



# **A History of Clouds: 99 Meditations (Seagull Books - The German List)**

*Hans Magnus Enzensberger*

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In these 99 meditations, poet and novelist Hans Magnus Enzensberger celebrates the tenacity of the normal and routine in everyday life, where the survival of the objects we use without thinking—a pair of scissors, perhaps—is both a small, human victory and a quiet reminder of our own ephemeral nature. He sets his quotidian reflections against a broad historic and political backdrop—the cold war and its accompanying atomic threat, the German student revolt, would-be socialism in Cuba, China, and Africa, and World War II as experienced by the youthful poet.

Enzensberger's poems are conversational, skeptical, and serene; they culminate in the extended set of observations which gives the collection its title. Clouds, alien and yet symbols of human life, are for Enzensberger at once a central metaphor of the Western poetic tradition and “the most fleeting of all masterpieces.” “Cloud archaeology,” writes Enzensberger, is “a science for angels.”

Praise for the German edition

“After reading this wonderful volume of poetry one would like to call Enzensberger simply the lyric voice of transience.”— *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*

“With this book Enzensberger reveals himself both as a spokesman of persistence and as a decelerator.”— *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*

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