

likely to appear on the best-seller list in the United States. It is even more noteworthy that among its very first publications are two volumes of contemporary poetry. While many established publishing houses are apparently cutting back on the publication of lyrics, Red Dust seems to have followed the admonition of Erich Fried: «Today alas/ we have not time/for the finer things of life/said someone/whom years ago/I knew as / a boor.» In contrast these are graceful and gracious books.

Against the background of this publishing event the translation of the Fried anthology is a most felicitous beginning. In many ways it is the model of a successful collaboration of a poet writing in one language and a translator who is a native speaker of the target languages. Hence Fried's great poetic gifts have been retained in the translation: his gift for conveying anger and impatience with social ills, his sardonic humor in the section entitled Almost funny, the play on words, which often works as well in English as in German, the paradoxes, the seemingly simple, in reality highly sophisticated verse form and rhythm. The translator, Stuart Hood, a professor of the Royal College of Art in London, has managed - without doing violence to the poet's intent - to make his translations sound like original poetry. He explains, in his terse foreword (which serves as an introduction to the poet), that he has left out ephemeral poems or those which cannot be translated because the poet had exploited, to their very limit, various linguistic ambiguities and double entendres, which are possible only in German. With these exceptions he has rendered in its entirety the selections from Fried's poetry which appeared in Germany under the title *100 Gedichte ohne Land* (Berlin: Wagenbach, 1978 and were awarded that year the Prix des Sept, the prestigious International Publishers Prize. Stuart also provides brief, useful footnotes and, while one might wish for a few more, they admirably serve the foreign reader understand topical references, puns and allusions, and names of people and places presumably unfamiliar to him or her. This anthology would, in fact, be an excellent volume to include in a comparative literature course or a literature-in-translation sequence.

This also applies to the second volume from Red Dust, a sampler of the poetry of Günter Eich, Hilde Domin, Erich Fried, and Günter Kunert. But here the reader must work harder. The introductions, both the general and specific ones, often lead from one unknown to another. The introduction to Eich, for example, compares him to Rilke; the reader's familiarity with the *Duino Elegies* (not mentioned by title) is presupposed. Footnotes to the poems, beyond the few provided, would have helped - as well as some sharp editing of the introductions.

Yet the poetry, despite the occasional literalness of the translations, is preserved in its English version. In this transference Hilde Domin fares best, conceivably because she actively participated in the task of translating. Her poem «Grey Times» («Graue Zeiten») remains, as it was in the original, the poet's moving identification with the exiles and the Holocaust victims.

It would be superfluous, for the readers of this journal, to register, describe, or analyze the various poems in the anthology. It should be said, though, that they will find a judicious admixture of very well known ones - Günter Eich's poem «Latrine»,

Domin's "Ruckwanderung and Kunert's Berliner Nachmittag...we as researchers and teachers of German have every reason to extend a warm welcome to a new,

ERICH FRIED: *100 Poems Without a Country*. Transl. by STUART HOOD. New York: Red Dust, 1980. 147 pages. *Four German Poets*. Transl. and ed. by AGNES STEIN. New York: Red Dust, 1980.

It is heartening to find that a new and courageous publishing house has had the temerity to publish translations of modern German literature by authors who are not likely to appear on the best seller list in the United States

highly promising and still small publishing house Guy Stern Wayne State  
University