

Anna Glazova. *For the Shrew*.

Trans. Alex Niemi. Brookline, Mass.: Zephyr Press, 2022. vii, 143 pp. Notes. \$17.00, paper.

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Alex Niemi's translation of Anna Glazova's poems, collected here under the title of one of Glazova's collections *For the Shrew*, brings to English these poems of nature, the forest, and of the natural world as it meets and intersects with the human. In Russian, Glazova's poems challenge the reader with their lack of capitalization, minimal and often absent punctuation, and the sometimes hermetic imagery of poems that can begin and end in unexpected places; in English, Alex Niemi has had to balance her translations to capture the same reading experience. There needs to be enough in the English to point towards how to read, while also preserving the readers' need to orientate themselves within the text and navigate a path through.

These translations are very successful, and a large part of this success lies in the careful reconstruction of meaning. In a poem from the collection *North*, for example, the Russian compression is given a little explication with extra verbs in English:

<p>пресный ветер свернул в гнёзда ветки, хвою внутрь, за окно яблоки.</p>	<p>bland wind rolled the branches into nests, curled the pine needles inwards, spun the apple out the window (60–61).</p>
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Where Russian uses one verb to express all these actions, Niemi's version adds the verbs "curled" and "spun" to maintain the movement and sense that Russian can achieve more laconically.

There are few instances when such a translation intervention is required. This is not to say that Glazova's work is easy to translate, but that it requires not interpretive changes and additions, but preservation of the qualities that characterize the texts: laconicism and precision. Given that English is more wordy than Russian, and in particular that articles must be added in English (articles do not exist in Russian and are deduced from context that is often lacking in Glazova's work), this is a particular challenge. Niemi is resourceful in her choice of words, in the bold manipulation of syntax, and in the careful choice of vocabulary. In another poem from the same collection *North*, for example, Niemi delicately handles the challenges of a compressed and complex image:

в нашем доме свет далеко не ходит.
в три утра тебе ближе всего показали на север
а ты спишь и тень шире круга луны
из облаков и видна бы-
да с одеялом вы мученики одним миром стянуты;
столько льда на севере что не видишь и дня.

Lines 2, 3 and 4 here are without punctuation and the meaning is both condensed and precise. Niemi's solution is successful because of her careful choice about how to use definite

and indefinite articles, her choice of translation for conjunctions, and her decision to add punctuation at one point:

north is closest at three in the morning
 though you're asleep and the shadow is broader than the arc of the moon,
 even visible from the clouds—(78–79).

These faithful and accurate translations can give those without Russian the confidence that they are reading a close reproduction of Glazova's original texts. For those with Russian—whether learners or the more proficient—the dual-language text is a great asset and instructive in the art of translation. It is a great pleasure to trace Niemi's versions of the Russian and to see how idiom and image find their expression in English, how compression and precision are reproduced in a language that struggles more than Russian to convey these qualities.

This collection by Zephyr press is beautifully produced. As a kind of preface to the poems there is a short text, "On the Boundaries of Conversations" by Anna Glazova, in which she talks about poetry, openness, language, and communication. There is nothing here by the translator, however, and no introduction to the poems. It is only at the end of the collection that one finds the translator's afterword, in which Alex Niemi describes her engagement with Glazova's texts and the process of translating them. Of particular interest is her description of her collaboration with Glazova in translation—Glazova, a translator herself, was keen to be involved in the process and has commented on and contributed to the translations. The position of this text as an afterword forces the reader to take on the texts without introduction or explication. Perhaps this is appropriate for poems such as these which are often without context, so that their meaning rests fully upon spare words and isolated images. For many readers, however, the inclusion of a more traditional introduction and a translator's foreword would make the texts more accessible.

Alexander Etkind. *Tolkovanie puteshestvii: Rossiia i Amerika v travelogakh i intertekstakh.*

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The cover of Alexander Etkind's 2001 book, *Tolkovanie puteshestvii: Rossiia i Amerika v travelogakh i intertekstakh* (Interpretation of Journeys: Russia and America in Travelogues and Intertexts) shows a crowd of European immigrants greeting the first sight of the Statue of Liberty with excitement and hope, symbolized by the brilliant light emanating from the American continent. By contrast, on the cover of the second edition, from 2022, we see a picture of a solitary couple, their eyes closed in rapture as they dance together into what appears to be an abyss. The change suits well the author's overall approach to the book's