

Yasha Klots. *Tamizdat: Contraband Russian Literature in the Cold War Era.*

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In *Tamizdat: Contraband Russian Literature in the Cold War Era*, Yasha Klots surveys texts by Soviet Russian authors that engage with Stalinist terror and were published before the emergence of the dissident movement in the mid-1960s—that is, before Russian literature published abroad (and often smuggled back into the USSR, not least as an instrument of soft power) became a mass phenomenon.

Klots consciously omits the text that is commonly hailed as the starting point of late Soviet tamizdat: Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* (1957). Instead, he takes as his point of departure Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (1962), because the hopes raised by its publication in *Novyi mir* literary journal, and subsequently dashed when no more texts on the terror reached the Soviet reader, triggered the first wave of manuscripts sent abroad.

Ivan Denisovich's official status is central to Klots's argument: *Ivan Denisovich* did not just mark the limits of what was permissible at the height of the Thaw, but was published precisely because it followed recognizable, and perfectly Soviet, genre conventions. By contrast, all the other texts discussed—Anna Akhmatova's *Requiem*, Lydia Chukovskaia's *Sofia Petrovna* and Varlam Shalamov's *Kolyma Tales* (as well as the texts by Andrei Siniavskii and Yulii Daniel surveyed in the epilogue)—alienated editors through their formal properties and/or protagonists.

Klots is an excellent literary scholar, and his discussion yields new insights into texts that are among the best-researched of twentieth century Russian literature. His study of gendered viewpoints as an additional impediment to publication—as intelligentsia women writing from the queues outside the prisons, Akhmatova and Chukovskaia were witnesses to the camps at one remove, and their protagonists were female—is a case in point. So is the analysis of Shalamov's Mandel'shtam-themed stories (*Cherry Brandy* and *Sententsiia*) as meditations on poetic inspiration and the link between life and language and the influence of Shalamov's formalist past in the 1920s on his documentary fiction.

While each chapter elucidates one key work, Klots's strategy of placing these works into context allow him to touch upon a large number of other texts, such as Gulag memoirs and fictions that were not published, or *Going Under*, Chukovskaia's lesser-known sequel to *Sofia Petrovna*, which made her a pariah. This greatly enhances the book's overall informational value.

Hans Robert Jauss stated that “a text is unthinkable without its addressees” (15). Klots is well aware of the issues arising when texts written mainly for the respective author's contemporaries in Soviet Russia were read by Russian emigres with limited or no experience of Soviet social and linguistic particularities (and by non-Russians in translation). He provides a wealth of detail on each text's reception by different audiences and uses reception as an opportunity to comment on the dichotomies of the Russian literary community of the mid-twentieth century.

Perhaps the most outstanding element of this closely argued volume is the meticulous reconstruction of each text's journey to the west. Klots transcribes oft-repeated shorthand such as "reached the West by diplomatic pouch," giving the names of key actors and underlining the role of western scholars. His reconstructions also complicate the commonly held view of tamizdat (print) editions as authoritative versions. Rather, we are encouraged to contemplate the contingency of printed texts that originated in a clandestine literary economy: without direct authorial oversight, what reached the press was sometimes incomplete or not final, and always at the mercy of editors (competing versions of *Requiem*, the publication of Chukovskaia's *Sofia Petrovna* under the unauthorized title *The Deserted House*, the actions of the editor of *Novyi zhurnal*, who split Shalamov's cycles into stories he edited to make them palatable for émigré readers). Thus tamizdat, at least at this early stage, emerges as a continuation of samizdat, more focused on circulation than on accuracy, and ultimately sharing more characteristics with self-made typescripts than with the orderly processes of the Gutenberg paradigm of printed literature.

The overview of tamizdat given in the introduction notwithstanding, this is not a history of tamizdat. Arguably, the title is misleading, too, because Cold War-era tamizdat took off as a phenomenon after the period discussed by Klots, namely after Siniavskii and Daniel received labor camp sentences for publishing tamizdat. And yet this is a fantastically informative volume that covers a variety of disciplinary angles—literary scholarship, cultural history, history of the book, and reader response—and will be of interest to scholars and students as well as to committed lay readers of texts from behind the Iron Curtain.

Ed. Ostap Kin. *Babyn Yar: Ukrainian Poets Respond.*

Trans. John Hennesy and Ostap Kin. Ukrainian Research Institute of Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., 2022. ix, 269 pp.

Bibliography. Chronology. Glossary. Index. Illustrations. Photos. \$16.00, paper.

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In September, 2021, I attended a zoom memorial for Babyn Yar. Eighty years earlier, tens of thousands of Jews (along with Roma, Tatars, and communists) were shot into a mass grave on the outskirts of Nazi-occupied Kyiv. Several poets read tributes. I had been studying Ukrainian poetry about Babyn Yar, but when I mentioned this phenomenon, the American poets were surprised it existed. Ostap Kin and John Hennesy's bilingual volume, *Babyn Yar: Ukrainian Poets Respond*, corrects this lacuna.

Babyn Yar has played an increasing role in Ukrainian collective memory since the 2013–14 "Revolution of Dignity," and especially since Russia's 2022 full-scale invasion. When a Russian missile fell near Babyn Yar, killing five civilians, President Zelensky addressed the nation: "We all died again in Babyn Yar." Ironically, as the Kremlin has justified its attacks on Ukrainian civilians by accusing Ukrainians of nationalism, Ukrainians have engaged in