

I applied for a LIDL Year Abroad Project Prize to carry out a research project on the reception of the poetry of the thirteenth-century poet Walther von der Vogelweide under National Socialism. I was fortunate enough to be awarded £200 of funding for my project in the first round of applications at the start of the 2019/20 year.

My project was focused on a 1937 edition of selected poems by Walther which was edited by Hermann Stodte (1871-1939), a teacher and translator from Lübeck who was a fervent supporter of National Socialist ideology. I came across this book by chance while looking for an edition of Walther's poems in a bookshop in Oxford, having been inspired to explore his poems for myself by a course of lecture on medieval poetry which I had attended earlier on last year. I had expected it to be an edition of the poems in Middle High German but, when I looked at the poems, I found that they were described on the title page as having been "erneuert" - renewed, revived, refreshed. I was interested to find out more about the ways in which this concept and the strong focus on national identity in the translator's introduction influenced the way in which he translated Walther's poems. Once I bought the book, I was curious to find out more about the translator, because I had never heard any mention of him in my lectures or tutorials. However, searches on Solo and Google yielded very little information on him, other than a slim biographical article on German Wikipedia, a translation of *Das Nibelungenlied* from 1940 and one academic article from 2016 which discussed the ways in which Stodte presented his concept of a "German" national identity in some of his own poetry from the 1920s. It seemed that these translations had not been as fully researched as other topics from the period have been, which motivated me to investigate the questions I had about the translations for myself as part of my project.

I was also inspired to carry out further research because I was involved in the White Rose Translation Project in 2018/19. The background reading about the period that I had done to help me produce my translation was still fairly fresh in my mind. I thought that the project which I proposed would help me to apply this newly-acquired background knowledge. The topic which I chose for my project has helped me to do this by combining interests in German literature and culture of the 1930s and 40s, medieval literature, and translation theory which I would not normally have had the chance to cover as part of my course.

The funding which I received from the LIDL Year Abroad Project Prize was very valuable in allowing me to carry out research on my topic in the UK and on my German Year Abroad. It allowed me to buy several other editions of Walther's poetry in order to compare them to Stodte's translations to gain a deeper understanding of what is particularly interesting about the edition that my project is focused on. I also visited a library in Freiburg to access some older and rarer books about Walther from the nineteenth century which I couldn't easily find in bookshops. These books - including an early biography of Walther from 1865 and early mass-market editions of his poems from 1833 and 1864 - provided me with a very interesting insight into the popularisation of Walther's poetry in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which Stodte's translations also form part of. Carrying out this research also helped me to develop my ideas for a future exhibition of popular versions of medieval German history and literature (mainly focused on Walther von der Vogelweide's life and poems) which formed part of my proposal for the prize money.

The LIDL Year Abroad Project Prize was also a fantastic opportunity for me, because I aspire to study for a Master's in German literature when I graduate. It helped me to gain a taste of developing a proposal and applying for funding for my very own research project. Being awarded this prestigious prize will be a very valuable addition to my Master's application and, eventually for my CV. Carrying out the research for my project which was made possible by the LIDL Year Abroad Prize inspired me to give a talk at this year's Cambridge Undergraduate Conference in German Studies on the theme of

Innovation and Invention in German-speaking literature and culture. My talk was based on a comparison of the ways in which Karl Simrock and Hermann Stodte invented and innovated a version of "German" identity in their popular translation of Walther's poems. Giving the talk was a really rewarding experience which helped me to share some of my research and ideas on the topic with sixth-formers and undergraduates from across the UK.

Although my project was sadly interrupted by the pandemic and I haven't yet been able to do everything that I wanted to with the funding that I received as a result, I plan to return to Germany in the summer (if it is safe and legal to do so) and conduct further background research and work on the poems. I would also like to travel to meet experts on Walther and medieval German poetry to discuss the ways in which it was received, if public health rules allow this to happen! Furthermore, I still aspire to organise the exhibition that I'd planned to do as part of my proposal for the prize.