Translating At the Edge of Empire: Olha Kobylianska and Rose Ausländer

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Abstract: The edge of empire is a mythical place which has inspired the historical and literary imagination. As the easternmost city of the Habsburg Empire, Czernowitz was a product of a particular kind of border culture, one which sustained an intense relationship with the German language. In the multilingual matrix of the years leading to the collapse of the Empire and during the interwar period, translational relationships were developed through German. The cases of the Ukrainian writer Olha Kobylianska and the German-Jewish poet Rose Auslander are considered here.

The edge of empire is a mythical place that has long stimulated the historical and literary imagination. The Roman Limes—which encompassed a vast area that included Britain (up to its northern, Atlantic reaches), continental Europe right across to the Black Sea and down to the Red Sea, and North Africa as far west as the Atlantic coast (see http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/430)—probably provide the most pervasive material traces of the walls, ditches, forts, fortresses, watchtowers, and civilian settlements that separate Empire from its barbarian outside. But the waxing and waning of innumerable empires over the course of world history—from the Greek and Mongol to the Habsburg, British, and Ottoman empires—have offered an abundant supply of objects and narratives, images and fantasies, a recent example of which is the Star Wars game called "The Edge of the Empire."

An expression of imperial power at its highest point (bringing the full might of military force to bear against the enemy without), the edge of empire is also, because of its physical distance from the imperial center, a place where identities can become diluted, where the precise dividing line between inside and outside can become troubled. This paradox is richly exploited in J. M. Coetzee's

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1980 novel *Waiting for the Barbarians*. It tells the story of a disabused middle-aged magistrate who chooses to end his days in a lazy imperial outpost, spending his free time carrying out his own archaeological digs.

Largely indifferent to the bellicose aims of his military superiors, he comes under suspicion of collusion with the enemy. He has excavated a cache of slivers of wood that all seem to have some sort of message written on them, but the writing is ancient and impenetrable and he has been unable to decipher the message. When he is forced, however, to provide the meaning of these writings, now considered crucial evidence, the magistrate suddenly finds words to transmit the messages he reads from the slips: appeals from barbarian prisoners to their families—intimate and immediate and alive.

Through his "translation," the magistrate transforms the barbarians from aliens into individual beings. He blurs the line that separates the enemy from the citizen, and he opens gaps in the Empire's line of defense. And in fact the Empire never does achieve victory. The barbarians simply lure the army out into the desert and then vanish. Faithful to the genre of "the barbarian and the frontier"—classically drawn by Dino Buzzati in *The Desert of the Tartars* and powerfully evoked by Cavafy in the poem also called "Waiting for the Barbarians"—the barbarians in Coetzee's novel are elusive. The moment of direct confrontation, feared and desired, never comes. The link between present and past, self and other, suggests Coetzee, is an imaginative leap, a gesture of voluntary projection.

Coetzee's novel will be our entry point into another site of translation at the edge of empire. This is the city of Czernowitz (today's Cernivtsi in Ukraine), the most easterly city of the erstwhile Habsburg empire. Abundantly mythologized as a border city, as a cultural bulwark against the alien forces from the east, the city provides rich material for a study of translational forces. Its geographical situation but also its cultural vocation as a border city during the period of the military collapse and the reorganization of the Habsburg border lands offers a singular viewpoint onto the work of translation at the edge of empire. In what follows, I will examine the work of two Czernowitz authors—Olha Kobylianska (1863-1942) and Rose Ausländer (1901-1988)—as translators of

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their border city. Like Coetzee's magistrate, they find the borders enacted by translation to be shifting and elusive. To translate at the edge is to be especially aware of the ways in which boundaries can accentuate or attenuate difference. Political borders hypostatize cultural and linguistic differences, while geographical borders often show difference to be gradual. The multilingualism of border zones problematizes the activities of translation as source–target transactions. Whether applied to a huge geographical expanse or to the microspaces of the multilingual city, the operations of translation at the border are shaped by the special pressures of the interzone. This means that the frames of language exchange must be recast to respond to more subtle understandings of the relation between language, territory, and identity. How do the competition and animosities, but also the shared references that inevitably flourish in multilingual geopolitical contexts, shape translation (Meylaerts 2013)? Languages that share the same terrain rarely participate in a peaceful and egalitarian conversation: their separate and competing institutions are wary of one another, aggressive in their need for self-protection. Cultures of mediation are shaped by the social and political forces which regulate the relations among languages.

Building the bulwark

Today the Bukovina is largely situated in Ukraine. From 1774 until 1918, this area was the easternmost edge of the Habsburg empire that the emperor Joseph II consciously and vigorously constructed as a buffer zone in order to protect his territories from Russian and Ottoman expansion (Colin 1991, 7). He actively promoted the settlement of Germans from Austria and southwest Germany, as well as the Germanization of Ruthenians and Roumanians, the two largest language groups in the Bukovina.

Over the course of the nineteenth century in particular, for both German-language empires (the Prussian and the Habsburg), "the East" exerted tremendous fascination. From 1848 to 1918, central Europe was crisscrossed by conflicting imperial projects, each marked by its own real and imagined borders and the constant pressure to defend newly conquered expanses of territory. The areas that became known as the "eastern Marches" were increasingly important in public consciousness. The term "March"—originally indicating the border provinces of the Carolingian Empire,

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granted a privileged political status in order to fulfill their duties in defending and expanding the Empire's boundaries, and used only sporadically in the first half of the nineteenth century—became a catch-phrase (the OstMark) after 1848 (Thum 2013, 44–59). And in the second half of the nineteenth century, a new kind of highly ideologized novel later called the *Ostmarkenroman* emerged, popularizing the idea "that a battle over territory was taking place in the eastern borderlands between the representations of a superior German civilization and their Slavic enemies" (Thum 2013, 48).

As Pieter Judson has so convincingly demonstrated, these border zones were not "natural" zones of conflict, in particular of language conflict. Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, they were, rather, strategically targeted by nationalist ideologists and enlisted in the struggle for patriotic allegiance (Judson 2006). "Nationalist activists" took every opportunity to transform rural conflicts into national ones (10). In particular, campaigns around the language of schools were used to mobilize energies for nationalist causes in what Judson calls the "nationalization of the language frontier" (17).

From 1848 onwards, Czernowitz had an increasingly German-language population. Many German-speaking Jews settled in the major Bukovinian cities and by 1918, 47 percent of the population of Czernowitz was Jewish. "Since Bukovinian Jews were German-speaking and particularly loyal to the Habsburg monarchy and instrumental in its expansion in that region, Austrian officials tended to consider them representatives of the Habsburg empire" (Colin 1991, 7; see also Hirsch and Spitzer, chapters 2 and 4). Proof of the importance of Czernowitz for Austria and the German language came with the founding in 1875 of Franz Josef University—a coveted boost to the intellectual and cultural life of what was considered by many to be an outpost of imperial life. While the town had its military garrisons to protect the city from attack, it also had its linguistic ramparts. By 1875, for example, in order to conform to the empire's own language laws guaranteeing the use of a national language when numbers justified it, Lemberg university in the Galician city was giving all its courses in Polish—so the Empire had to exert its efforts at Germanization elsewhere. The university in Czernowitz was the Empire's first new university in fifty years (Judson 2016, 321). The new university, won for

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Czernowitz over intense competition from other cities—notably Trieste—was the result of relentless lobbying by a noble landowner from Bukovina who argued that only German scholarship could claim universality and that it would ensure an integrative function in this multilingual zone of empire (322). The University reflected the Empire's broader political and ideological aims.

> When in 1866 Austria lost its traditional political hegemony in Germany, the liberal empire sought a renewed sense of mission in Europe. In the 1870s, the exploration of cultural diversity seemed to offer the foundations for a renewed Habsburg civilizing mission directed specifically to eastern and southeastern Europe, including the Balkans. In its earliest incarnation, this new mission for the empire focused its civilizational energies on the existing crownlands of Galicia and Bukovina. The founding of a university in Czernowitz in 1875 offered early elaborations of Austria–Hungary's new civilizational mission to the east and of it ideology of unity in diversity. (Judson 2016, 318)

It is to be noted, however, that the new university did have the first professorships of Romanian and Ukrainian literature.

What does multilingual mean?

Like other cities in Central Europe—large cities like Budapest and Prague (where German was the first, then the second, language) (see Spector 2000), or smaller cities like Vilnius, Lviv, Riga, Danzig, Bucharest, Timisoara, Plovdiv, or Trieste—Czernowitz was intensely multilingual. What made Czernowitz different from other cities in Galicia, where Polish was dominant (for instance in Lemberg or Vilna), is that there was no one Christian national bourgeoisie which dominated in Czernowitz. Ukrainians (also known as Ruthenians) and Romanians were both a significant presence in the city, but the fact that neither was dominant in the city gave greater prominence and autonomy to the Jewish, German-speaking, population (Corbea-Hoisie cited in van Drunen 2013, I , 3, 34).

The multilingualism of Czernowitz is today often remembered in a benign, nostalgic mode. Despite the violence of both World Wars and the repressive regime which ruled in the interwar period, memories of pre-World War II Czernowitz are often cast in a very rosy light—evoking the cosmopolitanism of a lost Mitteleuropa. Time and again, the character of Czernowitz's language landscape is reiterated as a trademark symbol of the city—equivalent to a

landmark or tourist attraction. City guidebooks, postcards, and similar popular materials praised the coexistence of separate but happily coexisting ethnic communities. This refrain was accentuated by pronouncements for instance by Rose Ausländer on the four-languaged town she grew up in ("Viersprachig verbrüderte Lieder in entzweiter Zeit," Ausländer 1976, 72) or Paul Celan's oft-quoted salute to his "city of books" (Hirsch and Spitzer 2010, 32), or the many memoirs by former inhabitants of the interwar period that evoke a long period of relative harmony—even against the backdrop of rising Romanian nationalism and anti-Semitism in the 1920s and 1930s. In 1908, a visitor to the city, Yitzchak Peretz (1852–1915 wrote "We stroll in the evening streets, and from different windows the tones of different languages waft out, all different kinds of folk music", in (Olson 2010, 33). Peretz conveys what seems to be a conventional aural impression of the city—that of a harmonious music wafting through the air and captured with pleasure by the evening stroller.

The myth of Czernowitz that issues from this image of happy polyphony has increasingly come to be critiqued in light of the easy idealizations it fosters. This image allowed German-speaking scholars, for example, to have Czernowitz stand as a site of pre-Nazi German pluralism, a safe haven in German historiography (Menninghaus 1999). It promoted a nostalgia industry which pitted a perfect "then" against the flawed "now," though little proof was given beyond the same repeated phrases. A more nuanced portrait of intercultural relations is therefore required. What kind of relations existed among the city's various language communities? Following the outpouring of publications which, since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, has opened research in this area of the world (see the excellent review of the literature by van Drunen 2013). I will bring translation studies into the discussion. How can the view from translation illuminate the field of language relations in the city?

A first move is to view the city not as multilingual but as translational. What is the sense of this distinction? Multilingualism calls up a space of pure diversity, a proliferation of tongues and of parallel conversations, without concern for the interactions among these languages. The translational city looks for connections and convergences across language and communities, connections that

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indicate direction (to and from which languages) and intensity (Simon 2012). It follows, then, that the translational city is not always a site of peaceful and friendly transactions. It includes the refusal to translate, zones of silence and resistance. And so translation could be broadly defined as "writing at the intersection of languages," writing under the influence of, in the company of, with and often against, other languages. A detailed examination of urban translation practices, such as those provided in Michaela Wolf's pioneering study of translation in the Habsburg monarchy, distinguishes between the formal practices of translation dictated by the Empire's language laws and the myriad informal practices of translation which were part of daily life—the domestic servants and artisans who had to learn to serve in German, the tradespeople who had to learn German terminology, the informal exchanges through which children would be sent to neighboring villages of the empire to learn the languages across the border (Wolf 2012, 2015). Restoring multilingual transactions to the streets of Habsburg cities, showing how these cities were in many ways precursors to today's multilingual diasporic and postcolonial cities, Wolf's study also confirms that translation practices were dominated by the power of German and therefore by translation into German. Literary translation in Czernowitz also followed this pattern. Translation out of German, however, followed a different path. Whether in relation to Yiddish or Ukrainian, writers chose not so much to translate works in that direction as to abandon German in favor of a new writing language.

Literary interactions

Literary translation was a popular activity in Czernowitz, particularly in the interwar period. In her introduction to a book on Paul Celan, Amy Colin (1991) details the myriad activities of translation which were undertaken by the participants in the active literary milieus of the city. These include Alfred Margul-Sperber's German translations of British (T. S. Eliot), French (Apollinaire and Gérard de Nerval), and American (Robert Frost, Nicholas Vachel Lindsay, Wallace Stevens, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and e e cummings) modernist poets as well as American Indian texts. Immanuel Weissglas translated Eminescu's famous poem "The Morning Star" into German and Grillparzer, Stifter, and parts of Goethe into

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Romanian. There was also indirect translation—with Romanian and Ukrainian poets influenced by German authors and inversely. Authors writing in German often used motifs from Romanian and Ukrainian folklore and translated important historical and literary texts from one language into the other (Colin 1991, 11). The writer who is at once exceptional and yet who best exemplifies the culture of mediation which issued from the multilingual matrix of Czernowitz is Paul Celan (Nouss 2010). Celan's displacements from Czernowitz to Bucharest to Paris, his poetic memorialization of the Holocaust, his negation of the German language after the Nazis, his experiments across and through languages—these mark his work as uniquely expressive of the Czernowitz legacy, its hyperconsciousness of language, of history and of the experience of literary mediation.

An important trend of the early twentieth century saw many writers begin writing in German, then turn to their "national" language—Ukrainian, or Yiddish. Amy Colin gives the examples for Ukrainian of Felix Niemchevski, Osip Juril Fed'kovych, Alexander Popovich, and Isidor Vorobkevich, sometimes combining motifs from German Romanticism with images from Ruthenian folklore (Colin 1991, 11). To this list she might have added the important Yiddish-language writers Itzik Manger and Eliezer Steinbarg—Manger, for instance, carried the German literary form of the ballad into Yiddish (Starck-Adler 2007, 124–132)—as well as that of the legendary Ukrainian writer Olha Kobylianska. It is to Kobylianska's experience that I now turn to explore the language configuration of Czernowitz, before examining the work of another well-known Czernowitz poet, Rose Ausländer.

Olha Kobylianska

Born into a family who used German as their daily language (her father was a Ukrainian who worked for the Austrian administration and her mother was of Polish origin), Kobylianska began her writing in German and in fact continued to keep a diary in German for her entire life. She was born and brought up in a small town not far from Czernowitz, but moved to the city when she was in her twenties. After "converting" to the Ukrainian national cause in her late teens, she began to translate herself into Ukrainian—sometimes asking fellow authors to help her or receiving editorial

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help from her publishers. Though she lived in a small corner of the Ukrainian cultural territory, Kobylianska was very soon in contact with the powerful standard-setters of the Ukrainian literary establishment. As a young woman writer she was much influenced by the opinions of these critics, and tried to change her style and subject matter to suit the left-wing populism that was considered appropriate. But Kobylianska was continually criticized for the strains of mysticism and intellectualism which were discerned in her writing. Though it would be those same qualities of modernism, exploration of the emotions of women and fascination with art which would endear her to later generations of readers and establish her as a major figure in Ukrainian literature.

Kobylianska's writing is difficult to categorize, with its sometimes incongruous mélange of feminism, intricate exploration of inner sentiments, portrayal of the cruelty of peasant life, and outbursts of nationalist rhetoric. Critics are divided as to the elements of her work that are ironic or parodic and those that convey her true sentiments. Among her works, "Valse mélancolique" stands out as a truly radical portrait of women sharing a life together as artists. Like some of her other stories, this takes place in an urban setting, recounting the daily life and conversations of women who have chosen to devote themselves to art rather than to a conventional married life. This story marked a radical beginning for Ukrainian literature. Kobylianska's writings move between urban stories and rural depictions that are gothic in their intensity. In one story, a wife kills her husband and the children live in terror of being killed as well—though in the end the story shows sympathy for the woman browbeaten by the drunken husband. In fact Kobylianska knew both the urban and rural worlds, as she grew up in a small town, but travelled often to Czernowitz before settling there. She was involved in setting up the first women's organization in the city—a radical organization from a feminist perspective but tied to the church and therefore suspect in the eyes of most young Ukrainian women who preferred to join left-wing socialist organizations. Much of her writing associates "German" with high literature and a genteel life style. As a Ukrainian nationalist, she supported the Russians and then the Soviets as defenders of Ukrainian identity against the Austrians and then the Romanians, and when the Romanians took the city in 1942 she was condemned

to death by hanging. She died before the hanging was to take place. There is a museum dedicated to her in Czernowitz and the main street, called the Herrengasse by the Austrians then by the name of a Romanian writer by the Romanians, is today named after her in Ukrainian Czernowitz.

Kobylianska was influenced by George Sand but especially by Nietzsche, a writer she could read and quote in the original German—by contrast with her new compatriots who would have had only secondhand versions.

> Kobylianska was the first Ukrainian intellectual to introduce Nietzsche to Ukrainian readers, incorporating many of his philosophical concepts to her own philosophical system [. . .] Nietzsche's association of myth with aesthetic creativity, his statement that myth is essential for the health of a culture, as well as his call on the "free spirits" to create this new "ruling idea" by which to live spoke directly to Kobylianska's dissatisfaction with positivism, rationalism and socialism. (Ladygina 2013, 85)

While many critics disparaged her use of "German technique," which in this case included a combination of elements such as intellectualism, mysticism, and estheticism, the writer and feminist Lesia Ukrainka took the opposite position and praised its influence on Kobylianska's writing: "It led you to recognize world literature, it transported you out into the broader world of ideas and art—this simply leaps out at once, when one compares your writing with that of the majority of Galicians" (de Haan 2006, 249).

One could therefore refer to Kobylianska's impressive output of novels and short stories in Ukrainian as translational writing—a product of the particular mélange of cultures particular to the Bukovina and Czernowitz. In turn, Kobylianska translated Ukrainian literature into German, including the works of Pchilka, Kobrynska, and Ukrainka (Franko 1998). In the case of Kobylianska as for the many other writers of Czernowitz, the multilingual milieu did not signify a close interrelationship with all the literary communities but meant, rather, that writing occurred in the presence of other languages, in the consciousness of competing literary systems, and in this case with or against the power of German.

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Rose Ausländer

In a prose fragment written in 1971, Rose Ausländer answers the question, "Why do I write?" with the following reply:

> Perhaps because I came into the world in Czernowitz, and because the world in Czernowitz came into me. That particular landscape. The particular people, fairy tales, and myths were in the air, one inhaled them. Czernowitz, with its four languages, was a city of muses that housed many artists, poets, and lovers of art, literature, and philosophy. (Cited in Morris 1998, 59)

Rose Ausländer grew up and began her literary career in Czernowitz, where she was an active member of the Jewish German-language literary community, but left in her twenties to travel to the US. She spent the war years back in Czernowitz in hiding with her mother (she was one of the five thousand survivors of the ghetto, while 55,000 were murdered) and after another almost two decades of wandering finally settled in Dusseldorf in the 1960s. In the US after the war, Ausländer began a period during which she wrote poetry only in English. She later returned to the German language and has become a well-known German-language author. Her works are collected in seven volumes, much of which published after her death.

The interweaving of diaspora and home, the long wanderings of much of her life, are reflected not only in the themes of her writing but in the consequences of the to-and-fro between English and German. In particular, her exposure to American modernism resulted in shifts in her formal expression, from a German-inspired lyricism to an American-inspired modernism.

Ausländer is one of the sources most often quoted in favor of the image of a peaceful multilingual Czernowitz before the war. In the poem "Czernowitz Before the Second World War," she writes:

> surrounded by beech forests. . .
> . . .Four languages
> in accord with each other
> spoiled the air
> Until the bombs fell
> the city breathed
> happily (Ausländer 1977, 6: 348)

Indeed, Ausländer continued to praise the city of her birth and upbringing, despite the horrors she experienced during the war. Perhaps because she was always able to keep a distance between fatherland and motherland:

> My fatherland is dead
> they have buried it
> in fire.
> I live
> in my motherland
> word[1] (quoted in Morris 1998, 49)

This motherland is German, the language in which she wrote all her life, except for a period of eight years, from 1948 to 1956, when, she says, she "found herself" writing only in English. She was living in New York, a city where she had previously spent several years during the 1920s, and perhaps contemplating a conversion to an American existence. But this period turned out to be only a hiatus in her writing life, as she later returned to Europe and to the German language—and most of the English poems were discovered only after her death. Yet these years in English introduce a significant translational element into Ausländer's esthetic, a more precise materialization of the Czernowitz multilingualism, and one that gave greater heft to the name she seems to have chosen to keep as hers—the name which belonged to the husband of a short-lived marriage: Ausländer or outsider. Rose Ausländer owned two suitcases that she carried through her lifelong wanderings, and identified fully with her Jewish identity as someone who has wandered for hundreds of years, "from Word to Word."

English was *not German*, the language of the war. Ausländer knew Paul Celan from Czernowitz, and met him several times later on her return trips to Europe—and she surely shared his sense of the contamination of the German language. English was also the language of her daily life in New York, of her workplaces there, and of the modernist poets she read and admired. Ausländer met Marianne Moore at a writer's conference in New York in 1956, and in addition to Moore Ausländer was drawn to the work of Wallace Stevens and e e cummings. These sources allowed her to write

[1] Mein Vaterland ist tot/sie haben es begraben/im Feuer/Ich lebe/in meinem Mutterland/Wort.

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poetry after years of silence and a personal crisis brought on by the death of her mother in 1947. Ausländer could return to poetry only through the oblique angle of another language—one which had not been part of the "old world" configuration.

In 1956 she began again to write in German, putting together the shattered pieces of her life through a renewed belief in the mother tongue. The poetry becomes more angular, less lyrical, she says that the stars had taken on a new configuration, the flowered words had faded. She uses fewer adjectives, shorter lines, no rhyme or punctuation, the isolated word taking on new meaning. The mother tongue takes the place of the mother, the poem a place of refuge.

But, as Lesley Morris argues, Ausländer's "return" to German is less a one-way and definitive embrace of the authentic tongue than a renewed practice of translation, as she brings back to Germany the long experience of exile, experiencing new forms of displacement within the German-speaking world (Morris 1998, 55).

The sheer number of Ausländer's poems, which are normally only some twelve lines long, suggests an esthetic of incompletion, of relentless recommencing. Ausländer translated some of her English poems into German, just as she also translated at various times in her career the poems of others into German or English—Yiddish poems by Itzik Manger (1901–1969) into German and German poems by Else Lasker-Schüler and Adam Mickiewicz (1798–1855) into English. The fragmented nature of Ausländer's various exiles and returns points to a kind of permanent diasporic state, a Niemandsland of exile, where being at home will always mean being far away from home. Ausländer's diasporic life began before the Second World War, but her poetry was irrevocably marked by her experiences as a Jew during that period and by the wanderings which were a result of the destruction of Jewish life in Czernowitz.

The imaginative world of Ausländer is deeply embedded in the originary crucible of languages in Czernowitz and marked especially by one enormous fact: the sudden reversal of meaning attached to the German language. For this city, so tied to the myth of the "imaginary West in the East," German had been elevated to the status of a religion—an affiliation so intense as to remain strong even during the Romanianization of the interwar years.

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Raised in the adoration of Deutschtum, Czernowitz authors were forced to see German undergo a spectacular transvaluation of values—and therefore to revise their relationship to the language. For Ausländer, following Paul Celan, this meant a mediated relation to German, one which showed the "home" language to be partially alien.

Conclusion

The meaning of Czernowitz as a city at the edge of empire is dominated by the history of the significance given to German. The preeminence of the German language, lasting far into the twentieth century, was central to the writing lives of both Kobylianska and Ausländer. The historical events which shaped their relationship to this language were, however, of very different natures. Kobylianska's literary imagination was shaped in German, and she carried into the Ukrainian language the sensibility she had first acquired in that language—both the popular sentimental novels she had read as a youth and the exalted ideas she took from Nietzsche. At the same time, her choice to write in Ukrainian was a decision to separate herself from the German sphere and participate in the construction of a new Ukrainian sensibility. This turn to nationalism on the contested site of the border city expresses the conflictual nature of language relations in the border city. That Kobylianska, however, continued to keep a diary in German throughout her life, testifies to the ambiguities and split allegiances of the private sphere—where translation became a permanent condition.

Ausländer's relationship to German was shaped by the Jewish literary milieu of Czernowitz, by her personal experiences of diaspora (before and after the Second World War) and by the Holocaust. Ausländer is one of relatively few Jews to have lived through the Holocaust and to have continued to use German as a literary language after World War II. (Among the best-known exceptions are Paul Celan, as noted, and Marcel Reich-Ranicki.) It is surely significant that both Celan and Ausländer are from Czernowitz. Certainly her understanding of that language and its cultural affiliations were tempered by the multilingual matrix of that city, and the translational relationships out of which it evolved. Her turn away from German, and her subsequent return, her wanderings and her final settling in Dusseldorf, testify to a difficult relation-

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ship to language and place—one which nevertheless allowed her to celebrate her past in the borderlands of the empire.

Kobylianska and Ausländer would not have known one another in Czernowitz. They belonged to different milieus and different generations (Kobylianska was born in 1863; Ausländer in 1901), though Ausländer would have heard of the more famous Kobylianska, her growing literary fame, her persecution and death in 1942. Their careers illustrate the parallel paths followed by the literatures of the city, each enclosed within its respective literary languages and traditions. Even today, they are unlikely to be found in the same anthologies or literary histories. Nevertheless, both writers defined themselves with and against the German language—along the lines of tension that animated the language life of their common border city.

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