

REVIEWS

Ausländer, Rose. *Selected Poems*. Trans. Ewald Osers. Tisbury, Wiltshire: London Magazine Editions, 1977. 72 pp. With an introduction by Ewald Osers.

It appears, the German critics have finally "discovered" Rose Ausländer. She has just reached the venerable age of 70 (on May 11, 1977), and has been awarded no less than two literary prizes this year: the Ida Dehmel Preis, and the prestigious Andreas Gryphius Preis which carries with it an award of DM 10,000. While there has been an attempt in the FRG to come to grips with Ausländer's poetry only very recently—witness the glowing essays by Karl Krolow and Marie Luise Kaschnitz in Ausländer's *Gesammelte Gedichte*—, the first full-length article appeared in the U.S. years ago in *German-American Studies* (Jacob Erhardt. "Einführung in das lyrische Werk von Rose Ausländer." *German-American Studies*, Vol. II, No. 2, 1970, pp. 55-62).

Ewald Osers has translated 33 of Rose Ausländer's poems in this dual language edition. All of his translations are quite literal. This, I feel, is good, though it sometimes results in a loss of the unique, individual rhythm of the original poem. Care has been taken to preserve alliteration whenever possible. There are very few questionable translations:

Erzengel Luzifer	Archangel Lucifer
ich will deinen	I will caress
Ungehorsam liebkosen	your disobedience
...	...

The second line ought to read: "I want to caress" (pp. 42/43).

Jetzt ist sie eine Nachtigall
...
Sie singt das Zion der Ahnen
sie singt das alte Österreich
sie singt die Berge und Buchenwalder
der Bukowina.

Now she is a nightingale.

. . .

She sings of her ancestors' Zion
she sings of the old Austria
she sings of the hills and the beech-woods
of Bukowina.

(pp. 20/21)

If the first three “ofs” are deleted, you achieve the same odd, impressible construction in English, as you do in the German original. Why not leave them out?

However, these are merely minor quibbles. For the most part the translations are sensitive, and capture the flavor of the original. The translator, as well as the publisher, should have our gratitude for their endeavor to bring Rose Auslander’s poetry to the attention of English language readers.

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Ausländer, Rose. *Noch ist Raum*. (Duisburg: Gilles and Francke, 1976), 128 pp.

A consistent elegiac tone was characteristic of much of Ausländer’s earlier poetry. This is no longer the case in *Noch ist Raum*. To be sure, the holocaust, exile, the uncertainties of life—the themes which formed the heart of her earlier verse—are still present in many poems and in some of these her voice remains plaintive, as in the lines “Die gute alte Zeit/strömt wieder an dir vorüber//mündet in den Krieg” (p. 93). But a new source of consolation, which first become prominent in the new poems included in the *Gesammelte Gedichte* (1976), has become paramount: the transcendent power of the poetic word.

Ausländer’s poetry has always reflected the unity of man, his physical environment, and his metaphysical concerns. In her elegiac verse, the theme of mankind’s loneliness and insecurity is developed by means of images—often taken from nature—and allusions to the stages of her own biography. Nature, inanimate objects, and concepts are frequently personified and assume the all-too-human role of the

persecutor. Traces of this are still found, e.g., in the lines "Dumpf schlägt der Wind/seine Trommel/an unser Trommelfell" (p. 36). But this device, which Auslander develops in an exceptional effective manner, is now more often applied to the healing power of the world: "Bin ich fröhlich/schreiben sich Gedichte/in mich" (p. 58); "Worte finden/die dich lieben" (p. 52). "Luft" and "Atem" — the very basis of life — are similarly personified, and often appear in conjunction with the healing power of the word: "Du ein Vogel/im Atemland/der unsern Atem singt" (p. 18); "Ich liebe . . .//die Luft/die mich atemlang liebt" (p. 40).

For Ausländer, language is not merely an abstraction; it serves as a direct manifestation of the possibility of brotherhood and communication, the search for which, as well as the role of a friendly personified nature, can be seen in "Auftrag": "Ich erlaubte dem Wind/durch meinen Sprachraum/zu fliegen//schickte ihn/zu dir/mit einem Gruss//Hat er/dich schon erreicht/Sprachbruder" (p. 12).

Ausländer's verse is growing sparser. Her laconism, however, is not just another example of the arbitrary obscuration prevalent in some recent poetry. On the contrary, it contributes to the lyrical depth and universality which are consistently present in her works.

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Wilson, Joseph. "The German Language of Texas." *Schatzkammer*, 2 (Spring 1976), 43-49.

Rarely does a single article merit review, but the commendable essay by Professor Joseph Wilson of Rice University on "The German Language in Texas" deserves further note. The article describes the language spoken today by descendants of German immigrants in Texas as a modified standard German. The differences within the spoken and written idiom of German settlements extending over 150 miles from northeast to southwest are "minimal," according to Wilson. "Most of the Texas Germans do not speak dialects, but standard German Any two Texas Germans can understand each other perfectly, though they may in some instances

note some differences, and they have no trouble understanding a German from modern Germany or being understood by him.” (43) Texas-German newspapers follow the journalistic conventions of German news writing of the nineteenth century and the syntax is very much a product of that period, as well. According to Wilson, “This is quite in contrast to Pennsylvania German, which is basically Palatinate dialect (*Pfälzisch*) and which is about as different as Dutch from standard German.” (43) “Surely,” Wilson continues, “many Americans are unaware that generations of Texas, though native born, lived out their entire lives as Germans—that is, they spoke German in their home; they had their own German community with their own churches and schools; their newspapers were in German; they were baptized, married, and buried in German (and the official documents of these events were in German); and their graves have lengthy inscription in their beloved mother tongue.” (44) Wilson explains that “there were always strong corrective and standardizing influences at work: newspapers, schools, churches, and confirmation instruction (which involved the memorization of hundreds of standard German Bible verses)” (49); although the cohesiveness of the Texas-German community accounts for the “strength and pervasiveness” (44) of the German language in the face of assimilatory pressures, there are instances when the vocabulary is quite naturally influenced by English bilingualism, by unfamiliarity with new environment, and ultimately by twentieth century technology:

Distrikt-Court
 Farm zu verkaufen
 Der Phone
 Der Store (**germanized pronunciation**)
 Die Road (**germanized pronunciation**)
 Butchermesser
 Fence (**sing.**), Fence (**pl.**)
 Box (**sing.**), Boxen (**pl.**)
 Cotte (**sing.**), Cotten (**pl.**) (**sing.**, meaning a single boll of cotton)
 die Roach
 die Mosquito
 die Luftschiff or der Airplane
and parts of the internal combustion engine, etc.

Glen E. Lich

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Maralyn A. Wellauer, *A Guide To Foreign Genealogical Research*, rev. and enl. ed. (Milwaukee, 1976), 227 pp. Price: \$10.00 (plus 50 cents postage and handling). Order from: Maralyn Wellauer, 3239 North 58th St., Milwaukee, Wis. 53216.

Until now genealogists involved in research of ancestral lines from German-speaking countries have relied on Olga Miller's excellent book and have consulted several other sources for information not touched upon therein. Miss Wellauer's first edition of *A Guide To Foreign Genealogical Research* was one of these other sources. Now, in her revised and significantly enlarged edition, she has brought forth a work which represents the major guide, not only to German-speaking lands and settlements, but to some 60 countries. This new edition is a must for any serious German-American ancestor hunter. In her Introduction, the compiler gives many helpful hints and cautions, and discusses research in the U.S. as well as overseas. Of special note are her lists of "German, Swiss and Austrian Genealogical Terms" (pp. xxiii-xxv) and "German Abbreviations." The following corrections should be made on p. xxiii: Geschlecht, Wappenkunde, Mittelalter, Beitrag, Gesellschaft, Bauer, praktische, Verwandte; p. xxiv: Landesarchiv, Staatsarchiv, Gasse, neu, Schein; p. xxv: Süd, Abkürzungen, Band, Bände, Deutsche Demokratische Republik, Bevölkerung. The "German Abbreviations" section would have been more helpful had the compiler included the English meaning for each term on the list.

In addition, the word Blätter means "newspapers" not newspaper (Blatt). Miss Wellauer should point out to the reader that German adjectives are inflected and she should list the various adjectival endings one will find. Missing umlauts, misspelled words and lack of capitalization are encountered in the titles given in the volume's section on Austria, Germany and Switzerland, but these do not detract from the invaluable assistance this information provides the genealogist. In addition to important titles to biographies, bibliographies, handbooks, etc., Miss Wellauer provides us with the names and

addresses of Austrian, German and Swiss libraries, archives and genealogical societies. Since German-American research doesn't stop at the boundaries of these three countries, the researcher will welcome the book's sections on Poland, Rumania and other areas of the world which were once part of the German-speaking realm.

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Günther Haselier, ed., *USA und Baden-Württemberg in ihren geschichtlichen Beziehungen. Beiträge und Bilddokumente* (Stuttgart, 1976), 192 pp.

This volume was published in celebration of the American Bicentennial by the Landesarchiv Baden-Württemberg in collaboration with the Württembergische Geschichts- und Altertumsverein in Stuttgart.

It contains 120 pages of text and 72 illustrations all of which treat the historical relations of America and Baden-Württemberg.

A first class scholarly work, this volume contains the following articles all of which are in German: Aspects of the Historical Relations Between the USA and the Former States of Baden, Württemberg and Hohenzollern; Basic Thoughts of the Exhibition (refers to the German-American exhibition sponsored last year by the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen); The Birth of the Name "America"; The American Revolution—Southwestern Germans in Both Camps; Friedrich Wilhelm Steuben; The Forty-Eighters in the U.S.; Southwestern Germans As Participants in the Civil War; The Emigration from Southwest Germany to America; Southwestern Emigration and Settlements in the USA; Emigrant Letters in the 19th Century; The USA As Exile for Persons Pursued by the National Socialist Regime; Biographical Profiles of German-Americans From the German Southwest; The Political Relations; The Cultural Relations; The Economic Relations; American Support After World War II.

A copy of this outstanding work is available at the Western Reserve Historical Society (Ward Collection of Americana Germanica).

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Russel L. Gerlach, *Immigrants in the Ozarks. A Study in Ethnic Geography*. Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Pr., 1976.

Gerlach's outstanding work suggests that "the old hypothesis that the United States is an ethnic melting pot is not applicable to the rural Ozarks." This area of Missouri is inhabited by Germans, Amish, the Mennonites and various European ethnic groups. It is a scholarly renunciation of the melting pot and evidence that the Germans remain unassimilated.

Carl Sauer, the noted American geographer, states that ethnic groups are carriers of culture which becomes the shaping force in the evolution of landscapes. The differences and similarities in the landscapes of various ethnic groups can be detected, analyzed and identified by techniques of geographic measurement. Gerlach applies them to ascertain whether the Ozarks became a mosaic of various groups or whether the individuality of the immigrants as evidenced in landscapes was erased by the melting pot.

Gerlach concludes that ethnic landscapes are still distinctive only for the German element in Missouri. The Germans made the deepest imprint on the cultural landscape of the state. He examines the following landscape features: settlement patterns, agriculture, land use, and social characteristics. In terms of settlement patterns Gerlach notes that Germans settled a nucleus area and bought out all non-Germans surrounding the nucleus. Non-Germans eventually desired to vacate regions inhabited by the "clannish" Germans. Locational stability is more pronounced in German areas than in other areas and the rate of land transfer in German areas is small. Germans still to this day are buying out non-Germans who own land adjacent to their areas. This practice of keeping

land in the hands of the Germans is often done "consciously." String-shaped villages, or Strassendoerfer, dot the landscape of Missouri and although "may have suffered some population loss, the German village in the Ozarks today appears to be quite healthy." Gerlach illuminates other fascinating aspects of Missouri German life, but his coverage of the German language in Missouri indicates that German is still a vital force in the ethnic community.

World War One forced the Germans in Missouri, as elsewhere, into formal acceptance and recognition of the English language on a coequal basis with German. The language has basically been preserved by the institutions of the family and the church. According to Gerlach, in his study of eight German counties in Missouri, the percentage of the German population which indicates German as mother tongue varies from 20.4% to 44.9%. It should be remembered that the overwhelming majority is American-born. German thrived in Missouri since the immigrants came when their language competed for large-scale coexistence with English. It was realistic to expect a bilingual Missouri to emerge. Various "American" dialects have developed, such as Hermann German, the dialect spoken in Hermann, Missouri. In the Saxon section of Perry County 66-75% list German as mother tongue and "approximately 60% of the residents still speak fluent German."

This is an excellent contribution to the study of ethnic retention in ethnic groups in Missouri. Studies such as Gerlach's should lay the groundwork for further historical treatment of the German element in the U.S.

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Heinz Kloss: *The American Bilingual Tradition*. Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House Publishers, 1977.

The dated image of America as a nation of one language and culture has melted away in the past decades as America has again regained consciousness of its bilingual tradition and

multicultural makeup. Prof. Dr. Kloss describes this bilingual tradition with special attention to bilingual schools and legislation relating to this tradition. His earlier works on the topic are little known in the U.S.: *Das Volksgruppenrecht in den Vereinigten Staaten*, Vol. I, 1940, Vol. 2, 1942 and *Das Nationalitaetenrecht der Vereinigten Staaten*, 1963. This new publication represents a new and updated version of the 1963 German work. Kloss covers bilingual traditions not only on the mainland, but also in Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Guam, Samoa, the Virgin Islands, the Canal Zone, the Ryukyus, the Bonin Islands and even the pre-1945 Philippines. It is thus a thorough and exhaustive treatment of the topic.

To the student of German-Americana the sections dealing with German bilingual traditions in America are unsurpassed. In Chapter Two Kloss outlines the attempts at establishing German as an official language in America from the early attempts in the 1770s to 1862 when the U.S. Congress voted on the question of recognizing German as an official language for governmental publications. All of these attempts failed, so that German never could receive permanent official recognition, although here and there German language publications were authorized. This failure to achieve permanent recognition coupled with the suppression of German-Americans during World War One had a harsh impact on language maintenance efforts. German-Americans had no legal protection against Anglo-American resentment about the slowness with which some German-Americans gave up their language and about the prominent place German occupied in the curricula of many American cities. The suppression of German has implications for all American ethnic groups. Several of the measures adopted against the Germans were turned against other minority groups.

This work is well documented, contains several appendices on mother tongue by states and on bilingual education and a selected bibliography. An interesting comment by Kloss is that there is a remarkable gap between the leading position of German among ancestral mother tongues and its zero position in present-day bilingual education. Most German-Americans are

moderately well off and cannot profit from the 1961/68 BEA legislation which is designed to assist economically backward minorities. Kloss concludes "It would mean a new step forward if Americans realized that discrimination against those minorities who never requested or even needed governmental aid is not fully compatible with the American Dream." All German-American researchers should read this book.

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GERMAN-AMERICAN GENEALOGICAL NOTES

ON GERMAN SURNAMES

The use of surnames began in Köln (Cologne) in the year 1106, in Strassburg in 1129, in Basel in 1168, in Zürich in 1145 and in Hamburg in 1260. The first record of surnames in Bremen was made in 1303. Normally, persons from the lower classes were not called by surnames until the 15th and 16th centuries. In North Germany the clergy often wrote the surnames of a church member in the Standard German rather than the Low German form, e.g. *Hoopmann* became *Hoffmann*, or misspelled the name all together, e.g. *Kleucke* became *Glocke* or *Klöcke*. Frequently landowners were known not by their real last name but rather by the name of the previous landowner of the farm or estate on which they resided. (See Rolf Hillmer, "Gedanken zur Einführung in die Genealogie," *Mitteilungen der Gruppe Familien- und Wappenkunde im Bundesbahn-Sozialwerk*, Jahrgang 4, Folge 7, Mai 1977, p. 130.)

GERMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH REGISTERS

Since 1563 Germany's Catholic churches have been required to keep church registers.

HELPFUL BOOK ON RESEARCH IN LOWER SAXONY

Helmut Jäger, *Methodisches Handbuch für Heimatforschung in Niedersachsen* (Hildesheim 1965).