bromberg was the German name for the Polish city of Bydgoszcz, occupied by the Nazis. Bardia is a Libyan port town near the Egyptian border, the scene of the decisive British victory over the Axis powers in November 1942. The withdrawal from North Africa had already signaled a turnaround in the war, but the most devastating was the German military defeat at Stalingrad in February 1943.

13. Zimno, panie! / Zebe, gospod! [It's Cold, Sir!] melody of unknown origin, probably by Aleksander Kulisiewicz. text by Aleksander Kulisiewicz translated by Jani Kovačič

1.

Był sobie prominencik  
na dziadowskim bloku,  
a zwał sie Lulusiński –  
lokaj bez uroku,  
a przy nim pan  
wiadomy hrabia  
Obrabiał otoczenie swe.  
Heissgeliebt er Graf ...

2

Zi- zi- zi- zi- zimno, panie,  
Zi-mno!... Zi-mno!  
Nie - nie-nie- nie- niema chleba,  
Głód-no!... głód-no!

3

Bitte um bischen Zigarette,  
Bitte, ach, bitte, bitte, bi...  
Bitte o ciepłą mą kobite,  
Bitte – wybite oczko lśni.  
Zi-zi- zi- zi- zimno, panie,  
Zimno! ... zi-mno!  
Zi- zi- zi- zi... zi... zi... zi-mno!  
Zi-mno ...

In Sachsenhausen, many upper-class Poles sought to maintain their social benefits by exerting "favors" to the camp's lords. Kulisiewicz names two such prisoners – Lulusiński and a count named Graf – in this short poem from 1944. Both aristocratic denuncians betrayed members of the Polish communist underground and other activists to the Reich Criminal Police Department, leading to the arrest of several prisoners. Apparently, the collaborators denounced Kulisiewicz. He was taken from the barrack in the middle of the night in February 1945. He was interrogated by SS police.

The "Beggars Block" mentioned in the first line of the poem, was the camp designation for a huge barracks in the center of the camp containing 600-800 prisoners. "It's cold, sir. There's no bread," recalled Polish painter Wiktor Siminski (1897–1966) in 1947, who met Kulisiewicz in Sachsenhausen and encouraged him to write down all the memories of camp life. This is how this satire was preserved. Heissgeliebter Graf – dearly-beloved Count; Bitte um bischen Zigarett – Please, one cigarette.

14. Tango Truponoszów / Tango truplonoscev [Corpse-carriers' Tango] melody is a variation of *Po kieliszku* by Wiktor Krupiński, text by Aleksander Kulisiewicz, translated by Simona Klemenčič

1

Ta psiajucha Germania cholerna  
męczy człeka już czwarty rok.  
W krematorium truposzów przypieka;  
Tym to ciepło, milutko – bo ...  
Bo przypieka tam człowiek człowieka,  
ni to piekarz ni rzeźnik to;  
więc do pieca, synalku, nie zwlekaj!  
Immer langsam und sicher und froh!

2

Po szturchańcu pierwszym jest ci lepiej,  
w mordę leją a ty humor masz.  
I kopniaczek trzeci się przylepi,  
a po czwartym...mokre portki, ach!P  
ięciu drani w jedne kopie nery  
i wypluwaj, bracie, zębów sześć!  
Siódmy obcas skacze ci po brzuchu!  
i dopiero wtedy fajno jest.

3

Kostusia śliczna, joj! okey!... biedula bez partnera,  
a że w oczka wpadłeś jej,  
więc oczkiem cię pożera ...  
Do Leichenkeller prosisz ją, wyciągasz giry wnet,  
niedługo pójdzie z ciebie swąd, trupim w czułym tête à tête!

4

Za minutkę, bracie, jesteś w niebie,  
ciepluteńkie pączkifrygasz dwa...  
trzech aniołków w pupcie cie poskrobie  
i wykrzyknie: So ein hübscher Arsch!  
Czwarty anioł, toć milunia Ania  
pięć kielichów wlewa w durny pysk,

Z aniołkami lulaj dziesięcioma,  
lulaj w niebie, lulaj, Ç'est la vie!

When he was quarantined in the barracks between World War II, Kulisiewicz envisioned Tango Trupono-szów [Corpse-carrier's Tango], "in response to an audience that demanded some cheerful music in the camps." The Sachsenhausen morgue was the area of Sonderkommando(s) – prisoners whose special task was to collect and dispose of corpses in the concentration camp. They were also called "Heavenly Orders." "For a complete understanding of the tragic-parodic nature of this poem," Kulisiewicz warned us, "remember that it is a cellar and a dungeon where the corpse carrier, who was also only an inch away from death, was closed with piles of corpses for quite some time." Kulisiewicz borrowed the melody from the pre-war hit song *Po kieliszku* [After Kieliszk] (With a Glass, 1932), popularized by Tadeusz Faliszewski, the 'Polish Al Jolson' (1898–1961). In particular, prisoners who came from the Mauthausen-Gusen camp often asked him to "entertain" them with his songs, among which his adaptation *Po kieliszku – Tango Truponosów* was very popular.

Some unknown words: *Immer langsam, sicher, ja, und froh!* – Slowly, steadily and cheerfully!; *kárner* – ossuary; *Leichenkeller* – mortuary; *tête-a-tête* - head to head, better put: cheek to cheek – but in a figurative sense of confidential, intimate; *So ein hübscher Arsch* – What a beautiful ass; *Ç'est la vie* – That's the way life is.

15. *Kołysanka dla synka w krematorium / Uspavanka za sinka v krematoriju* [Lullaby for for my Little Son in the Crematorium], melody is a variation of Alexander Wertyński's poem, text by Aaron Liebeskind, translated by Simona Klemenčič

1  
Krematorium czarne, głucho ...  
bramy piekieł, trupów stos.  
Śliskie, sztywne ciała włokę,  
osiwiałem w jedną noc.  
Oto synek leży, synek mój,  
małe piąstki w usta wgrzył.  
Jakżeż ciebie w ogień wrzucę tu!  
Złote włoski śliczne twe ...

2  
Lulaj, lulaj – synku mój  
Lulaj, lulaj – synku mój  
Lulaj, lulaj – synku mój Synku mój

3  
Podłe słońce, czemu milczysz?  
Wszak widziałem wszystko tu,



Główkę jego roztrzaskali  
o kamienny, zimny mur.  
Patrzą w niebo ciche oczka twe  
i zastygłe krzyczą łzy.  
Synku! Wszędzie, wszędzie twoja krew!  
A przeżyłeś latka – trzy.  
4  
Lulaj, lulaj – synku mój  
Lulaj, lulaj – synku mój  
Lulaj, lulaj – synku mój  
Synku mój.

Aaron Liebeskind (1918–1942), a young watchmaker from Biłgoraj, Poland, had to witness the murder of his wife Edith and young son in 1942 at the Treblinka camp (at Malkinia Górna by the Bug River in Poland). He asked the crematorium's foreman to let him stay with his son's body the rest of the night. Aaron knelt against his boy's body and sang this lullaby in his mind. He turned grey overnight, aged barely 24. He miraculously managed to escape from Treblinka, but was captured and sent to Sachsenhausen, where he befriended Aleksander Kulisiewicz. Aaron told Alex his story and sang a song in Yiddish which Kulisiewicz translated into Polish. The melody was known in eastern Poland and was composed by the famous Russian song writer Aleksander Wertyński (1889–1957). In Sachsenhausen, Liebeskind sang bass – basso profundo – at Rosebery d'Argut's secret concentration camp choir. Liebeskind was among those Jewish prisoners who were transported to Auschwitz-Birkenau in 1942. He died there in 1942–43, most likely in a gas cell. This song was all that remained after him, in and for his memory.

16. Chorał z piekła dna /Korał z dna pekła / [Chorale from the Depths of Hell]melody by Aleksander Kulisiewicz, text by Leonard Krasnodębski, translated by Jani Kovačič

1  
Słyszcie nasz chorał z piekła dna!  
Niech naszym katom w uszach gra.  
Chorał! Chorał z piekła dna!Niech naszym katom,  
niech naszym katom gra!  
2  
Słyszcie nasz chorał,  
słyszcie nasz chorał z piekła dna!  
Attention! Attention!  
Tu ludzie giną, tu ludzie są!  
Tu ludzie są!

Young poet and journalist from Warsaw, Leonard Krasnodębski (1918–1943), wrote the text to Chorał in 1942 at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. Chorał can mean a chorale – as a genre of song, it can mean a song as well as a choir. Krasnodębski was an assistant at the “hospital” of the camp where Dr. Paul Schmitz tested the effects of new combat toxic gases on prisoners. Krasnodębski witnessed these experiments and knew the consequences. Knowing too much, the SS forced him to commit suicide in 1943.

Kulisiewicz composed the song in October 1944 to commemorate the German-Jewish composer Rosebery d’Argut, who was executed in Auschwitz in 1943. Aleksander first performed the song for his sick colleagues at the camp’s “hospital” where he was treated for temporary blindness.

17. Dziesięć milionów / Deset milijonov [Ten Million]  
unknown authors  
translated by Simona Klemenčič

1  
Dziesięć milionów! Dziesięć milionów!  
Dokoła kolczasty drut  
Za drutem zagnani, za drutem skazani,  
Skazani na niewolę i na głód.

2  
Więźniowie Polacy, Rosjanie, Słowacy  
Francuzi, Hiszpanie i Grek  
Nad taczka schyleni, nad młotem zgarbieni  
czekają na hasło i na zew

3  
By powstać tłumem, uderzyć piorunem,  
Z niewoli w potęgę wzrósć  
Do trumny niemieckiej, do trumny zbójeckiej  
Ostatni wbijemy gwóźdź!

This song was written as an anthem in concentration camps in late 1944. It was banned, of course, but it spread through incredible lager channels. It is not known in which camp it was created, its author is unknown as well. There were already over ten million men, women and children in concentration camps across Europe at that time.

18.1000 kobiet! / 1000 frauen! / 1000 žensk! [1000 Women!], Aleksander Kulisiewicz. translated by Jani Kovačič

I  
Wielki dzien,  
radosny dzieri — —

Wieżniowie czyszcza zżotkce zeby,  
wieżniowie piorg zgrzebne szmaty,  
wieżniowie pojda dzisiaj — pojda! —  
bo:  
wielki dzieri!  
dziś wielki dzieri —  
dziś 1000 kobiet na placu!!...

\*  
Numery maja takie. jak my  
| ptaszeze takie.  
I spodniczki w pasy.

Spodniczki krotkie;  
wzrok szuka kolan,  
wzrok szuka fydek,  
wzrok szuka, szuka ...

natrafia  
na koslawe pokraccnie obcasy.

Nogi? —

Feee! — Toč chude.  
Rozeschte

jak ...

u dorożkarskiej szkapy.

/

Biodra —

jak dawno zapomniane skrzypce,

na których rozkosz nie zagra ...

A piersi mowig i żebrza — i mówia:  
m». bytam dziewczyna —

jestem dziewczyna ...

Otom ja jedna z tysigca —

Syćcież sie!  
Gapcież ..."

bo:

wielki dzien,  
radosny dzieni —

II

Gdyby ci sprawit przyjemnosć  
fakomy pocatunek

cztowieka nieszezesliwego jak ty —  
catowatbym cie dtugo:

za caty 1000;

inie mogtbym patrzeć, że

inne na nas patrza.

Przecietny jestem,  
powszedni —

ale byś data mi site:  
rozpreżytybym ramiona,  
szeroki wgarngt oddech —  
i wtulitbym sie w ciebie  
jak dziecko! —

jak szaleniec!! — —

ty, byle kt8ra z tysigca ...  
Boš moja jest;

bo\$ nasza —  
boš z Polski.

In March 1945, a thousand women came to Sachsenhausen. Some prisoners have not seen a woman for 12 years. And when the first hundred of “half-women, half-skeletons” came in through the entrance, the disappointment was huge. The camp was overcrowded. Most prisoners yearned for rotten potatoes rather than a pretty girl. The “nancy boys”, gay men wearing pink triangles, especially made fun at the time. For them, a woman was a “sexless” dissonance. That’s how Kulisiewicz remembers it. Yet the arrival of starved and slimmed women was a real irony and a mockery of the men’s dreams and memories. The beginning of the song mimics the rhythm of the drums: Ram-ta-ta ... ta-ram ta-ta ... tram-ta-tara-ta ta-ta ... “I listened to the rhythm of the drums, and this invocation was created,” says Kulisiewicz about the opening verses of the poem. The song was not recorded anywhere, so only the text from the German translation from the German translation *Adresse: Sachsenhausen, Literarische Momentaufnahmen aus den KZ* (p. 58) remains. That’s where the translation originates. Subsequently, with the help of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, I also obtained a Polish original of *1000 kobiet* published in the edition *Sachsenhausen. Monument poetycki 1939–1945 [Sachsenhausen. Poetic Diary 1939–1945]*, p. 32.

19. Heil, Sachsenhausen! [Hail, Sachsenhausen!], melody after Polish-Yiddish *Heh Madagascar!* text by Aleksander Kulisiewicz, translated by Simona Klemenčič

1  
Jestem sobie na wpół dziki scheissen Poluś, cham.  
und warum denn do Afryki?  
Tu kolonie mam!  
Kupili cię, chłopie,  
Kupili z gnatami –  
Krew ci z mordy kapie  
Alles Scheiss-egal.

2  
Aj, Sachsenhausen!  
Kolonja gwarna, parna –  
Germania richtig dzika ...  
Heil Sachsenhausen!  
Giry tycie jak bambusik  
trupie śmerdza ... fuj! ... nagnusy!  
Heil, heil, es lebe Kulturkampf!

3

Mädchen sobie zafunduję  
Polaczysko ja  
Gibt's denn so was? ...  
wy bestyje! śliczne oczka  
ma sliczne oczka ma  
Az tej Mädchen-matki  
i z durnego tatki  
będą kindchen w kratki  
schwartz und weiss und rot.

4

Aj, Sachsenhausen! Błogosławiony raj  
wszak wielbi ciebie ludzkość!  
Heil, Sachsenhausen,  
A jak będę jutro zdychał,  
lewą nóżką zafikam:  
Heil, Heil, Es lebe Kulturkampf!

The song was dedicated to the fifteen-year-old Elisabeth (Elsi) Zahn, a young German who fell in love with a Polish prisoner-of-war Jan Kobieli. She smuggled his letters from the concentration camp home. In July 1943, Elsa and her father, Hans Zahn, who was the director of the car park at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in Oranienburg, were caught smuggling these letters. Elsa loved Jan and the song was written at a time when there was still hope for them. But the end of the story was tragic: Elsa was imprisoned and tortured, her father was sent to a concentration camp, and she committed suicide at the Oranienburg prison (near Berlin).

Kulisiewicz wrote the poem in spoken language or rather – in the language of the prisoners. Heil, Sachsenhausen ridicules Nazi "racial" politics, especially the prohibition of racial mixing – Rassenschande [racial impurity]. The Nuremberg Laws of 1935 included the Slavs as "impure". Probably Elza Zahn didn't even know about these racist regulations. But Kulisiewicz was convinced that her sentence was due to the "Rassenschande" and Heil, Sachsenhausen describes exactly that, though commentators, especially German ones, are reserved on the matter, saying that it is not clear what really happened. But no history cares for the little people, anyway.

The Heil, Sachsenhausen melody is based on the Polish-Jewish cabaret song Madagascar which already in original ridiculed the deportation of Polish Jews to the island of Madagascar off the coast of East Africa. The term Kulturkampf [Cultural Struggle] was first used to describe the political struggle between the German government and the Catholic Church in the 19th century. Kulisiewicz regarded the Nazi

efforts to eradicate Polish culture as a form of Kulturkampf. "Black and white and red" refers to the mixed colors of the Nazi and Polish national flags. The "left foot" hints at leftist or communist sympathies of political prisoners.

Some unknown words: scheissen – to take a dump, shit; kadaver – cadaver, corpse, rotting corpse; Gibt's denn so was – Youd don't say?!; Mädchen – girl; schwarz und weiss und rot – black, white and red; Heil, es lebe Kulturkampf – Hey, long live the cultural struggle.

20. Bergen-Belsen moje / Bergen-Belsen moj [Bergen-Belsen Mine], melody after a Slovak folk song, text by unknown prisoner, translated by Simona Klemenčič

1

Cóżem ci zawinił?  
Bergen-Belsen moje  
Płakać nie mam siły  
Bergen-Belsen moje

2

Śmierć, psiajucha,  
czeka Bergen-Belsen  
moje Dobij mnie,  
nie zwlekaj!  
Bergen-Belsen moje

3

Nad namiotem słońce  
Bergen-Belsen moje  
Gasnę ja w gorączce  
Bergen-Belsen moje.

The Bergen-Belsen concentration camp near Hannover began operating in 1940 as a camp for prisoners of war under the name STALAG XI-C. By the spring of 1942, some 18,000 Soviet soldiers had died there, mainly due to famine and illness, which were then cremated. Since 1943, this concentration camp has been under the direct command of the SS. The original Aufenthaltslager camp [Holding Camp] was organized as an Erholungslager [Recuperation Camp] since March 1944 – a shelter for sick prisoners from other camps. That's what the last stanza is talking about. Towards the end of the war, the Germans, in fear of the Red Army, drove in another 60,000 prisoners from other concentration camps. The 7,000 prisoners were thus joined by the masses of the sick. Typhoid, fever, tuberculosis, and intestinal diseases decimated the internees, therefore the Allies found 13,000 unburied bodies around the camp. The song was probably made in 1945. In this song, the half-dead prisoners chanted by whispering "My Bergen-Belsen!"

21. Himna / Hymne [Hymn], melody from Moorsoldaten by Rudy Goguel and Hanns Eisler lyrics by Johann Esser and Wolfgang Langhoff; Alexander Kulisiewicz; Sul suolo desolato by Mario Montuoro translated by Simona Klemenčič

1

Wohin auch das Auge blicket  
Moor und Heide nur ringsum.  
Vogelsang uns nicht erquicket  
Eichen stehen kahl und krumm.  
Wir sind die Moorsoldaten u  
nd ziehen mit dem Spaten  
ins Moor!

2

Sachsenhausen, Stutthof, Dachau,  
ponad wamy boży gniew,  
choćbym sto lat nawet zdychał mocny,  
straszny jest mój śpiew:  
Pójdziemy, niewolnicy,  
rycerze w ból zakuci na bój!

3

Hej, Treblinko, Auschwitz, Gusen,  
serca w górę, w górę pięść!  
Niech na druty idą tchórze  
Nam nie wolno śmierci chcieć!  
I dla nas, niewolnicy,  
to samo słońce świeci co dzień!

4

Bergen-Belsen, Ebensee,  
hlavu vzhůru, vzhůru pěst!  
Liberté, liberté chérie, мы пойдём домой, oh yes!  
Dai campi del dolore rinascerà l'amore, domani!

At the end of 1944 prisoners at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp tried to write an international concentration camp anthem. The song mentions the names of many concentration camps they knew about and describes this inhumane system and the scope of the SS enslavement system.

The first three verses were taken from the famous song Die Moorsoldaten [Swamp Soldiers], translated in Slovene by Milan Apih Jetniki blata, composed by Rudi Goguel in 1933. The tune up to the fourth verse originates from the musical revision of the same song, written in 1933, by Hanns Eisler. The last stanza contains the first verse by Johann Esser and Wolfgang Langhoff from 1933. The second, third and fourth verses



were added by Aleksander Kulisiewicz. The last two lines were taken from the poem *Sul suolo desolato*, written by Maria Montuoro, an Italian prisoner at the Ravensbrück concentration camp. This song of the deportees is a traditional Italian version of *Moorsoldaten*, written by anonymous prisoners in various German concentration camps.

In rare surviving videos, Aleksander Kulisiewicz sang this song at the 1967 Burg-Waldeck-Festival. The Burg-Waldeck-Festivals (1964–1969) were the first mass outdoor concerts in Germany. The program consisted of different genres: from chansons, folk music, protest songs to hit songs. Kulisiewicz sang in all the languages he knew. He started in German, and also the final addition was in German, as he translated the final Italian verses by Maria Montuoro. Kulisiewicz said: "I survived the Nazi period but never really left the concentration camp."

The first stanza from the *Moorsoldaten*, in translation by Milan Apih:

As far as one can see, swamps, mud everywhere; a bird's voice does not  
resound, oak stands alone in places,  
and we, prisoners, step  
in the mud with a shovel – forward!

\*We did not put this song on a CD. But because the entire issue is a document, it's worth publishing it in a booklet.

22. *Der Tango Fun Osvientshim / Auschwitz Tango* melody is a variation of the *Niewolnicze tango/Slave Tango* by an unknown composer, text by a 12-year-old girl, translated by Jani Kovačič

1

Mir hobn tangos, fokstrotn un melodiyes Gezungen un getantst nokh far dem krig.

Di tsarte lider, tseklungene, farbenkte  
Hobn mit libe undz dem kop farvig.  
Un itst milkhome, keyner shaft keyn lider  
Fun yene yunge yorn in der shtot.  
Zing-oyf, o meyd, an ander lidl  
Fun teg un nekht in lager hinter drot.

2

Undzer shklofn-tango unter knut fun shleger  
O der shklofn-tango fun dem Oshvientsimer lager.  
Shtolene shpizn fun di vekhter-khayes  
O, es ruft di frayhayt un di tsayt di fraye.

3

Der neger nemt bald aher zayn mandoline  
Un vet bald oyfdriplem zayn lidl do.

Un der englander, frantzoiz zingen a nigun –  
Vet fun troyer vern a triyo.

Un oykh der polak a nem tut bald zayn fayfl  
Un er vet gebn filn gor der velt, –  
Vet dos gezang dan ontsindn di hertser,  
Vos lekhtsn nokh der frayhayt vos zey felt.

4

Undzer shklaufn-tango unter knut fun shleger  
O der shklaufn-tango fun dem Oshvientsimer lager.  
Shtolene shpizn fun di vekhter-khayes  
O, es ruft di frayhayt un di tsayt di fraye.

Der Tango Fun Osvientshim [Auschwitz Tango] was written in Yiddish with a strong German touch. Therefore, Oświęczym (German Auschwitz) is referred to in the title as Osvientshim. The text is attributed to a 12-year-old girl who sang it in Auschwitz to the tune of the then popular Polish tango Niewolnicze tango [Slave Tango]. The song became very popular with the prisoners, if we can talk about popularity in those circumstances. Unfortunately, the girl did not survive Auschwitz. The song seems to have spread through several channels. The prisoner Irke Yanovska mentions two names: Kaczerginsky and Leivick. These two sang the song to the tune of this pre-war popular hit song. According to her, it was even the first song of its kind in the concentration camp. The song was performed by many singers besides Aleksander Kulisiewicz. Probably the most famous is the version by Ute Lemper.

23. Moja brama / Moja vrata [My Gate], melody is Balkan variation of hungarian song Szép a rózsám by Zsigmond Lajoš Kertész, text by Aleksander Kulisiewicz, translated by Jani Kovačič

1

Moja, moja, moja, brama –  
Zamykana, zamykana haargenau;  
Moja, moja, moja brama.–  
Zakichana, zakichana, alte Sau!

2

Moja, moja śliczna moja bramusia,  
Wszystkich połknie i nikogo nie puszcza!  
Moj a, moja, drania-brama...  
Będziesz, łajzo, wyłamana na sto dwa!

My Brama is Kulisiewicz's unpleasant remainder of the sadistic "sporting competitions" that took place in Sachsenhausen. Among these matches was also an "Indian Dance / Indianer Tanz", rehearsal that the SS-men commanded and forced prisoner to do. As soon as possible they had to raise their hands and stare at the sky,

and then they had to abruptly shrink into a pinch and straighten up. They had to repeat this as quickly as possible until they became dizzy and exhausted. Some even vomited from this effort. In these exercises, Kulisiewicz focused on the camp gate. Ballet balleters use this method to keep them from spinning and not falling – they focus on the point in the distance into which they collected after each turn. So Kulisiewicz made a point – the camp door – to endure the torture. The image of the door as a symbol and way out – only further strengthened the desire ignited in consciousness. Among his impressions of camp life, this parable is one of the most powerful and indelible.

The song was very popular before World War II., entitled Szép a rózsám (Beautiful is my rose). It was written by Zsigmond Lajos Kertész probably in 1933 with text by György Kubányi. The Hungarians rank it as a czardash. Lively two-quarter-beat rhythm was popular especially in the Balkans, where this song is known as *Moja mala nema mane* (My Little girl has no flaw) and is still played today. Kulisiewicz heard exactly this Serbo-Croatian version and summed up the tune. He probably murmured it in the fast paced “gym” torture to make it easier to bare.

24. Lichtenburger Lagerlied /Lichtenburška lagerska [Lichtenburger Camp Song], probably after the source material of a German folk song, text by unknown prisoner, translated by Jani Kovačič

1

Lichtenburger Lager  
Wir verlassen dich  
Eltern, Frau und Kinder  
Werden freuen sich  
Wenn wir wieder weilen  
Ganz in ihrer Näh  
Holdari, faldara!  
Holdari, faldara!  
Lichtenburg, leb wohl, adieu!

2

Keiner kam freiwillig Jemals zu dir hin  
Wann blüht uns die Freiheit Das war unser Sinn Solche lange Trennung Tut uns  
allen weh  
Holdari, faldara!  
Holdari, faldara!  
Lichtenburg, leb wohl, adieu!

3

Wenn aus deinen Mauern Froh hinaus wir ziehen Sagt von uns wohl keiner Dir  
“Auf Wiedersehen”!Denn von dir das Scheiden Tut uns niemals weh  
Holdari, faldara!  
Holdari, faldara!

Lichtenburg, leb wohl, adieu!

A song of farewell to the camp which could only be sung by a handful of lucky individuals who managed to survive and return home. It was created in 1933 and it is said to have been composed by an unknown teacher, probably one of the first victims of intolerance. It has been passed from prisoner to prisoner for over a decade. Kulisiewicz liked to include it in his program. Some unknown words: Lichtenburg, leb wohl, adieu – Lichtenburg, hello, farewell; it is meant of course as a goodbye.

25. Spalona matka / Zažgana mati [A Burnt Mother], text probably by Nâzim Hikmet, Tadeusz Niemira, melody by Alexander Kulisiewicz, translated by Simona Klemenčič

1

To ja – spalona matka –  
do waszych serc pukam stęsknionych.  
Widzieć mnie nie możecie;  
nie można widzieć spalonych.  
Gaz wypalił mi oczy,  
włosy zajęły się pierwsze.  
Stałam się małym prochem.  
Proch uleciał w powietrze.

2

To ja – spalona matka –  
do waszych serc wołam z oddali:  
Niech dzieci nikt nie zabija!  
Niech matek nikt nie pali!  
Spalona błaga matka.

The author of the song is supposed to be the Turkish poet Nâzim Hikmet, while the translation is attributed to Tadeusz "Niemira" Kostrzewski. The text probably originated in correspondence with a Turkish poet, which is unverifiable because the original poem was not yet discovered. The author could also be Tadeusz Kostrzewski, whose pseudonym was Niemira. Niemira was an important part of the Polish resistance, a member of AGAT (Anty-Gestapo). Its members formed the core of the Armie Krajowe's battalion. He was arrested by the Nazis in 1944 and may have been Kulisiewicz's fellow prisoner in Sachsenhausen. The song has been recorded on the records *Chants de la déportation* (1975) and *Pieśni obozowe. Z hitlerowskich obozów koncentracyjnych 1939–45* (1979).

\*We only projected this song at the concert, as all the nameless victims are a reminder to all of us that we must do everything in our power to prevent this from happening again.

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### **Orfej iz pekla**

#### **Izbor pesmi iz taborišč, ki jih je izvajal Aleksander Kulisiewicz**

1. Lager/Konzentrak 1:30 (Jan Stefani/Aleksander Kulisiewicz), prevod: Simona Klemenčič
2. Siva kolona/Graue Kolonnen 3:04 (Fritz Sotke/Ernst Busch?), prevod: Jani Kovačič
3. Šimon Ohm/Szymon Ohm 2:56 (poljsko-jidiš ljudska/Leszek N.), prevod: Simona Klemenčič
4. V gozdovih krog Sachsenhausna/Im Walde von Sachsenhausen 1:11 (ruska ljudska/avtor neznan), prevod: Jani Kovačič
5. Muzelman-Čikober/Muselman-Kippensammler 4:11 (Menashe Mieczystaw Oppenheim /Aleksander Kulisiewicz), prevod: Simona Klemenčič
6. Mister Č/Mister C 2:21 (Aleksander Kulisiewicz/Aleksander Kulisiewicz), prevod: Simona Klemenčič
7. Hekatomba 1941 1:46 (avtor neznan/Aleksej Sazonov), prevod: Simona Klemenčič
8. Smrti tango/Das Todestango 1:54 (Eduardo Bianco/avtor neznan), prevod: Jani Kovačič
9. Judovska posmrtnica ali Deset bratov/Judischer Todessang oder Zehn Bruder 4:34 (nemško-židovsko ljudska/Rosebery d'Arguto), prevod: Jani Kovačič
10. Črna noč/Stoi nocka 2:11 (poljska ljudska/Zofia Karpifiska), prevod: Simona Klemenčič
11. Črni Bohm/Czarny Bohm 1:43 (rusinska ljudska/Aleksander Kulisiewicz), prevod: Simona Klemenčič
12. Adolfovo slovo od sveta 1943/Požegnanie Adolfa ze Światem 2:36 (poljska ljudska / Aleksander Kulisiewicz), prevod: Simona Klemenčič
13. Zebe gospod!/Zimno panie! 1:42 (avtor neznan/Aleksander Kulisiewicz), prevod: Jani Kovačič



14. Tango truplonoscev/Tango Truponoszow 2:42 (avtro neznan/Aleksander Kulisiewicz), prevod: Simona Klemenčič
15. Uspavanka za sinka v krematoriju/Kotysanka dla synka w krematorium 3:41 (Aleksander Wertyfisi/Aaron Liebeskind), prevod: Simona Klemenčič
16. Koral z dna pekla/Choratz piekla dna 1:54 (Aleksander Kulisiewicz/Leonard Krasnodebski), prevod: Jani Kovačič
17. Deset milijonov/Dziesięć milionow 1:29 (avtor neznan/avtor neznan), prevod: Simona Klemenčič
18. 1000 žensk!/1000 kobiet!/1000 frauen!3:11 (Aleksander Kulisiewicz, Jani Kovačič/Aleksander Kulisiewicz), prevod: Jani Kovačič
19. Heil Sachsenhausen! 2:03 (poljsko-jidiš ljudska/Aleksander Kulisiewicz), prevod: Simona Klemenčič
20. Bergen-Belsen moj/Bergen-Belsen moje 1:44 (slovaška ljudska/avtor neznan), prevod: Simona Klemenčič
21. Auschwitz Tango/Der Tango Fun Osvientshim 2:58 (avtor neznan/avtor neznan), prevod: Jani Kovačič
22. Moja vrata/Moja brama 1:10 (Zsigmond Lajoš Kertesz/Aleksander Kulisiewicz), prevod: Jani Kovačič
23. Lichtenburška lagerska/Lichtenburger Lagerlied 1:42 (nemška ljudska/avtor neznan), prevod: Jani Kovačič