

decken. Dies aber wäre die Aufgabe künftiger Forschungsarbeiten, sich ausgehend von Geschwills Studie den Sprachbiografien und dem Stellenwert verschiedener Sprachen im Leben der durch Mehrsprachigkeit ge-

prägten Bukowiner Juden beispielsweise in den USA, Rumänien oder der ehemaligen Sowjetunion zu widmen.

Natalia Blum-Barth

### **Silke Pasewalck / Dieter Neidlinger / Terje Loogus (Hg.): Interkulturalität und (literarisches) Übersetzen**

Stuttgart: Stauffenberg 2014 - ISBN 978-3-86057-097-5 - 49,80 €

The 2014 essay collection *Interkulturalität und (literarisches) Übersetzen* could just as well have been titled *Handbuch zum Interkulturellen und Literarischen Übersetzen*. In English parlance, the genre ›Reader‹ may have been appropriate as well, as this collection reaches beyond the expected mixed-bag of a co-edited volume and offers a coherent, stimulating, and imaginative selection of articles that, together, will serve well as a teaching tool for any upper-level undergraduate or graduate course. The articles contained in its pages did indeed emerge from a collegial gathering in Tartu, Estonia, in October 2011, but the contributions have clearly grown a great deal in the ensuing period and now read as pithy, short-form case studies that deliver informative scenarios for non-specialists in areas ranging from multilingual African postcolonial literature, to Turkish-German film, to linguistic ideology in translating contemporary Irish literature. The overall impression this collection gives is decidedly not that of a potpourri of ›diverse‹ perspectives, but of mutually dialogical case studies that allow readers to test one participating scholar's conclusions out on the data presented in another scholar's subsequent essay, only a few pag-

es later. This synergy must have taken a fair bit of time, good will, and vision among the volume's three editors, Silke Pasewalck, Dieter Neidlinger, and Terje Loogus (all from German Studies, University of Tartu). Often, even when scholarly meetings appear to promise a wonderful published proceedings down the line, this promise fades in the protracted editorial process that ensues after everyone heads back to their home institutions. Such was not the case with this volume, which offers an admirable countermodel.

One of the delightful decisions the editors of this volume made was to foreground a handful of essays by major thinkers in and beyond the German-language context, including Christiane Nord (a name that has become synonymous with Skopos-functionalist approaches to translation) as well as the esteemed Norbert Mecklenburg. These four mutually enriching essays (by Nord, Mecklenburg, Loogus, and Albrecht) are wry, contemporary, personable and problem-oriented, rather than merely rehearsing well-known positions associated with each scholar's disciplinary commitments. Each text is furthermore quite aware of the methodological and termino-

logical cloud of doubt that the word »intercultural« often precipitates, and they handle the word itself with due respect and due critique, while not allowing terminological debate itself to consume the space of their arguments.

While current scholarship routinely latches on to both »translation« and »interculturality« in a somewhat fetishistic and talismanic manner, as if these were elixirs uniquely poised to swoop in and rescue the 21st-century national philologies from their character flaws, most all of the scholars featured throughout this book display erudite awareness about long-running interdisciplinary work within Translation Studies since the mid-20th century. Rather than immediately reaching for their Spivak, Benjamin, Venuti, or Schleiermacher, these researchers are just as likely to work intensively with subtle debates around Nida, Vermeer, and Toury. The presence of applied linguistics and second language studies (via Kramsch and Altmayer) is felt throughout the book, and indeed the collection concludes with an inspiring contribution by Michael Dobstadt and Renate Riedner on the role of translation practice in *Deutsch als Fremdsprache* discourses. This is all very encouraging for a US-based researcher like myself, who often must despair at the persistent mutual misrecognition among the fields of second language teaching, translation studies, and comparative literary study – three arenas that ought by historical rights to be able to speak each others' conceptual idioms fluently, without always reinventing the others' wheel according to their own needs.

A further strength of the collection is that its Estonian provenance con-

tributes to a decentering of the current Franco-Germano-American topicality around translation, translatability, and World Literature. Serious barriers of access, funding, and language competence indeed still loom for instance between Germanists and Slavic and Baltic research contexts, and a mere gesture of intercultural openness does little to improve West Europe's scholarly grasp of the complexities of Czech, Polish, Estonian, and Lithuanian cultural production and scholarly method. In addition to these other virtues, such volumes as *Interkulturalität und (literarisches) Übersetzen* make the honest effort to »move the show« to a new epicenter of debate, in this case Tartu, thereby helping to continue the good work of provincializing North Atlantic comparatist habits of thought. In this sense, the case studies in this volume act as a complement to Barbara Cassin et al.'s monumental *Vocabulaire européen des Philosophies*, by shifting the center of gravity around translatability and philology significantly eastward (in its place of publication) and southward (in its range of contributions). Moreover, in focusing on the problematics of practicing intercultural translation, the volume takes readers out of the agonistic discourse of so-called untranslatables and returns us to the nitty-gritty pragmatics of how translators do their improbable work in specific, and often precarious, social and political contexts, too busy as they are doing precisely that to pause for the theoreticist conceit of untranslatability to catch up.

After its four introductory essays, the book is structured in four major thematic sections on Literature and 1) Translation, 2) Interculturality, 3) Cul-

tural Transfer, and 4) Second Language Acquisition. It contains 17 approximately 3,500-word case study essays (all in German) on the following topics, among others: translating Emine Sevgi Özdamar into Spanish, translating Russian (literary-)cultural ›untranslatables‹ into German, the pragmatics of grammatical negation in literary translating, French translations of Paul Celan, language play among post-Francophone African authors, and translations of recent German literature into Estonian. A few more contributions from the applied linguistics and second language studies world would have rounded out the book nicely.

As a whole, the collection impresses upon me three important and inspiring discoveries: 1) co-edited volumes can indeed operate as a holistic primer on a given ›state of the discourse‹, and not only as series of loosely related monologues, 2) the presence

in such a project of senior scholars who have made defining contributions to a field can ensure that freighted terms like translation and interculturality are treated with the requisite disciplinary and historical depth throughout the collection, and not merely as capital-rich buzz-words of the day, and 3) that Germanistik in Eastern Europe is advancing the discourses of translation and interculturality in ways that cannot be achieved on the Franco-German and/or Turkish-German axis alone. I look forward to recommending this volume to German-reading colleagues and students here in the Western United States, and to alerting non-German-reading colleagues to the various conceptual advancements in this collection that they may be missing the opportunity to consider.

*David Gramling*