

translation decision carries with it the implication that other talking names, from Nikolai Gogol's Chichikov to Fedor Dostoevskii's Raskol'nikov, should undergo a similar treatment—an odd prospect, indeed. Still, we can thank the translators for having made this choice in that it will likely prove productive in classes in which the problems of literary translation are a topic of discussion.

This last criticism is minor. Chandler, Irwin, and Larsen have produced a volume that will prove valuable in both in the classroom and on stage. It helps place Platonov alongside Bulgakov and Maiakovskii as one of the key playwrights of the early Soviet period.

KEVIN REESE

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Leaving Footprints in the Taiga: Luck, Spirits and Ambivalence among the Siberian Orochen Reindeer Herders and Hunters. By Donatas Brandišauskas.

New York: Berghahn, 2017. xiii, 291 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Glossary. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. Figures. Tables. Maps. \$120.00, hard bound.

doi: 10.1017/slr.2018.185

Leaving Footprints in the Taiga by Donatas Brandišauskas is, in so many ways, a wonderful book. Based on seventeen months of substantial fieldwork among a small community of Orochen reindeer herders and hunters living east of Lake Baikal, Brandišauskas examines an Orochen ontology of *kutu*, or luck. In looking at *kutu* in particular through the beliefs and practices of the Zhumaneev-Aruneev kin group, an extended family that hunts and herds reindeer in the Zabaikal Province and Buriatia, he analyzes Orochen *kutu* as a complex practice and idea that includes creating and sustaining good relationships between humans, humans and animals, and humans and the spirit world. The way in which such relationships are produced and maintained is key to Orochen hunters' success to tracking and killing animals, as well as to securing future fortune and luck. By extension, a *kutuchi*, or lucky person, is a person who follows cultural rules that help him or her to express respect for and gratitude to guardian or master spirits, and to maintain a living energy (*musun*) that flows through humans, animals, and plants. While Orochen hunters acknowledge that *kutu* cannot be constant and fluctuates, a lucky person must nevertheless continuously use her or his knowledge and skills to enable good fortune and fate.

Much of what Brandišauskas describes and knows about Orochen hunting ontology and culture was collected 2004–11, although he also makes excellent use of pre-Soviet and Soviet ethnographic sources and texts. On the one hand, Brandišauskas' ethnographic experience enables him to delineate significant cultural practices that ensure and maintain *kutu*, and show the knowledge, skill, and expertise involved in its maintenance: for example, taking care of *omiruks* (miniature figures or figurines) that act as guardians, using pieces of animals—sable fur or the upper jaw of a moose with teeth attached—to attract luck, reading “natural” signs to assist trapping, and guarding the words one pronounces and speaks. What is at stake here is not only a cultural definition of luck—*kutu* is clearly set in contradistinction to a more western understanding of luck as a chance-like incident—but also the notion of a cultural self that is not always already seen as bounded but marked by complex interrelations with other humans, animals, plants and external phenomena such as thunder and wind. On the other hand, the temporal length of his research enables Brandišauskas to present an Orochen world that is also subject to change. Like so many others who have lived through the post-Soviet economic and political transition, Orochen

started to experience great poverty. As one consequence, Orochen do not only hunt for reasons of sustainability, but also to trade the products of the hunt with others on the market.

While *Leaving Footprints in the Taiga* is based on a great deal of ethnographic knowledge and expertise, it nevertheless raises larger questions about the anthropology of Siberia and the North, as well as an anthropology that centers on indigenous issues. Important questions—the production of ethnographic knowledge, temporal continuity, and gender—have been and are explored in anthropology, and they trouble *Leaving Footprints in the Taiga* as well. For example, in telling us at the beginning of the book that he first became truly aware of Orochen ontology as part of an ethno-archaeological expedition, Brandišauskas is honest about the ways in which he came to live among Orochen hunters in the Zabaikal region; at the same time, however, *expedition* marks an idiom reminiscent of an exploratory attitude that in significant parts of the discipline is now associated with and criticized for an evolutionist outlook and exotic desire. It would have been fitting for the author to frame the term in more critical ways. At times Brandišauskas also struggles with issues of historical continuity. Early on in the book the reader is informed that the Zhumaneev-Aruneev alliance constitutes one of the most isolated groups in the Zabaikal region; however, she or he is also informed that Orochen cultural practices constituted a serious site of loss in the period of the Soviet Union and that it is only in the post-Soviet period that Orochen hunting and spiritual knowledge began to experience a revival. Yet, if the Zhumaneev-Aruneev kin group truly lived in an isolated world, how then would such a historical break, as implied by the author, have occurred? Exploring questions of historical continuity and break in greater detail would have certainly assisted this reader. And third, while most of the hunters Brandišauskas describes are men, they are not always already men, and I feel that it would have behooved the author to signify this in his use of—for example—gender pronouns (for example, see page 3).

PETRA RETHMANN
McMaster University

Sustaining Russia's Arctic Cities: Resource Politics, Migration and Climate Change. Ed. Robert W. Orttung. New York: Berghahn Books, 2017. xx, 254 pp.

Notes. Index. Figures. Tables. Maps. \$110.00, hard bound.

doi: 10.1017/slr.2018.186

Russia's Arctic region has received focused attention during the last decade due to its importance for both geopolitical and global environmental concerns. At the same time, our understanding of Russian policy and activity in the region remains relatively limited. As such, this edited collection (the second volume in Berghahn's Studies in the Circumpolar North series) is a welcome effort to provide insight into current trends of importance for the medium- to long-term future of the region.

The edited volume brings together a range of authors from Russia, Europe, and the US in order to reflect on substantive issues and their consequences for Russia's Arctic urban areas. More specifically, the book's focus is underpinned by a belief that the policy-making process, resource development, and climate change are key factors with respect to shaping the sustainability of the region going forward. These concerns provide a basic structure for the collection, which covers "decision making," "migration trends in Russian Arctic cities," and "climate change."

In order to provide a context for the various contributions, Colin Reisser opens up the collection with a general examination of the evolution of Russia's Arctic cities