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Review: *Baba Yaga: The Wild Witch of the East in Russian Fairy Tales*

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like a selection of interesting items that Burak could not resist including, pointing outward into further topics of study.

One of very few quibbles I could mention is with Burak's critique of the title *Nad propast'ju vo rzhi* for Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*. He rightly points out that it is not entirely adequate (adding the sense of "above" and "abyss" to the original, and removing the catcher), but, since it is taken from Samuil Marshak's translation of the Robert Burns poem, poetic translation required that the line scan in a way that is bound to impact meaning. By using the line from a well-known translation of Burns, the Russian edition ties the two texts together even more tightly than in the English original. (And no doubt it is true that "propast'" could be read as a negative reference to Western anomie.)

In sum, Alexander Burak's *"The Other" in Translation* is an informative, provocative, thought-provoking, interesting book that should help to start and continue many conversations among both translators to and from Russian and the scholars and students who use their products in working with Russian literature, film and culture. Now that Translation Studies is growing as a discipline, impacting the teaching of literature in translation as well as other fields, academic libraries will want to acquire this title as well.

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***Baba Yaga: The Wild Witch of the East in Russian Fairy Tales.* Translation and introduction by Sibelan Forrester; captions to images by Helena Goscilo; selection of images by Martin Skoro and Helena Goscilo; edited by Sibelan Forrester, Helena Goscilo, and Martin Skoro; Foreword by Jack Zipes. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2014. Notes. Index. vii + 202 pp. \$42.49 (hardcover); \$25.99 (e-reader).**

Villains are in, as we see in our Disneyfied multiplexes and musical theater productions, and what better villain to highlight than one who is functionally ambiguous? Given that Baba Yaga has been featured in a Hellboy comic (Mignola, *Hellboy, Vol. 3: The Chained Coffin and Others*, Dark Horse,

2004) as well as a Scooby Doo episode (“The House of the Nightmare Witch,” *Scooby Doo! Mystery Incorporated*, episode 202, airdate July 31, 2012, written by Adam Beechen, directed by Victor Cook), it should come as no surprise that she has finally demanded her own gloriously illustrated book.

That Baba Yaga has gone her entire existence without a colorful tome dedicated to her seems inexplicable, and Forrester rights a long-standing wrong by providing us with this collection. The book includes a Foreword by fairy tales scholar Jack Zipes, as well as Forrester’s preface and translator’s note, lengthy introduction, and brief bibliography highlighting Baba Yaga in various works. Beyond these prefatory pieces, Forrester offers 29 tales, some variations on one another, some well known, some obscure, in vibrant new translations that avail the non-Russian-reader of much of the flavor of the original language, with its nuances and jibes. The lengthy introduction probably should be called what it is, e.g., a chapter unto itself, with its detailed and in-depth examination of the history and modernity of Baba Yaga and the various ways in which she has been interpreted over time.

The introduction is based on the “Russian Fairy Tales” course Helena Goscilo pioneered at the University of Pittsburgh, a version of which I taught at Pitt and continue to teach at West Virginia University. That connection clearly strengthens the book and its presentation, as many semesters of teaching about Baba Yaga have guided Forrester and Goscilo in identifying the most interesting aspects of her character and the most effective ways of presenting those to the reader. In fact, the overall structure, the approachable language, and the incorporation of theory in a way that is accessible to non-academic readers work in harmony to make the book appropriate for a wide range of audiences; Slavists and Russianists, folklorists and art connoisseurs, students and instructors alike will find something worthwhile in this book. Helpful linguistic and etymological notes, especially those comparing Russian words to words in other Slavic languages, as well as curious and clever cultural tidbits, offer something for everyone, delivered in a style that neither condescends to the non-Russian-reader and layman nor bores the Slavic folklorist. The chief beneficiaries of the book, however, will be those of us who teach courses dealing with Baba Yaga, and our students. The price tag, while not miniscule, is reasonable, given the number and quality of images selected by Goscilo

and Skoro. Such images offer a wonderful collection, enhanced by the astute editorial comments on the photos, such as the sometimes-snide remarks on the overt commercialism exhibited by some newer works featuring Baba Yaga. Such comments are welcome first because of their content, but also because they are much more entertaining to read and more thoughtful than the standard photo captions. They also draw our attention to another innovative feature of the book: rather than limiting itself to classical fairy tale illustrations or antique woodcuts, this publication is rich in contemporary renderings and even high-tech offerings. The up-to-the-minute illustrations reflect not only the diligence of the contributors, but also, more importantly, the vital role Baba Yaga continues to play in Russian and global culture.

Perhaps the most useful indirect feature of the book is its review of other books on Baba Yaga, providing interested readers with other avenues for their own continued study. The tangible tastes of humor throughout the text, the clever turns of phrase, and the elegant translations combine to serve up a feast worthy of Baba Yaga's bounteous table; the illustrations ensure that the reader, like Vasilisa, will find her way to the hut where Baba Yaga waits, ready to impart her wisdom or gobble up the overcurious. Forrester's collection ensures that the hut with chicken legs will remain in the woods, ready to delight and terrify all who encounter it.

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Genevra Gerhart with Eloise M. Boyle. *The Russian's World: Life and Language*. 4th ed. Bloomington, IN: Slavica, 2012. xxx + 513pp. ISBN-10: 0893573809; ISBN-13: 978-0893573805 \$49.95. xxx + 513.

Now in its fourth edition (first published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich in 1974), Gerhart's and Boyle's encyclopedic catalogue of "common knowledge" among "Russians" is a classic; readers of this review likely have at least one well-worn edition of *The Russian's World* on their bookshelf. Where else under one cover can one find the rules for "gorodki" (240-1), a guide to (Soviet) Russian clothing sizes — "take the bust or chest