

*Germans for a Free Missouri: Translations from the St. Louis Radical Press, 1857-1862*, selected and translated by Steven Rowan, with an introduction and commentary by James Neal Primm. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1983. xii, 323 pp. Photographs, notes, index. \$26.00 cloth.

As the title of this book suggests, it is a compilation of representative newspaper articles and editorials from the two major radical German newspapers in St. Louis just prior to the Civil War, the *Anzeiger des Westens* and the *Westliche Post*, with the Sunday supplement of the latter, *Mississippi Blätter*. Steven Rowan translated and annotated selected articles and editorials in order to present to an English-reading public the development of Republican thought and sentiment among the German radicals in St. Louis during the crisis of Missouri's secession, "to show how it came to make sense for a [native-born] German to place his life in peril to defend the American republic in Missouri" (vii). By his careful choice of news reports and editorials, the translator attempted to include journalistic comment on all the major political events affecting Missouri's secession between the founding of the *Westliche Post* in 1857 and the decisive battle of Pea Ridge, Arkansas, in March, 1862. The five major divisions of the collection, derived from the "internal logic of the material itself" (viii), are: 1) St. Louis Germans, 1857-1860; 2) The Republican Crusade, 1860; 3) Secession Winter, 1860-1861; 4) The Missouri Putsch, 1861; 5) Beyond Heroism, 1861-1862. The care exercised in the choice of articles for translation is evident in the integrity and continuity of the reports and editorials over a period of five years.

This reviewer was not able to compare any of the news reports or editorials in German with the translated versions, but even a single reading of this material yields the impression that the translator has taken care to capture not only the content of each article, but also the individual style and wit of its author. The result is both interesting and satisfying.

The body of translations in the book is preceded by two introductory chapters. James Neal Primm's on "Missouri, St. Louis, and the Secession Crisis," offers a scholarly overview of the issues, interests, and personalities of Missouri politics in the 1850s which culminated in the "Missouri Putsch" of June, 1861. The second, by Steven Rowan on "The Continuation of the German Revolutionary Tradition on American Soil," examines the European events of the 1830s and 1840s that had shaped the political philosophy of the German Forty-eighters before they emigrated to America, and the problems and issues confronting them in Missouri in the 1850s that finally impelled hundreds to bolt the Democratic party and embrace Republicanism. The main focus of

this informative essay, however, is the politics, the publishers, and the editors of the St. Louis German radical newspapers of the Civil War era. The central figure in Rowan's essay and the one that dominated the German radical press in Missouri was Heinrich Börnstein (1805–1892), publisher of the *Anzeiger des Westens*. Rowan's portrayal of Börnstein's influence on German journalistic tradition in Missouri, including the contributions of the German editors Carl Dänzer, Karl Ludwig Bernays, and Friedrich Münch, provides a valuable introduction to the St. Louis radical press.

The credits on the title page and the dust jacket to the contrary, the translated articles and editorials were annotated by both Rowan and Primm. Generally, Rowan appears to have supplied the notes on German and Missouri German topics, while Primm's notes inform about non-ethnic topics and personalities from the history of the United States and Missouri. The notes by both writers are informative, succinct, and yet scholarly, without proliferating all over every page. It is regrettable, however, that many of the notes contain no source reference other than the author's initials. Equally disappointing is the utter lack of a bibliography. A list of authoritative historical and biographical sources which Rowan and Primm utilized in the preparation of these notes would have been an invaluable resource for any reader interested in the history of Missouri and Missouri Germans.

Overall, this volume of translated and annotated articles from the St. Louis German radical press forms a valuable addition to a growing body of published historical documents from the Missouri German community. The quality of research, of language, and of publication is excellent. With one small exception the book is virtually free of misprints and similar flaws. On page 273 a single paragraph presented as an entire article from the *Anzeiger des Westens* of July 25, 1861, is duplicated as the first paragraph of another article from the same newspaper one week later (274). If this duplication did indeed occur as presented in these two different issues of the newspaper, then the translator should have noted the replication. One minor oversight does not diminish the value of the whole, however, and this book deserves to be on the shelf of every scholar interested in the history of Missouri and Missouri Germans. By way of a comment on the need for such translations in the United States, Rowan's own concluding remark in his preface is worth repeating: "The concentration by American historians on English to the exclusion of all the other languages historically spoken and written in North America both destroys our usable past and impoverishes our present" (x).

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