

SlavFile

April 1996

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SLAVIC LANGUAGE DIVISION
AMERICAN TRANSLATORS ASSOCIATION

FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

by Susana Greiss

Well, it seems that things are finally getting back to normal. Our Directory is out, Ann is back in her house after the fire, and I am back in my apartment after shuttling back and forth between my daughter's house in Brooklyn and my apartment in Queens. What a relief!

Ann is putting together sessions for the ATA conference in Colorado Springs this fall. We want our program to be as interesting and as useful as possible. It is still not too late to submit proposals for the Conference, so please do not delay and call Ann as soon as possible. This is our most important activity of the year, and your opportunity to participate.

Our Directory was a major feat, in a way, because what we anticipated to be a 3- or 4-month project actually took over a year to finally see the light of day. This year, for the first time, we were able to offer our members a special benefit - we had sufficient funds to cover publication of the Directory without asking for an additional contribution from our members. However, the task of putting the material together turned out to be a long and arduous job. We tried our best to give ample notice to all members, sent out a special mailing, and also inserted a self-addressed tear-out page in two consecutive issues of the *SlavFile*. All entries were then submitted to the entrants to be checked for accuracy. In the interim, if there were any changes such as new accreditation, change of address, etc., the entries were revised accordingly. Unfortunately, less than half of our members responded. If we do not receive a response, we have to assume that you do not want to be listed.

Perhaps the following explanation will help clarify some points that seem to come up:

1 When you join the Slavic Language Division of the ATA, you join an organization staffed entirely by volunteers. Simple arithmetic will tell you that with 400 to 450 members at \$15 a year (minus \$2 withheld by ATA to cover direct expenses headquarters incurs on our behalf), we cannot afford an office, paid staff, or even our own telephone line. However, as officers of the SLD, we are dedicated to the Division, giving willingly of our personal time and, on occasion, even sacrificing our own income, to fulfill our commitment to you.

2 We request of you the same thoughtfulness we give you. If you are disappointed in your expectations, remember that we are a volunteer organization; the solution: more personal involvement on the part of our members. Please show consideration in your use of the

telephone, the times you call, and so on. Do not call after 10:00 pm., and if you don't reach us the first time, it is a courtesy to try again and save us the long-distance charges. There is always a delay before we receive reimbursement for the expenses we incur on the Division's behalf.

Another point we would like to make is this: We receive calls from potential members who have heard of us but are only vaguely aware of who we are. They ask us questions such as "How can I become certified, licensed, etc. as a Russian translator?" Such questions should be directed to the ATA, and we must explain why we, as a Division, cannot help them unless they join the ATA, then we give them ATA's number, and the person has to make yet another long distance call. If anyone inquires of you as a member, the best thing to do is to give them the ATA number right away, and then they can join both ATA and the SLD, and have all their questions answered about accreditation at the same time.

3 One of the reasons we publish the *SlavFile* is to build a bridge among members who live too far from each other to meet personally. We try to make it as useful (and interesting) as we can. Through our newsletter we can reach you to let you know what's happening and what opportunities have come to our attention, and we hope that you read it promptly, so that you do not miss any relevant and timely information.

4 We depend on you to keep us up-to-date about yourselves. In this issue, you will find a survey intended to let us know more about our members, and help us share useful information with others about the profession. Please take a few minutes of your time to fill it out.

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Membership

\$15 addition to ATA membership fee and designation of Slavic Division membership on application or renewal form provides full membership.

Write to ATA, 1800 Diagonal Rd., Ste. 220, Alexandria, VA 22314.

Affiliate membership \$15 per year provides a subscription to the newsletter and participation in regional and national activities.

Write to Susana Greiss at above address.

Advertising rates

Classified ad: \$5 per issue for up to 5 lines.

Display ad: \$25 per issue for up to

¼ page. Send artwork to editor and payment to Susana Greiss.

FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR (continued from page 1)

5 We also ask you to check the enclosed membership list carefully. If your telephone number is missing or you have moved, please let us know. If you see (95) after your name, it means we have no record that your dues have been paid for 1996. If you have forgotten to add \$15 to your ATA dues, you can still send a separate check. If you are an affiliate, please send the check to the Administrator, made out in the name of Susana Greiss; ATA will not accept your check if you are not a member, but we keep a record of affiliates, and you will receive all newsletters and other notices directly from us.

6 A word of clarification about the objectives of the Slavic Language Division. We try our best to offer support and assistance to all members seeking to use their skills, but it is not the function of a professional organization to provide jobs, much as we would like to see everyone gainfully employed. However, membership can be of great benefit, both professionally and in your search for work; we are always on the look-out for job opportunities and are happy to pass them along. We also depend on you to share this type of information with us.

7 Finally, to all members who were not included in the Directory because they joined the Division after the deadline, to all those whose entry may have contained errors or omissions, we offer our sincere apologies. In order to partially remedy the situation, we will enclose another form in our next issue of the *SlavFile*, which will be attached to all Directory orders as an Addendum. To those who have sent us messages of appreciation, thank you for your support and encouragement.

We hope that some of you will give serious consideration to running for Division office in 1997, when our current term expires. Much needs to be and can be done in the Division. We need new and capable people and we welcome them.

MEETING IN NEW YORK CITY, APRIL 20, 1996

Because of exceptionally bad weather this winter, we have not had a meeting since December 16, 1995. We hope to get back to our regular pattern of meetings, and have scheduled an unusually interesting program for April 20th.

Place: Eighth Avenue Studios

939 8th Avenue, Third Floor Rm 3-B (at 56th St.)

New York, NY 10019 (ring bell downstairs to release door)

Date: Saturday, April 20, 1996

Time: 10:00 am (sharp)

Agenda: We have a double agenda for this day, after updating you on the regular activities "behind the scenes."

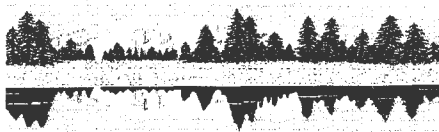
1) **Jeffrey A. Margolis** is an Immigration and Foreign Trade Attorney. He will talk to us about the new Immigration Law and its implications. Mr. Margolis frequently uses interpreters and translators, and is actively seeking out Russian translators/interpreters. He is a graduate of the Brooklyn Law School, has attended Harvard U. and the U. of Wisconsin (cum laude in 1967). He is a lecturer and columnist, and specializes in Immigration and Consular Law. His practice also includes foreign investors, multi-national corporations and counselling in real estate matters.

2) **Alice Weeks** is bringing an interesting list of translation "challenges" – neologisms and other difficulties in translation she has encountered in the course of her work.

Please bring your own terms for discussion; if you have a list, bring 10 or 15 copies to distribute around. We look forward to seeing you there. If you have any questions, please call (718)271-2110.

THE VIEW FROM SEATTLE

by Ann G. Macfarlane
Assistant Administrator



We have had an administrative change in Seattle. Under the press of professional responsibilities, I have had to relinquish some of the volunteer activities I have been involved in during the last two years. Karina Watkins, a member of our group since she arrived in Seattle two years ago, has kindly agreed to chair the Slavic Special Interest Group of NOTIS (The Northwest Translators and Interpreters Society). I am very grateful to Karina for accepting the job of coordinating our Seattle activities, and I look forward to continuing to work closely with her both as Assistant Administrator of our division, and as President of NOTIS. It was a good moment for me to hand over this baton, since my personal life was disrupted by a house fire on Christmas morning. Fortunately, no one was hurt and we are now back in our home, but life has been more than usually hectic for the last three months. I'm looking forward to resuming "normal life," in whatever guise it appears, as spring arrives here!

Life continues to be diverse for those working in Russian translation and interpretation in the Pacific Northwest. The US West Coast-Russian Far East Working Group, a subcommittee of the Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission, met in Anchorage in March, and we will be briefed in early April on the outcome of their deliberations. The group discussed a number of ideas to facilitate trade between our areas that had been put forward last June, including a proposal for an electronic customs clearance system. A "reverse trade mission"

in the medical field is due here in late April. The University of Washington, whose Slavic Department was retained after being due for elimination last year, is working hard to develop an alumni group for the Department that will help facilitate links between the world of academia and the community, in both its business and its public service aspects.

On the broader professional front, the proposal for a "brokerage" system to service the medical interpretation needs of the Department of Social and Health Services has been stalled by a court injunction. Many of our members have been active in trying to eliminate the worst aspects of the "brokerage" and to organize so that interpreters will not find themselves the object of unpleasant actions by large government departments, with no recourse. We now have four local organizations devoted to the professional needs of translators and interpreters — quite a mix!

The Slavic Special Interest Group of NOTIS met for lunch at the end of March, again at Ivar's Salmon House. The company and the food were a pleasure — we had 24 members and friends participating, so the table was overflowing.

Finally, please do let me know your thoughts and ideas on programming for the ATA conference next October. As our Administrator mentions, this is a vital part of our activities and we welcome your participation!

HUMAN RESOURCES

Congratulations to Nancy Luetzow and Gordon Livermore for passing the dreaded ATA accreditation test for Russian to English translation.

Laura Wolfson writes to tell us of her publication of an article in *Hemispheres*, the inflight magazine of United Airlines (January 1995). The article is entitled "Breaking the Language Barrier" and provides advice to international business men concerning finding competent interpreters. Laura mentions the ATA as a good source of interpreter referrals and advises. "...if you are tempted to cut corners by using an undergraduate language major or someone's friend who spent a semester in Europe—and surprising as it is, some fairly astute business people surrender to this temptation—stop that thought! (If it occurs to you a second time, perhaps the costs of doing business internationally are more than you're able to take on at the moment.)" Those of you who didn't happen to fly United in January and would like to read the article can write to Laura at 244 W Harvey St., 1st floor, Philadelphia, PA 19144-3321. She asks that you send a stamped self-addressed envelope and \$3.00 to cover the costs of handling.

REMINDER

Dear members: Please look at your address label. If you see (95) after your name, this means that we have no record of your membership renewal for 1996. If you wish to continue to be a member, you must make sure that your dues are paid up. We do not send out individual reminders. All dues are payable January 1 of every year. However, if you joined during or after the Nashville Conference, you are paid up through 1996. If you did not pay for 1996, we will regretfully assume that you no longer wish to belong to SLD and this will be your last issue of the SlavFile.

SlavFile Lite or NOT BY WORD COUNT ALONE

by Lydia Stone

The other day my friend Volodya told me he was going to traffic court to argue his way out of a speeding ticket. He had indeed been driving faster than the posted limit, he told me in English, but as he had been following the "green wave" he felt he had every right to assume that his speed was sanctioned. After a minute, I inferred that "following the green wave" means to go at a speed compatible with a series of staggered traffic lights. However, I couldn't imagine our beleaguered police force or traffic judges having the inclination to indulge in abstruse linguistic hypotheses, and I pictured Volodya being send off to St. Elizabeth's Mental Hospital for observation or at the very least being tested for intoxication. To avoid this I offered to rearrange my schedule and accompany him to court as an interpreter. There was no need for this at all, Volodya responded, after all hadn't he talked himself out of a ticket for parking in front of a fire hydrant only weeks after having arrived in this country? Evidently, he had gotten up in court and admitted that he knew very well that it was illegal to park in front of a hydrant, but how was he, a newly arrived visiting scientist to know that the ornate tower, which looked like a model of something in the Kremlin, was a hydrant, when those in his homeland were of a completely different configuration. The sympathetic judge let him off without even a reprimand. I think that the next time I get a ticket I am going to take Volodya into court with me to act as interpreter and argue my case.

For our anniversary, my husband and I and some friends went to dinner at the *Russia House* in Herndon VA., a far Northwestern suburb of Washington, D.C.. I do not recommend this restaurant to Division members living in or visiting our area. It was quite expensive by our standards, if not by Washington D.C. yuppie ones. The food ranged from fair to very good, but its authenticity ranged from only acceptable to totally wrong. Indeed, a number of dishes appeared to be more artists' conception of what Russian food might be like (e.g. noodles with caviar) and my Russian friend, who is not at all known for being fussy, refused to eat his Borscht because, although it was not bad, it was nothing like the real thing. The menu names many dishes in what is obviously meant to be transliterated Russian and is full of errors—the most amusing of which is Кулибяка по барански, i.e., meatpies as prepared by sheep.

Readers are invited to contribute reviews of Russian restaurants they have tried throughout the country. After all we all travel, some of us a good deal, and we all have to eat. I would love to publish a dining guide to the

restaurants of Brighton Beach if any reader would like to contribute one.

For anyone who has not yet seen it, Mikhaylkov's "Burnt by the Sun" is now in video stores throughout the country. Definitely worthwhile!. Another film now in video stores that may appeal to lovers of Russian literature is "Country Life." Set in Australia after World War I, it is definitely not for those outraged by "transpositions" of literary classics. I do not want to spoil the surprise by saying more.

My paragraph on Cyrillic license plates in last month's SlavFile engendered a number of responses. I will keep on publishing examples as long as people keep sending them to me. Vladimir Talmy of Silver Spring, Maryland writes that he saw XOPOWO not long ago. ZABTPA has also been spotted in the Washington D.C. area. Vladimir Bolotnikov of Oakland, California tells of an inadvertent Cyrillic license plate a friend of his was issued: 3VER69. He also reports on LIFE 3A and BOZHEMOI. Finally, Fainna Solasko has seen CEKRET and BOBA in the Boston area, as well as the transliterated BALDA and DURDOM. My own plate is transliterated: PEREVOD; however, if I ever manage to get my translation of *Little Humpbacked Horse* published, I have vowed to celebrate by adopting CKA3KA.

Speaking of publication, does anyone know of any small press in the U.S. specializing in publishing translations of Russian literature or in Russian manuscripts? I myself am fervently interested in the former, and we have received an inquiry about the latter.

Lovers of poetry in our Division, (and if you don't love poetry your Russian soul is hereby revoked) will be pleased to know that the Literary Division of ATA is sponsoring a 1960s type coffeehouse at the next (fall, 1996) ATA Conference in Colorado Springs. Anybody interested in participating by reading your own translations or original poetry in any language, please contact me. Poetry need not be submitted; if you want to read it, we want to hear it. We are also looking for folksingers and musicians to perform at this event. I myself am seeking someone willing to sing some of my translations of Russian songs.

In honor of the wintry weather most of the country has been having, I offer readers my translation of Pushkin's "Winter Evening." Actually this translation was composed during a series of restless nights when a hellish sinus infection was preventing me from sleeping, so all defects in the work can be blamed on the infection and the antibiotic.

(continued on page 5)



Winter Evening

Aleksandr Pushkin

Translated by Lydia Stone

Swirling clouds of snow are flying,
Shrouding skies in cloaks of fog,
Like a babe the storm is crying,
Now it howls like a dog.
Thatch is blowing helter-skelter
From the rooftop to the ground.
Like a traveler seeking shelter
Storm winds at the shutters pound.

Our old hut is dark and dreary
Every gust makes rafters groan.
Nanny, you seem very weary
Sitting silent all alone.
Has the storm's incessant moaning
Cast you into sadness deep?
Has your spinning wheel's dull droning
Lulled you into dreamless sleep?

Come we'll drink and drown our sorrow,
Dear old friend of my lost youth,
Drink tonight, forget tomorrow –
That will cheer our hearts in truth.
Sing the songs that gave such pleasure
When you used to sing to me;
Sing of maids and knights and treasure,
Blue birds dwelling by the sea.

Swirling clouds of snow are flying
Shrouding skies with cloaks of fog,
Like a babe the storm is crying,
Now it howls like a dog.
Come let's drink and drown our sorrow,
Dear old friend of my lost youth,
Drink tonight, forget tomorrow –
That will cheer our hearts in truth.



Vladimir Bolotnikov has volunteered to share his recipe for Russian Farmer's Cheese or *морож*. In my experience, complaints about the lack of a satisfactory equivalent to this staple are almost as numerous as those about Russian bread among the emigre population.

"My recipe for TVOROG (which can be pronounced both [tva-'rOg] and ['tvO-rag] – a rare case of freedom of expression in Russian phonetics) is very simple, but, as with even very simple recipes, requires some experience and several tries to get things "to happen by themselves":

1. Buy 1 gallon of milk (I usually buy whole milk, being a typical daredevil Russian, but low fat milk is OK; non-fat milk, however, makes "tvorog" taste 'sandy'...).
2. Boil milk in a pot.
3. Let it cool to body or to room temperature.
4. Add either yoghurt or buttermilk – half-a-glass or a glass-ful for a gallon is enough.
5. Leave it in a warm place for the milk to curdle (e.g. on the stove).

(Depending on the weather and on the time of year, this may take 12 hours to 3 days to happen.)

6. When the milk is curdled, put it on a small fire and leave it on for 15-30 minutes: the goal is, of course, to separate the liquid part from the harder, "cheesy" part.
7. Put 2 layers of cheesecloth (available at hardware stores) inside a strainer. The cheesecloth must be square.
8. Pour what's in the pot in the cheesecloth/strainer. (If you catch the liquid part, it's a famous Russian face and skin care recipe – try it!)

A difficult task comes next:

9. Take opposite cheesecloth ends and tie them, in two pairs.
10. Let the cheesecloth drip for ... minutes (until the cheese is ready).

So, everything is simple, but everything is very sensitive in this process (and affects the quality of the end product). The best thing is to experiment with all of the parameters: how long to let milk curdle; how long to warm it until the liquid and the solid part separate; how high the flame should be (it should be low, as far as I am concerned); how long to let the cheesecloth drip, etc. But even when I "fail", 'tva-rOg' is still quite delicious, and you can eat it with anything-pancakes, fruit, nuts, honey, sour milk (SMETANA), yoghurt, salted, sweetened, any way YOU like it!"

NOTE: Vladimir and I have been having so much fun exchanging recipes that we are thinking of compiling a cookbook of Russian recipes adapted to American ingredients and mores, as well as American dishes adapted to Russian tastes. If any reader has recipes to submit, either to this column or the potential cookbook, please send them to me.

Resources

Russian-English Dictionary of Science and Technology

Reviewed by Peter J. Benson

Fourth Edition, 814 pages, \$135.00

Callaham, L.I., Newman, P.E., Callaham, J.R.

John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

605 Third Ave., New York, NY 10158-0012

This is a new edition of Callaham's *Russian-English Dictionary of Science and Technology*, the fourth in a series that first appeared in 1947 as *R-E Technical and Chemical Dictionary*, later *R-E Chemical and Polytechnical Dictionary*. Because the third edition appeared in 1975, it was lagging seriously behind the evolution of technology and language. The original author, Ludmilla Ignatiev Callaham, died in 1990, and the updated edition was compiled by ATA's own Patricia E. Newman, with help from L.I. Callaham's widower, John R. Callaham. Those familiar with earlier editions should note that, with this edition, the work has been made more general, less specifically a chemistry dictionary (though it still includes an excellent collection of terms from chemistry). This is reflected in the fact that the word "Chemical" has been dropped from the title. The new Callaham's has many features that will appeal to Russian-English technical translators in the United States: It claims over 120,000 Russian terms, which makes it four times the size of the Soviet-published (and now decade-old) Русско-английский словарь научно-технической лексики (РАНТЛ). Unlike the latter, Callaham's 4th avoids compound terms whose meanings do not diverge from those of the constituent words. As a typical example, under the keyword «энергия», РАНТЛ lists a dozen or so phrases such as «выделять энергию», "give off [give out, liberate, release] energy, which are completely unnecessary ballast because the correct meaning is obvious from the individual meanings of the constituent words of the phrase; in contrast, Callaham's omits such ballast but includes many genuinely useful phrases omitted from РАНТЛ such as «энергия связи», (nucl.), binding energy, "the translation of which is not obvious from the constituent Russian words.

Because Callaham's 4th is aimed primarily at non-Russian users, it includes other useful features; for example, "ё" is distinguished from "e", many (though not all) irregular inflected forms are included alphabetically in the listings (as are perfective infinitives when alphabetically separated from the imperfective); and adjectives derived from proper names (e.g., уолтеровский, "Walter's") and numerous abbreviations are listed. Unlike Soviet/Russian dictionaries, Callaham's features U.S., not British, English.

There are, however, a few surprising shortcomings. Accent marks are not provided to mark stress, so pronunciation is uncertain. There is no indication as to whether a verb is imperfective, perfective, and/or both; transitive or intransitive; and the imperfective listing does not

inform the reader of the perfective form. No information is provided as to the case that should be used for what we think of as the direct object in English.

One might argue that technical dictionaries should not strive to teach Russian grammar—and Newman does emphasize that compactness requires leaving out much that might be useful; however, an inexperienced translator who needs to look up the word «управлять» in the first place will likely not know that this verb is used with the instrumental case, even where in English we use a direct object, increasing the risk of translation errors and/or mislearning Russian. An indication of the instrumental case (or other complement) after verbs would require little space, and accent marks would add none at all.

In addition, this dictionary lacks contextual distinctions between multiple meanings of listed Russian words. Context is indicated only in scattered cases. For example, «очистить» is translated as "purify, refine; clean(se); free, get rid (of), remove; ..." Purifying some thing is quite different from getting rid of it, and a translator will not always be able to determine which translation is most appropriate to a particular context. Choosing the best English equivalent will be even more difficult for those whose first language is not English. Again, it is true that eliminating this problem will require some space; but leaving out contextual indicators seriously hinders usefulness and, again, entails major risk of erroneous translations and learning. Finally, although examples of usage quickly add bulk to a dictionary, they can be very valuable when judiciously chosen to illustrate some peculiarity of syntax not apparent from the word or phrase itself. Some examples in Callaham would be a welcome addition.

In summary, for the Russian-English technical translator this work deserves to become the standard basic technical reference, though the user will need to supplement it with general defining Russian dictionaries (for pronunciation, inflections, context distinctions, and grammar), other technical R-E and E-R dictionaries, and no small amount of guesswork. Because the Russian technical vocabulary is growing at a rate even more explosive than that of English or other languages, surely a fifth edition will be needed in far fewer than 20 more years. One may hope that in the next edition the new authors and editors will correct what this reviewer considers to be deficiencies and make a very useful reference work even more valuable.

EDITOR'S NOTE: According to our Division Directory, Peter Benson who is ATA accredited for Russian-English translation, has been translating for 3 years. His fields of specialization are Astronomy, Physics, Mathematics and Electrical Engineering.

Translator Profile

Maria Zarlengo
Golden, Colorado

I was predestined to become a translator. When I was nine, I started learning English during summer vacations. I rode my bike to the big village near Moscow where we had our country house to meet my first English teacher—a young girl. I loved those lessons and even now remember the first book I read in English—it was called "Silver Thimble" and it was about a girl of my age who lived in Iowa. Then I read "The Wizard of Oz" and my favorite book, even now, "Alice in Wonderland," and many, many others...

By the time I graduated from high school, I was fluent in English and French, wrote poetry and was generally very interested and quite knowledgeable in literature, so the career of a translator seemed quite natural.

Later, during the 20 years of my professional life, I never worked as anything but a translator and interpreter. In addition to the languages that I loved, I also received a broad education in other fields, which enables me now to translate technical subject matter in many spheres. In the university, I majored in economic geography—which meant we had lectures in geology, environmental studies, economics, mathematical statistics, urban studies and mapping. I also learned Japanese. My five years at Moscow State University coincided with my father's assignment to represent Soviet Radio and TV in Japan, and summer vacations spent in this country contributed to my fluency in Japanese.

Later I finished post-graduate studies in the Institute of Orientalology. My 200-page thesis (based completely on materials that I translated from Japanese and English) was dedicated to the study of changes in the self-consciousness of women in Japan.

My professional life has consisted entirely of translation—I translated during working hours, I translated at night and on the weekends. The week my first son was born, I started the translation of a book from Japanese related to the urbanization of Japan. I worked for 3 months with the baby on my knee on a small portable typewriter.

I interpreted in Japan for Japanese and American associates. Often I would be involved in long negotia-

tions involving three languages—Russian, English, and Japanese, where I would be the only one speaking all the three.

Sometimes funny incidents happened. Once (while still a university student) I was working in a team of interpreters who assisted the American TV journalists who came to Russia with President Nixon. One of the guys confidentially asked me to get him a laxative. At that time, I did not know what the word meant, so I entered into a room full of other Americans and innocently said: "Bob asked me to get him a laxative—could somebody explain to me what it is?"

Translation has given me a chance to see the world and to meet many interesting people. For many years I worked with Valentina Tereshkova, the first woman astronaut, who was the chairperson of the Soviet Women's Committee, I got to meet Stalin's daughter Svetlana and her daughter Olga, when at one point of her life Svetlana applied for Soviet citizenship for herself and her daughter.

Finally, I decided that after all those years, it was time for me to see America with my own eyes. I was offered a job in a Denver-based translation company and for the last two years my translation career has been developing quite successfully in this country. Now I do simultaneous interpretation at telecommunications and mining conferences, at USA AID sponsored seminars, I interpreted for the mayor of St. Petersburg, Sobchak at a reception in the Waldorf-Astoria hotel, I translated and edited thousands of pages of legal and financial agreements, accompanied a group of geologists to a huge gold mine in Siberia...I consider myself to be successful in my profession. And there are reasons for this success. I enjoy translation and can work a lot. I never missed a deadline in my life—but spent quite a few sleepless nights in order to achieve this. My real love is interpreting. I consider my mission fulfilled if the parties forget about the existence of me as an interpreter. I have a dream. I want to translate books—good literature, which I enjoy and which readers would enjoy. But this is the project to be considered in the future.



Readers: you too can be featured in this column!
Send profiles and other material to the Slavfile!
We are happy to publish materials written in Russian.

DICTIONARY EXCHANGE



Alexander Svirsky (Phone 847-310-3355, Fax 847-310-0789 CST) writes that he has a few copies of *The Comprehensive English-Russian Scientific and Technical Dictionary*, (Barinov, Moscow, Russkiy Yazyk, 1991, 2 volumes, 200,000 entries) in new condition that he will gladly exchange for other dictionaries, reference books, or other Russian books. I (LRS) would highly recommend this dictionary, which is being sold by IBD for \$80.00.

Vladimir Bolotnikov (Phone 510-653-8395, Fax 510-653-8365, Email 102167.2470@compuserve.com WST) offers : *English-Russian Dictionary on Robotics* (Petrov & Maslovskiy, Moscow, 1989, 12,000 terms); *The Concise Illustrated Russian-English Dictionary of Mechanical Engineering*. (Shvarts, V.V, Moscow, Russkiy Yazyk, 1983, 3795 terms, 224 pages) and *English-Russian Minimum Dictionary of Psychological Terms*. Luchkov and Rokityanskiy, Путь, 1993, 12000 terms (Reviewed in the last issue of the SlavFile) for sale or exchange. He is also seeking Russian children's books and tapes for 1-year-old Kirill Vladimirovich.

Yuri A. Savkov (Phone&Fax 610-433-6857, EST) would like to sell or trade: *Dictionary of Flexible Manufacturing Systems and Robotics*. Five languages: English, German, French, Dutch, and Russian. Moscow, Russkiy Yazyk, 1991, 56000 terms, 390 pages, very fine condition. As well as a copy of *Hill's Russian-English, English-Russian Vest Pocket Dictionary and Self-Instructor* by S.J. Luboff, Philadelphia, 288 pages. This book is in good condition, and an antique – at least 60 years old. He also has: *Essentials of Russian*, fourth edition, by A.V. Gronicka, N.J. Prentice Hall, 1964 and a number of French grammars.

Found at Kamkin's Book Store

English-Russian Terminological Dictionary on Experimental Design, Ye.G. Kovalenko, Moscow, АОЗТ «ЭТС», 1995, 53 pages, ca. 12000 terms, ISBN 5-86455-002-7, \$7.00.

Russian-English and English-Russian Dictionary of Theatrical Terms. I.V. Stupnikov, St. Petersburg, Izd. Yevropeyskogo Doma, 1995, 127 pages, 1000 terms, ISBN 5-85733-021-1, \$10.00.

English-Russian Dictionary of Microelectronics. Second Revised Edition. K.Ya. Prokhorov, A.A.Orlikovsky, A.G. Sokolov. Moscow, Russkiy Yazyk, 1993, 392 pages, 24,000 terms, Russian index. ISBN 5-200-00639-2, \$12.50.

With regard to the price of new dictionaries being published in Russia by "new" publishing houses, the little pamphlet sized things that used to go for less than \$1.00 are now being sold for as much as \$10.00. The person I spoke to at Kamkin's told me it was she who affixed the prices to the books, and that she felt "ashamed" to do it, but those were the prices they were compelled to charge.

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(по материалам российских газет)

Возврат к деловым и культурным традициям старой России сопровождается у нас всплеском внимания к старому варианту русской письменности. На уличных вывесках, в некоторых текстах периодики все чаще встречаются то слова с твердым знаком в конце, то забытые буквы — «ять», «і десятеричное»... Поделитесь своими соображениями по этому поводу мы попросили доктора филологических наук, заведующую сектором орфографии и орфоэпии Института русского языка РАН Светлану Кузьмину.

Контрреволюционерка буква «ять»

— Светлана Максимовна, чего, по-вашему, больше в сегодняшней волне интереса к «добольшевицкой» орфографии? Это попытка возвращения к языковым и культурным корням? Или дань моде? Или просто погоня за экзотикой с коммерческими целями?

— Здесь всего понемногу. Но вот что любопытно. Многие убеждены: реформу языка «придумали» большевики. Отсюда ее восприятие в искаженном, политизированном виде.

Именно так оценивали ее те, кто после 1917 оказался в эмиграции. Новое письмо ассоциировалось у них с новой властью, и это делало реформу неприемлемой. Бунин и Цветаева продолжали писать и издавать свои произведения в старой орфографии. Практически вся эмигрантская литература долгое время не признавала новых правил написания.

Писатели и поэты вообще встретили реформу письма очень болезненно. Для них графический облик слова был не просто буквенной оболочкой, но и конструктивным элементом художественного замысла.

— А надо ли было менять устоявшиеся веками правила?

— Наше письмо — это «платье с чужого плеча», заимствованное в X веке у южных славян. Постепенно шло приспособление старославянского письма к древнерусскому языку. От некоторых букв, оказавшихся лишними, например от «юсов», отказались очень скоро. Другие — «пси», «кси», «омега» — были отменены реформой Петра I.

И тем не менее к началу XX века русская орфография оставалась в большей степени традиционной, в ней было много условного, устаревшего. Например, писали «старые учебники», но «старья» книги — в зависимости от рода существительного. А одна буква «ять» чего стоила! Слова «деньги», «десять», «весело» писались через «е», а «дети» или «дело» — через «ять». В слове «ветер» вместо первого «е» стояла «ять». Усваивать грамоту было намного труднее, чем сейчас.

— Почему же лишь большевики предприняли столь радикальные шаги?

— Реформа письма готовилась давно. В 1904 г. в Петербурге была создана Орфографическая комиссия,

высказавшаяся за упрощение правописания. В частности, в проекте предлагалось исключить некоторые буквы и облегчить правила: не писать твердый знак в конце слов, а мягкий знак после букв «ж», «ш», «ч», «щ» в таких словах, как «ночь», «мышь», «рожь», «помощь».

В обществе поднялась буря: многие, неправомерно отождествляя язык и письмо, видели в отказе от «обветшавших» букв посягательство на язык Пушкина и Тургенева, на русскую культуру в целом. В конце концов в мае 1917 г. Временное правительство выпустило циркуляр о введении нового правописания с нового учебного года.

Как видите, разработали реформу не большевики, хотя они и присвоили себе авторство. Но провели ее в конечном итоге именно они. Декрет о введении нового правописания был издан в декабре 1917 г., однако на него, по словам Луначарского, «никто и ухом не повел». Тогда, уже в 1918 г., появился второй декрет, и Володарский объявил, что появления каких бы то ни было текстов в старой орфографии будет считаться «уступкой контрреволюции».

В принципе реформа письма носила демократический характер, вполне соответствуя особенностям нынешнего столетия — с его массовой грамотностью и потребностями быстрого обмена информацией.

— Значит, вы лично считаете, что к прежнему правописанию возвращаться в любом случае не нужно?

— Не нужно, да это и не реально. Наше письмо стало проще, последовательнее. Оно в большей степени отвечает языку, чем старое. Ну а что касается уличных вывесок, то, если хозяин лавки, магазина или кафе хочет оформить вывеску «под старину», придать ей особый колорит, он, думаю, имеет на это право.

Пусть только написание будет правильным. А то сейчас можно увидеть, например, такое написание, как «тактірь». Но ведь буквы «і» в этом слове никогда не было. Ее писали только перед гласными и перед «й».

*Беседовала Татьяна Максимова
«Аргументы и факты» №9 96*

Important meeting of the Slavic Language
Division in New York City on April 20, 1996.
See page 2 for further details.

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SlavFile

We have just been notified by ATA
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