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*Czech Voices: Stories from Texas in the Amerikán Národní
Kalendár* ed. by Clinton Machann, James W. Mendl, Jr.
(review)

Helen Winter Stauffer

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CONTENTS

The Author and the West: Two Portraits by Jack Kerouac and Sam Wagstaff	John C. Aldrich
Deborah's "Breakfast": A Reconsideration	Clay C. Adams
Recent Writings of Studies in Western American Literature	Errol A. Steinbock
Research in Western American Literature: 2000-2011	Jim Riess
Book Review	John Tashaday
Reviews	
Index to Volume 26/11	

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of others—film stars, beats, hippies, valley gangs, Glendale school girls, Zen plumbers. The stereotypes form and crash like waves at Bodega Bay.

ROBERT S. HUGHES, JR.

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Czech Voices: Stories from Texas in the Amerikán Národní Kalendár. Translated and edited by Clinton Machaan and James W. Mendle, Jr. (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1991. 147 pages, \$18.95.)

Willa Cather made the experiences of Czechs in Nebraska world-famous in her fiction. Now, in *Czech Voices*, the editors provide information about nineteenth-century Czech immigrants in Texas.

The ten short autobiographies included were selected from a large number first published periodically in the national Czech language almanac, *Amerikán Národní Kalendár*. While they illustrate the unique experiences of Czechs in a small area of Texas, the stories mirror those of their countrymen and women who settled in Nebraska, Ohio, Illinois, and elsewhere, with the exception of the difficulties encountered by the Texas Czechs during the Civil War.

Because most of these people came to Texas in the 1850s, their histories reveal a little-known aspect of that war, the harassment immigrants experienced at the hands of a desperate Confederacy. The Czechs had come to escape poverty, political upheavals, and religious persecution in Europe, only to find it in Texas.

Nine of the selections are individual histories; the final essay, by journalist L.W. Dongres, is closer to an overview of the history of the Texas Czechs, including a brief description of the turmoil that Central Europe experienced in the mid 1800s, and the details about the three major ethnic groups that today are classed as Czechs—Moravians, Bohemians, and Slovaks. Although protestants and free thinkers often speak of religious persecution in Europe, the major reasons for migration seem to be economic or political.

The book is handsome, with print plates at each chapter heading, evidently taken from covers of the *Amerikán Národní Kalendár*. A photograph accompanies each life story. Introduction, informational notes, bibliography, and index are included.

For those not familiar with Texas geography or hazy about mid-nineteenth-century turmoil in Europe, maps of relevant areas would have been most useful. More serious, however, is the lack of information about the women who were also part of these experiences. Only one woman's words are included, in the joint account of Josef and Terezie Jirasek. The original series from which these pieces were selected, published first in the late 1800s and early 1900s, may not have included any by women, but one is aware of the relatively few general statements about women's contributions.

The book is successful in its intent: to personalize the universal experiences that immigrants so often faced, wherever they settled, at least in the rural Midwest: unsuspected problems with weather, land, and farm practices; concern with language; chicanery practiced on the naive by the unscrupulous; unexpected generosity and concern by others who wanted to help the newcomers; conflicts as they tried to adjust to local customs and the "American" ways while trying to maintain their own. These issues confronted immigrants whether they came to Texas or North Dakota, whether they were Czech, Norwegian, German, or Russian. But the life stories here remind the reader that those universal experiences happened to individuals.

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Haa TuwunáaguYis, *for Healing Our Spirit: Tlingit Oratory*. Edited by Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991. 514 pages, \$35.00/\$17.50.)

Despite longstanding European interest in native North American oratory—dating from the 1600s when Jesuits in New France recorded speeches from the "sauvages" whom they hoped to convert, few treatments of the subject compare favorably with this volume, the second in a series on the oral literature of the Tlingits of southeastern Alaska edited by Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer.

The editors begin by introducing the group's social structure and the important concept of *at.óow*, the "possessions" which anchor the culture. Then they describe contexts for oratory and use a detailed presentation of *koo.éex'*, a memorial service conducted a year after someone's death, to exemplify how speechmaking operates in context. Literary analyses, data on spirituality, and comparison of Tlingit oratory to speechmaking in other Indian cultures complete their introduction.

As detailed as the introduction is, it remains subsidiary to the oration texts themselves, which Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer divide into three sections. "Speeches from Various Occasions" includes fifteen texts. The earliest two come from wax cylinders made in 1899, and the most recent was delivered at a totem pole raising in 1988. Speeches delivered at the memorial service described in the introduction comprise the second section. The third section is a selection of speeches by Tlingit elders at a 1980 conference sponsored by the Sealaska Corporation, a Native corporation created in response to the 1971 Native Claims Settlement Act.

The format for the thirty-two speeches sets a Tlingit transcription opposite