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FROM THE ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR

Alex Lane

During my days as a supervisor at Plenum Publishing, I had occasion to review many resumes from applicants who wanted to fill the positions continually being vacated by employees moving Up and Out. Although most candidates were new to the job market, there was still a discernible difference between resumes submitted by people who got a job, and resumes submitted by those who didn't.

The folks who didn't get hired had a tendency to stress the irrelevant, as in "Was responsible for all aspects (except financial) for a bumper-car ride at XYZ Amusement Park," or assault the reader with muddled thinking, as in: "This job demonstrated my dedication to a situation." Other guaranteed ways to make The Prospective Employer groan included glaring errors in grammar and spelling.

In recent years, I've read resumes from freelancers who — in applying for a translation position — fail to insert the word "translation" (or any relevant variant) anywhere in their resume. Others never explicitly designate the language pair they work in, or what their respective proficiencies are in those languages.

Hammering on the shortcomings of others, though, isn't very productive, so let's review what I think one *can* do to create a better resume.

Include the essentials. Make certain you include your name, contact information, language pair(s), work experience, and educational background. Be sure to include applicable items that distinguish you from the crowd ("Trados user," "CD burner available," etc.), but also make sure the text covers the basics such as the work you are applying to do ("translation," "interpretation," etc.) and any specialization ("aerospace," "legal," etc.). This is important, as many companies use automated systems that look for specific strings in submitted resumes. Only after resumes pass that test are they screened by humans.

Watch the mechanics. Conventional wisdom says two pages is the "ideal" length for a resume. Don't try to play games with this guideline by reducing margins and font sizes so as to include more information. As you accumulate more experience, thin out the older items on your resume, to keep the length manageable. Watch your white space: too little is as bad as too much. Don't use outlandish fonts, either, as these annoy human readers and do not scan well in the automated systems noted above.

Update and customize your resume. Don't let your resume languish. Haul it out and update it every two months (embed the date somewhere in the footer in a very small font size, to avoid distributing old versions). When asked for a resume, take the time to rearrange some information so that it more directly addresses the needs of your prospect. If you're trying to branch out into something new, recast your existing experience to address the new field (experience translating mechanical engineering documents, for example, works for the aerospace, petroleum, and related fields).

Proofread your resume. The best way is to have someone else do it. If you proofread your own resume, take a tip and use an old trick the pros use: Read the words one at a time *from the end to the beginning* (otherwise, you run the risk of having the comprehending part of your brain override the proofreading part).

Of course, there's a lot more you can do to polish your resume, and there are some issues to address that aren't covered here (file formats, for example). But following these few tips will, *ceteris paribus*, definitely keep a prospective client's eyes from rolling as a result of reviewing your resume.

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SLD MATTERS: FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

Nora Seligman Favorov

In this issue of the *SlavFile* you will find announcements of two new grassroots undertakings in our division. Two of our members have stepped forward to initiate efforts to add additional Slavic languages to the list of those for which ATA grants accreditation (soon to be called certification). At this point, the only Slavic languages accredited by ATA are Russian and Polish. Vadim Khazin and Paula Gordon are working to organize support for adding Ukrainian and Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian, respectively. "Support" must come in the form of those interested in taking the test and those willing to help create the grading infrastructure. Qualified graders will need to be found and trained. In order for Vadim and Paula to succeed, other members must step forward, even if only to express a desire to take the tests. One of the first requirements for establishing a new language combination is a list of at least 50 parties interested in becoming accredited in these languages. Your support is needed!

The February issue of *The Gotham Translator* is largely devoted to the SLD's progenitor, Susana Greiss, reprinting her fascinating "Reflections on a Translator's Life" (which is also available on line at www accurapid.com/journal/12index.html). The issue features tributes to Susana written by several NYCT members. From them I learned quite a bit about Susana that I hadn't known. In addition to her contributions in founding the Spanish, Portuguese and Russian translators' groups that eventually flowered into the corresponding divisions of ATA, she was the main force behind the NYCT Continuing Education Committee, which was very active in providing formal educational opportunities for NY area translators. Everyone who wrote about her had some remarkable anecdote illustrating her energy, creativity and selfless devotion to translation and translators. Especially in the New York area, the world of translation is populated with her "children." She has always been generous in taking those entering the profession under her wing. Laurie Treuhaft writes that Susana founded the Russian Special Interest Group "to provide support for the wave of new Russian translators who had just arrived in the United States." Our division ultimately grew out of this organization.

Susana still contributes to our division. One recent example is a great idea she recently shared with me for a conference ses-

sion. She proposes a session devoted half to a presentation by a native Russian speaker on the most common mistakes made in Russian by us Anglophones and half to a presentation by a native English speaker on the most common mistakes made in English by native Russian speakers. **Please heed my plea:** If you are interested in taking on this challenge, either this year in Atlanta or next year in Phoenix, contact me. I think many of us could contribute snippets of e-mail messages and other writings to use as examples. I know that all it would take to give plentiful material for a Russian to critique would be to have me sit down and bang out a couple hundred words in my second language. I'm sure others would gladly contribute their flawed non-native writings for (anonymous) dissection. It seems to me this would be an extremely interesting and helpful session.

How about this idea for a new column in the *SlavFile*? It would be called something like "Translation Resources." A regular editor of this feature could collect from all of us new resources (and they seem to pop up all the time) that would be of interest to SLD members. Any volunteers?

Here's one that was recently posted on SEELANGS (a popular listserv among academics and others working with Slavic and East European languages—a marvelous resource in itself). The "Slavic Virtual Reference Desk" was recently created by the Slavic reference service of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The announcement states, "Patrons will be able to discuss their questions in live chat session with reference librarians from the Slavic Reference Service, as well as the Jagiellonian Library (Jagiellonian University) in Krakow, Poland and the Russian National Library in St. Petersburg, Russia." For more information go to www.library.uiuc.edu/spx.

Finally, I would like to urge any of you interested in playing more of a role in our division to contact me. We welcome you, whether you have a small suggestion or a big chunk of time to contribute.

Nora Seligman Favorov is a freelance literary and commercial translator living in Orlando, FL. She can be reached at norafavorov@earthlink.net or 407-679-8151. She looks forward to your feedback.

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Slavic Translation for the Determined: Reflections of a Polyglot Translator

Our Polish editor Ursula Klingenberg interviews Joel Stern, who, as a staff member of the Office of Language Services at the State Department, translates from several Slavic languages into English.

Q. How many languages do you know and what are they?

I can read all the Slavic languages with a varying degree of fluency (I am most proficient in Russian, Polish, and Ukrainian), as well as German, Italian, Spanish, French, and Hungarian. I have a bowing acquaintance with Swedish, Dutch, Rumanian, and Esperanto. A long time ago I studied Farsi and Turkish but let them slip completely.

Q. In what sequence did you acquire the Slavic languages that you know and what determined that sequence?

My first Slavic language was Russian, which I started in high school after four semesters of Latin. At the University of Michigan, I took up Polish and then Czech as cognate Slavic languages to satisfy my B.A. and M.A. requirements.

Q. Tell us about the methods of language acquisition that work best for you. What do you do to keep up your skills in the languages you know?

Well, if I'm studying on my own, outside the classroom, I generally start by tackling the grammar of the language (a habit carried over from my high-school Latin classes, no doubt!). I don't find this burdensome or boring in the least; it's an intellectual game for me, like doing crossword puzzles or playing chess. For some languages, such as Belarusian or Macedonian, reference materials may not be readily available. Fortunately, the Internet can sometimes be a real godsend when ordinary sources (bookstores, libraries, etc.) fall short.

After picking up the rudiments of grammar, I then turn to simple prose (short newspaper articles, children's books, fairy tales, etc.). Pre-recorded tapes and TV and radio programs can also be helpful, of course, for pronunciation and listening comprehension. If there is a native speaker around, I will try to enlist his or her assistance when I have a question. I try to read a wide variety of magazines and books to stay abreast of current cultural and political trends. Unfortunately, my first love—belles-lettres and literary translation—has had to fall by the wayside for lack of time and energy.

When I first started working in LS [Language Services] at the State Department, I had high-flown aspirations to outstrip my predecessor there, who retired at the age of eighty and translated from some 35 languages into English. I realized after a while that it would cost me too much time and effort to achieve that goal. Just keeping up my skills in the languages I work with most—Russian, Ukrainian, and Polish—is a very demanding task. So I made the conscious choice to concentrate on those three, at least for professional purposes.

Q. Did you receive any systematic training in translation or interpretation during your student years?

None whatsoever. The University of Michigan had no formal program in that discipline. A lone seminar in the Slavic Lan-

guages Department curriculum was fully devoted to translation (taught by Carl Proffer, the late founder and editor-in-chief of the *Russian Literature Triquarterly*). We pored over English renderings of Russian prose and poetry to critique them for accuracy and style. As our final project we had to translate two Russian texts into English—one piece of fiction and one of non-fiction. Proffer liked my translations enough to include them in the Winter 1974 issue of his RLT. Those were my very first published translations and, I must add, the work I am most proud of in my professional career.

Q. I see that you did not begin to work at State until a number of years after graduation. How did you support yourself in the meantime?

I left Michigan in 1977 and went back East to seek gainful employment. After a period of futile searching, I landed a job as an indexer/abstractor in Philadelphia at the Institute for Scientific Information, a regular white-collar factory. I stayed there nearly four years, then worked as a medical proofreader for one year at Saunders Publishing Company.

Q. Let's turn to your present position at the U.S. State Department. What led you to apply there?

I wasn't fully satisfied with my work as an indexer and medical proofreader. Not that there's anything wrong with those occupations. Having devoted so much effort to mastering difficult languages and broadening my education, I simply wanted to put my skills to better use. Over a period of two-three years I sent out several hundred resumes to prospective employers in both the public and private sector, including translation agencies throughout the country. The only responses I received were negative or non-committal. Finally I chanced to find a reference somewhere to the State Department's Office of Language Services (LS) and thought I would try my luck. I knew absolutely nothing about that organization but had nothing to lose, so out went another resume...shortly afterwards I received an encouraging reply.

Q. Evidently something about you caught their eye.

I'd say it was a matter of pure luck and timing. My predecessor, the elderly gentleman who knew over thirty languages, was about to retire and LS needed someone to take his place. At that time (in 1983) I could read twelve or thirteen languages, so perhaps they considered me a suitable candidate. In any case, they invited me to come down to Washington for testing and an interview.

Q. What were the tests like?

I took four translation tests in one day, from Hungarian, Czech, Polish, and Russian into English. They each consisted of three passages of 250-300 words. The particular subjects have slipped my mind. All I can remember is that the Russian texts seemed extraordinarily difficult and I had to struggle to make them sound halfway readable. I was notified soon afterward that I had passed the tests, but the final decision on hiring was contingent on my passing a background check in order to obtain a security clearance. That process lasted a full fourteen months. I didn't begin working in LS until March 1985.

Q. So you've been there for seventeen years now. Tell us a little about your office. How many other linguists work there? Do they interpret as well as translate?

I'll try to be brief, since the range of what we do is enormous. First, in regard to organization, LS is split into two main divisions—Translation and Interpretation. Some of the translators do interpret, and likewise there are interpreters who do translations. But that isn't true of everyone. I, for example, have never done any interpreting.

As for the size of our staff, it is relatively small, given the scope and importance of our duties. We presently have (in addition to the administrative personnel) forty-odd permanent staff members, almost evenly split between interpreters and translators. We cover the major European and Latin American languages, including Spanish, French, Italian, Portuguese, German, and Russian, and three Asian and Middle Eastern tongues—Chinese, Japanese, and Arabic. "Languages of limited diffusion," such as Korean, Greek, Burmese, etc., are handled by independent contractors, of whom there are many hundreds. However, translation assignments in the languages covered by the permanent staff may also be sent out occasionally to contractors if we are shorthanded, a job is long and extremely technical with a rush deadline, or one of us is on travel abroad.

Q. What are some of your duties as a translator?

Translation from Russian, Ukrainian and, to a much lesser extent, Polish, constitutes the bulk of my work here. Every conceivable subject may end up on my desk—diplomatic notes, government decrees, laws, scientific reports, certificates, etc.

In my capacity as translator I am also called upon to review my colleagues' work. This is a necessary and helpful task, but often it cannot be accomplished because of severe time constraints or lack of personnel.

A vital responsibility of all LS translators is the comparison of treaties and accords between the United States and other countries in various fields, including military cooperation, arms control, commerce, educational exchanges. Possible linguistic discrepancies must be identified, and disagreements on the interpretation of wording must be resolved prior to the signing and formal adoption of such documents in order to avoid future legal complications. This task is an indispensable element in all negotiations with foreign states.

One more responsibility I have is to evaluate the tests of prospective candidates for staff positions or contract assignments. Over the past seventeen years, I estimate that I have graded nearly a thousand.

Finally, I screen foreign-language correspondence addressed to the U.S. President, the First Lady, the Secretary of State, and other high-level officials. This mail comes to us from the White House mail office. Until the late 1990s this mail came to us in torrents; I must have read some thirty to forty thousand letters from private citizens in Central and Eastern Europe and the former USSR, as well as from immigrants writing to us in the languages of that region of the world. After the events of September 11, 2001, however, this stream has dwindled to a trickle....I assume the mail is being routed elsewhere for disposal.

Q. Has the nature of your work changed over the years?

When I first started in LS, there was one USSR, with Russian as its official language. Ten years ago that monolith broke apart, and more than a dozen nations arose in that same territory. In practice, this means a tremendous increase in my workload, since many of those new states are sending us material that is still written in Russian (they obviously realize the inability of U.S. diplomats to handle Kirghiz, Estonian, Turkmen, etc.). The emergence of independent Ukraine has brought a concomitant increase in Ukrainian documents requiring translation; Moldova rightly insists on its prerogative to make use of its official language.

Unfortunately, the size of the LS staff has not expanded commensurately to meet these new demands. That is the reason why I have consciously chosen to restrict myself to the three languages in which I feel most comfortable. I simply lack the time and energy to deal competently with more.

Q. Isn't it true that languages of Central and Eastern Europe, the Middle East, South and East Asia are considered "incentive" languages by the State Department? Why don't you hire more staff?

Well, we do receive a large number of resumes from people claiming to have relevant translation/interpretation experience and skills in such languages. Some are even full professors. The trouble is, hardly any of them can pass our tests.

Q. What could be the reason for that?

Let me say first of all that we don't deliberately concoct these tests to baffle and trip up our candidates. They are all passages selected by consensus from texts of average difficulty that one or another of us has had to translate or review.

The basic reason for failure, I am convinced, is the inability to write clear, idiomatic English. That is the very first thing I look for when grading an exam. Knowledge of specialized terminology can be acquired through constant practice; excellent writing ability, and the knack of conveying a thought accurately, concisely, and lucidly from one language to another, seem to be inborn, like perfect pitch or mathematical genius.

My criterion for grading is straightforward: can a candidate be trusted to translate difficult prose without the need for extensive review and editing? LS does not have the manpower to monitor the quality of the work of its contractors; we need people who already have the essential skills and experience to carry out their assignments competently and in a timely manner.

Q. If there is anyone with a knowledge of Slavic or Central Asian languages who might be interested in applying for an LS staff position or in working for you as a contractor, what sort of training would you recommend? Would a degree from an accredited school of translation and interpretation be helpful?

Not necessarily. I can't even recommend a particular type of training. Most of the translators here did not go to the type of accredited school you refer to. Besides, that's no guarantee of competence either. Let me give you a concrete example. Two years ago there was a group of advanced students from the Monterey Institute of Foreign Studies, eight or nine in all, who

Continued on page 14

Womb и Bosom

(в переводах Шекспира)

Игорь Веслер

Всё началось с почти праздного вопроса переводчицы NN и последующей дискуссии — откуда взялось слово **womb** в сонетах Шекспира, если они адресованы мужчине, почему латинский эквивалент **uterus** не обрёл право гражданства в литературном английском в той же степени, в которой **матка** — в русском, и т.п. Дошло даже до того, что один из участников дискуссии заявил, что, мол, рано или поздно

«... найдется переводчик, который воспользуется словом “матка”, чтобы донести до читателя шекспировский образ неводеланной земли, вспахиваемой плугом. Ведь корень этого слова - “мать”, а “мать” безусловно ассоциируется с землей и вообще схтоническими силами природы. Кстати, герой “Бедных людей” постоянно называет свою возлюбленную “маточка”, и никого это не коробит.»

Мы быстро расправились с различием коннотаций слов **uterus** и **womb** и неправомерностью трёхчленных ассоциативных связей **матка** → **мать** → **силы природы**, установив, что **маточка** Макара Девушкина прямым образом восходит к **матушка** и никакой референции к слову **матка** не имеет. Не коробило оно читателя по одной простой причине — во времена Достоевского слово **матка** в общем обиходе просто отсутствовало, оставаясь сугубо медицинским термином.

А вот вопрос о шекспировском употреблении слова **womb** и родственных ему, а также об их передаче в русских переводах оказался далеко не простым и повлёк за собой дальнейшие разыскания, в ходе которых обнаружилось целое лексическое гнездо родственных понятий, семантическое соотношение которых с соответствующими английскими оказалось не таким уж очевидным.

Следует отметить, что произведения Шекспира были выбраны в качестве источника узуса не случайно — это наиболее массивный корпус текстов, переведенных на русский язык наибольшим количеством переводчиков на протяжении наиболее длительного времени, что позволяет отследить стилистические вариации и предпочтения.

Здесь и далее будем исходить из значений словарных статей одного источника¹:

womb n

1. анат. **матка**
2. библ. **чрево, утроба** (матери)
3. поэт.

1) мрак, тьма

through the womb of night — сквозь непроглядный мрак ночи
it still lies in the womb of time — будущее ещё покрыто мраком неизвестности

2) колыбель, истоки

from womb to tomb — *шутл.* от колыбели до могилы
in earth's womb — в недрах земли

Для наших целей эта группа значений оказалась вполне достаточной — разве что к библейскому значению (2) следует добавить ещё два термина.

Первый из них — **loins** как «*порождающее, дающее происхождение*»:

loin n

1. *обыкн.* **р/поясница**

...

3. *библ., поэт.* **чресла**

to gird up the /one's/ loins — а) *библ.* препоясать чресла; ... sprung from smb.'s loins - порождённый кем-л., происходящий от кого-л.

Библейское употребление этого слова применительно к рассматриваемой теме можно проиллюстрировать цитатой из книги пророка Исаи «... **чресла** мои трясутся; муки схватили меня, как муки рождающей.» (Ис., 21:3) («... are my **loins** filled with pain: pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth...» (Is. 21:3, **KJV**)).

Второй (библейский) термин - **ложесна** (Исх., 34:19), являющийся прямым эквивалентом **womb** (Ех. 34:19, **KJV**). Это добавление многозначительно, и мы вернёмся к нему позже.

У Шекспира слово **womb** встречается дважды в сонетах (III и LXXXVI) и несколько раз — в драматических произведениях («Ричард III», «Тимон Афинский», «Ромео и Джульетта» и др.)

Хотя цитата, приведенная NN, была взята из маршаковского перевода сонета III, обратимся вначале к сонету LXXXVI:

*Was it the proud full sail of his great verse
Bound for the prize of all too precious you,
That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhearse,
Making their tomb the **womb** wherein they grew?*

В переводах этого сонета С. Я. Маршак и А. М. Финкель единодушны:

*Все помыслы во мне похоронил,
Утробу сделал урной гробовою?*
(С. Я. Маршак)

*Во мне замкнули мысли, превратив
Утробу, их зачавшую, в могилу?*
(А. М. Финкель)

В своих переводах этого же сонета Т. Л. Щепкина-Куперник использует слово **колыбель**, Н. В. Гербель ограничивается простым **сковал в мозгу моём**.... Иными словами, **womb** как **утроба**, **вместилище** чего-то сокровенного, здесь заявляет о себе ясно и недвусмысленно — и при этом ассоциативно увязывается как с зачатием, деторождением, плодоношением, так и с могилкой, подземным царством, сокровищем от взоров земных.

Вернёмся к сонету III. Вот оригинал и перевод С. Я. Маршака:

¹ Новый англо-русский словарь. Под ред. проф. Е. М. Медниковой и акад. Ю. Д. Апресяна. М., «Русский язык», 1994.

*For where is she so fair whose unear'd womb
Disdains the tillage of thy husbandry?
Or who is he so fond will be the tomb
Of his self-love, to stop posterity?*

*Какая смертная не будет рада
Отдать тебе **нетронутую** новь?
Или бессмертия тебе не надо —
Так велика к себе твоя любовь?*

Unear'd на староанглийском в данном контексте означает **никогда не колосившаяся, не дававшая урожая** - т.е. **целина, неводеланная земля**. Метафорически **unear'd womb** — то, что плодоносит, но ещё не приносило плода, а в данном контексте — вообще не тронута, девственно, не вспахано, о чём говорит **tillage (вспашка)** в следующей строке. По В. Далю, это «Земля, никогда еще не паханая, или снова задерневшая; новная земля, **новъ ж.** непашь, залог, целина...». Отметим, что здесь единственный упрёк досточтимому Самуилу Яковлевичу — тавтологическое сочетание (**новъ** и есть **нетронутая**).

А. Финкель предложил значительно более изящное решение:

*Где **лоно** неводеланное то,
Что оттолкнуло б дивный этот плуг?
Своей могилой хочешь стать за что,
Любви своей в себе замкнувши круг?*

Неводеланное лоно и **дивный плуг** (фаллический символ) совершенно точно передают образ исходного текста, хотя **лоно** в данном случае не является словарным переводом **womb**. (К этой многозначительной замене **womb**=>**лоно** мы вернёмся позже.)

И вот здесь на сцену выходит ещё одно слово этого же смыслового ряда — **bosom**, которое, как оказывается, имеет широкий спектр значений, во многом дополняющих метафорический арсенал **womb**, а иногда выступающим в качестве его синонима.

bosom *n*

1. 1) **поэт. грудь**
to cherish a serpent (a snake, a viper) in one's bosom — приграть змею на груди
- 2) **душа, сердце**
his sorrows were locked in his own bosom — он затаил в своём сердце печаль
2. **лоно**
in the bosom of one's family — в кругу семьи
3. **недра, глубины**
the bosom of the sea — морские глубины, пучина
in earth's deepest bosom — глубоко в недрах земли
in the bosom of the forest — в самой чаще леса
4. **пазуха**
To put smth. in one's bosom — положить что-л. за пазуху
5. 1) **грудь** (рубашки и т. п.); перед лифа (платья)
2) **манишка**
starched bosom — крахмальная манишка
6. **круглая впадина, углубление**

bosom *a* интимный, близкий

bosom friend = закадычный друг

deep-bosomed *a* полногрудый

deep-bosomed woman = полногрудая женщина

Применительно к этой группе терминов являются показательными переводы «Ромео и Джульетты» и «Тимона Афинского» — поскольку именно в них мы встречаем одновременно и **womb**, и **bosom**.

Например, в монологе брата Лоренцо (акт II, сцена 3):

*... The earth that's nature's mother is her tomb;
What is her burying grave that is her **womb**,
And from her womb children of divers kind
We sucking on her natural **bosom** find, ...*

Вот наиболее известные его переводы:

*Земля, природы **мать**, - её ж **могила**:
Что породила, то и схоронила.
Припав к её **грудю**, мы целый ряд
Найдем рожденных ею разных чад.*

(Т. Н. Щепкина-Куперник)

*Земля - природы **матерь** и **могила**,
Прах есмь и возвращаюсь в прах. Опять
Даст **мать-природа** колдовские силы
Всему, что будет жить и умирать.*

(Е. Савич)

*Земля - праматерь всех пород, их цель.
Гробница и вновь - их **колыбель**.
Все, что на ней, весь мир ее зеленый
Сосет ее, припав к родному **лону**.*

(Б. Пастернак)

Тот же образный ряд в пределах одного и того же отрывка — в «Тимоне Афинском»:

*Yield him, who all thy human sons doth hate,
From forth thy plenteous **bosom**, one poor root!
Ensear thy fertile and conceptious **womb**,
Let it no more bring out ingrateful man!*

*Даруй же ненавистнику людей
Из **глубины** твоей неизмеримой
Один ничтожный корень. Иссуши
Утробу плодородную твою,
И пусть она на свет не производит
Людей неблагодарных.*

*... Common mother, thou,
Whose **womb** unmeasurable, and infinite **breast**,
Teems, and feeds all; ...*

*О ты, природа, мать всего живого,
Ты, чье неисчерпаемое **чрево**
И **грудь** неистощимая рожают
И кормят все живое на земле...*

(Перевод Н. Мелковой)

В классическом русском словоупотреблении **лоно** имеет, согласно В. Далю, широкий спектр значений (**грудь, перси, недра, утроба, колени**), очерченных весьма точно (ср. **in nature's lap** — **на лоне природы**, **outside the pale of the church** — **вне лона церкви** (в данном случае **pale** — граница, черта, территория; ближайший русский аналог — пределы)). Источником можно, по-видимому, считать библейское **на лоне Авраамове (in Abraham's bosom)** — символ райского блаженства под покровительством библейского патриарха. (Образ праотца Авраама с разостланным на коленях (sic!) платом, в котором, как малые дети, покоятся души праведников, часто встречается в искусстве позднеримского и раннеготического периодов.)

Continued on page 8

Истоки этого образа — древнееврейские представления о **лоне патриарха**, — по словам Петра Грифа, «праотца, к которому в раю относились с особым уважением, уже на земле благословенного богатством и большим потомством» (Simbologum). В русскоязычной христианской традиции лono стало ещё более сакрализованым в том смысле, что каноническое употребление этого слова ясно знаменует его отрыв от плотского, женского, греховного начала — в противопоставление западной традиции, где **лоно** обычно ассоциируется с женственностью (**материнское лono**). Так, например, Иоанн Златоуст пишет: «... слыша о лоне, представляй не лono и не место, но под названием лона разумеи близость и дерзновение Сына в отношении к Родившему. ...» («Против Аномеев. Слово четвертое. О непостижимом.»)

Следует отметить, что до XX в. русская литературная традиция ограничивала, как правило, употребление слова **лоно** его метафорическим значением в возвышенном стиле (возвращение к месту происхождения, пребывание в чём-л. привычном). Эротический оттенок этого слова, придаваемый референцией к интимным частям тела, встречался крайне редко и являлся скорее исключением. Единственная область регулярного употребления — медицинская терминология (**лонная** (лобковая) кость (os pubis), **лонное** сочленение (symphysis), **лонный** бугорок (tuberculum pubicum), etc.). (Как было отмечено в начале статьи, это же справедливо в отношении **матка (womb)**).

Об этом наглядно свидетельствует состав приведенной выше словарной статьи английского слова **bosom**, составленной по корпусу переводных текстов, датируемых до 60-х-70-х годов XX в. В этой словарной статье местоположение **bosom** (грудь, сердце, пазуха, закадычный (т.е. за кадыком, за грудинной ямкой)) не опускается ниже талии — несмотря на референции Даля к **утробе, недрам и коленям** (см. выше). И лишь за последнее десятилетие XX в. лавина эротических и порнографических русскоязычных текстов прочно закрепила в массовом восприятии значения **лобок, промежность** и **влагалище**, тем самым в значительной степени лишив слово **лоно** его поэтического (и уж тем более сакрального) ореола и наделив его физиологической точностью. Это, в свою очередь, означает новое восприятие этого слова теми носителями языка, которые выросли в этой новой языковой среде² — так, пастернаковский перевод приведенного выше отрывка из монолога брата Лоренцо может вызвать у читающего его впервые недоумение в лучшем случае или скабрзную ухмылку — в худшем.

Из приведенных выше примеров следуют по меньшей мере такие выводы.

Основной смысловой и метафорической спектр употребления слова **womb** - плодоношение, деторождение, порождение, т.е. всё то, что направлено **из утробы вовне, в мир**. Не

случайно единственный нетрадиционный библейский синоним **ложесна** употреблён именно в этом смысле (**всё, раз-верзающее ложесна**, т.е. **выходящее в мир из утробы**) — так же, как и родственное слово **чресла**. И это подчёркивается, даже когда слово **womb** ассоциативно увязывается с могилой, утробой земли, Аидом, в который возвращается всё земное. Слово **bosom**, употреблённое в родственном значении (недра, глубины), напротив, не несёт этого смыслового оттенка порождающей сущности.

Основной смысловой спектр употребления слова **лоно** в современном литературном и обиходном русском языке практически лишился метафорических коннотаций укромного, интимного, тайного, сокровенного места, через которое или в которое возвращаются, т.е. всего того, что направлено **в утробу извне, из мира**, где находят упокоение и блаженство, и исчерпывается в основном анатомическими референциями. В этой связи следует отметить восприятие **bosom** как груди (а не в значении **лоно**), но не лона - как кормящей груди (а не пути к утробе); иными словами, если в русской литературной традиции объём понятия термина **лоно** был смещён и не совпадал буквально с объёмом понятия **bosom**, то в современном употреблении они отдалились друг от друга ещё более.

Igor Vesler can be reached at vesler@compuserve.com

Project Manager

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² “... Стоя на молитве, я был отвлекаем прысканьем и хихиканьем двух отроковиц годов 13-14 от роду всякий раз, как только священник произносил слово «лоно» ...” (В. Громов, частное сообщение).

ORFO UKRAINIAN SPELLCHECKER

Vadim Khazin

Many SLD members have been using various language-related programs distributed by SmartLink Corporation (ParaWin, multiple dictionaries, etc.). Their recent product, ORFO 2002 Russian-Ukrainian, can now be ordered from them (800-256-4814, www.smartlinkcorp.com). I spent some time checking this product's advantages and disadvantages on my Ukrainian files, and will share my impressions with our readers.

First, some technical details. According to the manufacturer, the spellchecker works with Windows 95 or later, including WinXP, and with MS Word 97 or later. At home I have a PC with Windows XP and MS Word 2002, and at work I have Windows 2000 and MS Word 98; on both computers my experience was similar. Using Orfo with applications other than MS Word might require additional Cyrillic utilities or adjustments to your OS.

Initially, when I installed SmartLink's ORFO 2002 Ukrainian (without Russian) on the computer with the earlier version of the Russian ORFO, spellchecking produced unacceptable and even funny results: it suddenly could not recognize the simplest Ukrainian words. The combined Ukrainian+Russian version is much better in this respect, but you must always be alert to which language it thinks it is dealing with at any given moment.

As far as I know, this is one of the first attempts to develop a Ukrainian spellchecker, and it proved its usefulness to me by unexpectedly revealing a number of misspellings (mostly double or misplaced letters; however, it also correctly identified some words that I had thought were correct but did not appear in any of my dictionaries). This proves once again that you cannot fully trust your own proofreading.

Among the features other than spellchecking this program provides are Show All Word Forms and Add New Word to the Dictionary. The first of these, if you select it, will open a window with all forms of the highlighted word, while the second one will open another window suggesting forms for the "new" word (not included in the ORFO dictionary).

The dictionary, by the way, as stated in the brochure, contains "100,000 Ukrainian stems"; however, no information is given on its authors, nor on the year of publication. Since the Ukrainian language has been developing quite rapidly in the last decade, and some of its spelling rules have changed, this information would be very important. Judging by the words ORFO rejected, I can guess that the vocabulary it covers reflects a pe-

riod no later than the mid-90s. For example, it recognizes the word **Інтернет**, but not its derivatives. And it virtually ignores the changes that are occurring with the letters **р**, **г** and **х**.

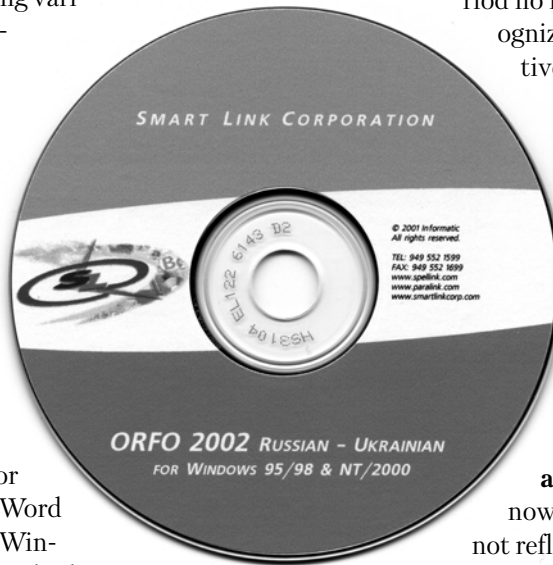
Current tendencies in Ukrainian spelling have led to the replacement of **р** by **г** (a letter that reappeared in the language in 1992 after more than 60 years of oblivion) in words of foreign origin where the corresponding sound is that of a hard **g** in English and the replacement of **х** with **г** when the sound is closer to the English **h**. For example, **агентство, гарант** are now replacing **агентство, гарант**, and **Голокост, гокей** are now replacing **Холокост, хокей**. ORFO does not reflect these tendencies yet.

In addition, it does not recognize many proper nouns, for example, some U.S. states (**Делавер**), non-Ukrainian (**Джоан**) and even some Ukrainian personal names or patronymics (in my document — **Сергійович**). Another problem for ORFO appears to be hyphenated words (for example, **імпортно-експортний**). Also, it seems to reject some nouns in the plural, although it recognizes them in the singular (**клопотаннях, направлень**), abbreviations (**вул. шт.**), and some other words for unknown reasons (**дарувальник, нерозбірливо, скінчується**).

When using ORFO with your old files (i.e., files created before you installed this program), you must be cautious because at any moment the program may switch from Ukrainian spellchecking to Russian regardless of whether you have marked Ukrainian as the "Default" in Tools > Language > Set Language. The best thing to do in such cases is to Select All, and then Copy and Paste the text into a new document, and only then Set Language. Unfortunately, in PowerPoint the Select All function does not apply to the whole document, only to the current slide, so spellchecking can become quite tedious.

All these shortcomings notwithstanding (and I did not touch on the Russian spellchecker here), I recommend ORFO 2002 to all Ukrainian translators as a powerful tool that may well help you avoid unnecessary and annoying mistakes.

Vadim Khazin, the Ukrainian editor of *SlavFile* and nationally known burime master, may be reached at vakh@ced1s0.engr.cuny.cuny.edu



The Ukrainian and Russian ORFO CD-ROM can be ordered by calling 1-800-256-4814.

The SmartLink Corp. is offering a special price of \$95 for ATA members. Upgrades for those who own previous ORFO versions are available for \$55.

SLAVFILE LITE: NOT BY WORD COUNT ALONE

Lydia Razran Stone

This issue of *SlavFile* could be described as my “Silver Anniversary” issue. It is the 25th I have edited since reluctantly volunteering to take on the Division newsletter after it became clear that no one else was going to come forward. Although my decision was impulsive and driven more by my commitment to our fledgling division than any desire for the job, from a purely selfish standpoint this was one of the best decisions I have ever made. I have loved the work, the results, and the feeling of contact with the profession and its members that this position affords me. Like a kind of self-appointed Supreme Court Justice I seem to have taken on this role for life and have no plans to retire; although I am enough of a democrat to allow myself to be replaced if a bona fide groundswell demands it. At the yearly meeting of newsletter editors, we are envied for the fact that obtaining interesting and well-written contributions from Division members bears little resemblance to pulling teeth. Whatever credit I deserve for *SlavFile*’s success can probably be attributed to the faith I have had from the beginning that there were an infinite number of interesting and entertaining articles to be written about the actual substance (as opposed to the periphery) of Slavic translating and interpreting and that our erudite, interesting and entertaining members were actually eager to write them, needing only a bit of encouragement. Of course the lion’s share of the credit goes to the contributors who allowed themselves to be so encouraged – see the first page of this issue for a list of contributors to the last 25 issues – and particularly to my fellow *SlavFile* editors and regular contributors, to wit: Galina Raff, Laura Wolfson, Ann Macfarlane, Nora Favorov, Alex Lane, Susana Greiss, Vadim Khazin, Tomek Poplawski, Jim Walker, and the Slovist Raphy Alden. Several months ago Galina Raff forwarded to me a letter she received from a reader in Russia, Valerie Shcherbakov, which closed: “The *SlavFile* is my favorite reading and, for all I know, the only publication where genuine love of the job prevails over the desire to use it commercially.” Although I would never have thought to put it this way, this comment reflects the essence of what I have hoped to achieve in our newsletter. I could not have received a more gratifying compliment.

Last month, Ann Macfarlane sent me a stack of old “Survival Russian” columns (a regular feature of the English-language magazine *Russian Life* compiled by Russian editor Mikhail Ivanov), thus saving an afternoon when I was too miserable with a cold to do anything useful but not quite miserable enough for daytime TV. Here I found one of the best multilingual puns I have ever encountered, and I try to encounter as many as I can. “The newest slang relating to New Russians is the odd term *novarischi*, invented by acrimonious French Hotel managers in the Cote d’Azur.”

Some issues ago I asked readers to send me interesting or amusing examples of what I had dubbed “cross cultural cross-overs,” instances where members of one culture react to some phenomenon in one way, while representatives of another cul-

ture react in precisely the opposite way. Alas, this, like many of my requests for reader contributions failed to produce a deluge of mail. Undaunted, however, I have gone on to find a (dare I say) juicy new example myself. In connection with my teaching of English to immigrants to Northern Virginia, I have been spending a fair amount of time with people from South and Central America. I have found that such folk tend to assess the fruit in the U.S. as tasteless at best; however, in spite of complaints of natives they find our bread acceptable. As we all know, Slavic (or at least Russian) immigrants are likely to consider our fruit worth queuing for, but our bread equivalent to wood shavings. Further, Latin Americans find the climate in Washington, DC fine in the summer and unbearably cold in the winter; our residents from the former USSR, наоборот; think the winters astonishingly mild and the summers quite literally Hellish.

After all these years as a translator, I rarely have trouble with Russian words that are neither technical nor slang, but some weeks ago the word опереточный in a general news article brought me up short. Are there any other well-meaning but misguided Anglonates out there who would have tried to derive this word from the (nonexistent) verb (о)переточить, before they sheepishly realized that there are numerous phenomena in Russian society today that can, quite legitimately, be likened to operettas.

In my last column, I requested readers to explain why “I like to travel, including on business,” is not quite normal English syntax. I received the following reply from Marie Hall:

To be sure that your query gets a response, here is my take on the sentence, “I like to travel, including on business.” This might pass without question in a colloquial setting, but is, as you kindly put it, not a completely normal English sentence. “Including” in this sentence seems to be used as a preposition or conjunction but as a verbal, it is not entitled to do this. A verbal does not require a noun antecedent, only relative pronouns require noun antecedents. A verbal can act as a gerund (noun) or as a participle (adjective). Example 1: “Including me would not be wise.” In this sentence “including” is a gerund acting as the subject of the sentence, and, in its verb function, takes the object “me.” Example 2: “The group, including the leader, numbers ten persons.” Here the participle, “including,” with its object, “leader,” modifies the subject, “group.”

One way of expressing what the “not-completely-normal” sentence says is: “I like travel, including travel on business,” where “including” is a participle that modifies the first “travel” with the second “travel” as its object. Another possibility: “I like to travel, even on business.” This is a bit more complicated because what you have here is an ellipsis: “I like to travel, [I like to travel] even on business.” Here “even” modifies the verb, “like,” and “on business” modifies “to travel” in the ellipsis.

As to “even” and “particularly,” both would modify the verb, “like,” and the sense of sentences including these words would usually mean, “I even like to travel on business.” or “I particularly like to travel on business.” and there aren’t very many people who could honestly make the last statement. That, I’m sure, is more of a response than you expected, but I don’t often have a chance to think about grammar and parsing and I got carried away.

Wow, I wonder what it would be like to have such an exact theoretical understanding of English grammar. I would certainly find it useful in my translating, and even more in my teaching of

ESL where I am constantly explaining myself into a corner. Meanwhile, I have decided that Russian sentences including *включая* can best be handled by using “included” rather than “including,” e.g., “I like to travel, on business included.” I do not think Marie agrees with me. What do the rest of you think?

Joel Stern has sent me a set of purportedly genuine Russian ads and announcements that a friend of his received on the Internet. I have seen a great many of this sort of thing, indeed, usually the same few cycled over and over, but these were all new to me and in Russian. Here is a selection:

Господа, не бросайте окурки в унитаз.
Администрация туалета.

(Объявление на заборе кладбища).
ВСЕ НА ВЫБОРЫ!
ХВАТИТ ОТСИЖИВАТЬСЯ В НОРАХ!
ВСТАНЬ И ПРОГОЛОСУЙ!!!!

Вяжем детские кофточки из шерсти родителей.

Граждане! В связи с ремонтом водопроводной сети
в доме 23 января не будет света.
Также запасайтесь горячей водой.

Граждане! Света не будет в ближайшие дни по причине
быка, сбежавшего с фермы и забодавшего телеграфный
столб.

Дети выдаются отцам только в трезвом состоянии.

ЗУБЫ? Наши стоматологи сделают все,
чтобы вы навсегда забыли о них!

Товарищи студенты! Не бросайте котлеты и сосиски на
пол, три собаки уже отравились.

ТРЕБУЮТСЯ МОЛОДЫЕ КРАСИВЫЕ ДЕВУШКИ
НА ВАКАНСИЮ ПЕРЕВОДЧИКА С АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА.
Ниже, мелкими буквами:
Желательно знание английского языка.

Finally, Tim Sergay sent me the following, in answer to a query in Raphy Alden’s *Slavist* column. Since the column does not appear in this *SlavFile* issue, I am including his message here.

How to translate “clear and present danger” into Russian came up in a recent *SlavFile*; I never saw anyone’s answers to it. My approach would be to investigate Russian translations of Tom Clancy’s novel titled “A Clear and Present Danger”; I just found two: “реальная угроза” and “прямая и ясная угроза.” The first is very very good semantically and makes an interesting illustration of the Russian take on the Latin-rooted “real.” The second is a closer approximation of the rhetoric, i.e., two closely synonymous modifiers plus noun. I was thinking of different modifiers for a version like the second (likewise reversing the English order for rhythmic reasons: назревшая и явная угроза. P.S. I just took another pass on Yandex and hit the jackpot: three different versions for the video title: ЯВНАЯ И НЕПОСРЕДСТВЕННАЯ ОПАСНОСТЬ (ЯВНАЯ И ПРЯМАЯ УГРОЗА/ПРЯМАЯ И ЯВНАЯ УГРОЗА).

Happy Spring Everyone!

“Wedded Strangers. The Challenges of Russian-American Marriages”

by Lynn Visson, Expanded (Second) Edition, Hippocrene Books Inc., \$14.95.

Razilya Todor

“Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus” is how author John Gray has described the differences between women and men in general. How then might one describe men and woman who come together from different cultures? Lynn Visson calls them “wedded strangers” in her book *Wedded Strangers. The Challenges of Russian-American Marriages*. Anyone romantically involved with a person from another culture at one point of time or another has asked him or herself whether a particular misunderstanding or wrong assumption is a problem common to all married couples, a matter of individual personalities, or perhaps a result of the fact that the partners were raised with different cultural assumptions. “Differences in roles and expectations, common enough between spouses of the same culture, can become major sources of conflict when the couple comes from very different backgrounds”. Since I have personal experience with being a member of such a couple, I began reading *Wedded Strangers* hoping that the book would explain the differences between Russians and Americans and tell me how to avoid the potential pitfalls faced by a cultural Russian who marries a U.S. native.

I eagerly opened the book and read: “She was a beautiful and famous 44-year-old American dancer. He was a handsome, idolized 25-year-old Russian poet.” Wow! I loved that. It was the beginning of a thriller. And I was thrilled until I got to the next chapter. In the second chapter, Lynn Visson provides a history of the relationship between America and the former USSR and how they stamped the minds of Russians and Americans: “Official propaganda, fervid imaginations, and the two caricatures which differed radically from flesh and blood Russians and Americans”. In the third chapter she starts to concentrate on her central theme.

This book turns out to be a large collection of anecdotal descriptions of relationships within Russian-American couples. Pyotr could not understand why Americans openly discussed the cost of vacations and schooling and their income tax deductions but not how much they earned or paid for their home. “Your friends prefer discussing what they do in bed to what they do at the bank,” he complained to Joyce. Some of those relationships were successful; some were not. As you go through chapters with intriguing titles such as: *Breaking the Ice, For Better or For Worse, Passions and Psychobabble: Roles and Sex, Looks and Manners, Two Kinds of Time, On the Job, Dollars and Rubles, Friend or Droog?, Eat, Drink and—Relax? How are you feeling? The Culture Conflict*, here and there you encounter a piece of wisdom, for example:

- ◆ Russian and American ways of talking about money are as different as their spending habits.
- ◆ Once “wedded strangers” produce children, it is as hard for the American parent to adapt to the Russian collective spirit as it is for the Russian parent to adapt to American individualism.
- ◆ Americans are not used to getting gratuitous advice on child rearing from relatives, neighbors and friends.

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REVIEW OF ROBERT TAYLOR'S ATA PRESENTATION ON TRANSLATING RUSSIAN FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Lydia Stone

As anyone who has seen my tax records or, alas, my bank balance could tell you, finance is not my forte. Nevertheless, I know a virtuoso performance when I see one. And to my mind, Bob Taylor's presentation, entitled *Challenges in Translating Russian Financial Statements* at the last ATA Annual Conference was just such a performance. It does not detract a bit from his accomplishment that, by choosing to walk us through a generic Russian financial statement, discussing the precise real-world meaning and best English equivalent of each line, he took advantage of ideal conditions for making a substantial contribution to Russian-English translation. Financial statements are, after all, an area where all the concepts are well-defined, and even equipped with precise operational definitions in each culture, although the concepts and practices used in each culture are very different, and where, as he told us, the most reliable dictionary is wrong at least 50% of the time. Moreover, as a person with many years of professional experience both as an international banker and a financial translator, Bob has an expert understanding of every term in Russian and English statements and of the differences between them, and, perhaps just as important, of the practical uses these translated documents are likely to have. For example, with regard to translation of the word *кредит*, he was able to say definitively, "In all my years as a banker, I never once discussed advancing a credit, it was always a loan."

In addition to the terminological explication, Bob gave some valuable general advice about translating financial material. First, he enjoined his listeners to be very skeptical of what they find in bi- or multilingual dictionaries. There is a particular pitfall in this field that does not occur in many others: British and U.S. accounting practices and terms differ and evidently all available financial dictionaries cite British terms virtually exclusively. How then to proceed? Bob suggests finding an explanatory definition of a Russian term in Russian. Then, if there is no exact U.S. accounting equivalent, the translator must come up with a rendering after deciding how literal or descriptive to make the translation. Various alternatives can be checked on the Internet to see if they are in current use at least in translations of Russian. Bob told us that he prefers descriptive translations unless a concept refers to a specific law in which case he uses the literal rendering.

Another excellent suggestion was to beware of locking yourself in to specific Russian-English equivalents across contexts. It

is far more important to translate a particular term in a way that is consistent with practice than to maintain a (foolish) consistency regarding rendering of particular words. As to whether it is justified to make a Russian financial statement seem as readable and familiar as possible to U.S. readers, Bob's answer was firmly negative. "It is better to be a bit awkward in translating, than to use normal American terms and imply that accounting practices are the same" (when they are anything but). Furthermore, "if a bank is not familiar with Russian accounting practice, it has no business lending money to Russian firms."

Since all of Bob's excellent handout material, including the Russian and English versions of a generic Russian financial statement, a list of business and financial dictionaries, and a two page list of useful web links can be found on the SLD website, we will not cite examples here. Bob did go over some financial false cognates not in his handout and these are well worth repeating. In a financial context:

- 1) *операция* is usually *transactions*;
- 2) *участия* or *участвовать*, for example, in a subsidiary, is *invest* not *participate*; after a percentage, *участия* is best translated as, e.g., *50% stake*;
- 3) *динамика* is frequently best rendered as *fluctuations*;
- 4) on a financial statement *фонд* is *reserves*;
- 5) a *положительный* or *отрицательный результат* is a *profit* or *loss* never a *positive* or *negative result*;
- 6) *налог на прибыль* should be rendered in English as *corporate income tax* not *tax on profit*.

As for *расчет*; a word many of us have learned to love to hate, Bob described it as an annoying fly buzzing around Russian financial statements that is only very rarely to be rendered by its canonical definition of *settlement*, but instead, in financial statements, as *receivable* or *payable* (polar opposites), depending on context.

As I implied before, the good news is that all Bob Taylor's materials are available on the web at www.americantranslators.org/divisions/SLD/index.htm. The bad news is that now we have finally got this elusive subject roped and tied down, the Russians are evidently planning on uniformly adopting practices much closer to the International Accounting Standards. Oh well, even the worse case will be ameliorated by looking forward to a presentation by Mr. Taylor explaining the latest wrinkles.

If you are looking for a love story similar to yours and/or want to have a working relationship with an American or Russian you might enjoy reading this book for pleasure. However, if, as I was, you are looking for something closer to a troubleshooting manual, you are apt to be disappointed.

Razilya Todor can be reached at todorr@pwfl.com.

Wedded Strangers

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◆ Trying to function from day to day in a stubbornly resistant foreign language can be highly frustrating, and listening to a spouse babbling in broken Russian or English can be grating on the nerve.

Wolfson on Wolfe

Laura Esther Wolfson

Editor's note: Our request in the SlavFile Lite column for readers to send information about English language literary works containing allusions to Russian literature elicited the following.

Dear Lydia,

Your request carried me back to my fifteenth year, much of which I spent immersed in the novels of Thomas Wolfe (1900-1938), author of such overheated works as *Look Homeward, Angel*, and *Of Time and the River*. I recalled a scene somewhere in which the protagonist mentions Dostoevsky, whose name is unfamiliar—and unpronounceable—to his university classmates. His enthusiasm for the Russian leaves them cold.

I searched the nine hundred and twelve pages of my parents' tattered edition of *Of Time and the River* without success. As I read, however, I became reacquainted with Eugene Gant, a young man of prodigious hungers struggling to experience the world and make himself into a writer, traveling as he does so from rural North Carolina to Harvard, to Paris. I also rediscovered other references to Russian literature.

The first reference occurs during a playwrighting seminar at Harvard. Seth is a classmate of Gant's in the seminar.

"Chekhov! Ibsen!" old Seth would whine sourly with a dismissing gesture of his parched old hand, and a scornful contortion of his bitter mouth in his old mummy of a face. "You guys all make me tired the way you worship them!" he would whine out at some of the exquisite young temperaments in Professor Hatcher's class. "Those guys can't write a play! Take Chekhov, now!" whined Seth. "That guy never wrote a real play in his life! He never knew how to write a play! He couldn't have written a play if he tried!" He never learned the rules for writing a play! — That *Cherry Orchard* now," whined old Seth with a sour sneering laugh, "—that *Cherry Orchard* that you guys are always raving about! That's not a play!" he cried indignantly. "What ever made you think it was a play? I was trying to read it just the other day," he rasped, "and there's nothing there to hold your interest! It's got no *plot*!" There's no story in it! There's no suspense! Nothing happens in it. All you got is a lot of people who do nothing but talk all the time. You never get anywhere," said Seth scornfully. "And yet to hear you guys rave about it, you'd think it was a great play." Further on, he says bitterly, "We've had plenty of guys in this country who wrote great plays. If they'd come from Russia you'd get down and worship 'em. But just because they came out of this country they're no good!"

Later, Gant muses on whether the received canon of great works is to be trusted, or whether one should read obscure writers in hope of discovering an unknown great. Although he has a native mistrust of authority, he concludes, "I have not discovered for myself any obscure writer who is as great a novelist as Dostoevsky."

Further on, he observes, "More and more I am convinced that to be a great writer a man must be something of an ass. I read of Tolstoy that he read no newspapers, that he went away and lived among peasants for seven years at a time, and that for six

years he read nothing but the novels of Dumas. Yet such a man could write great books. I almost think it is because of this that he did."

All of these allusions, and yet where was the conversation about Dostoevsky I sought? Finally I wrote to Alice R. Cotton, the reference historian at the North Carolina Collection of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, describing the passage and asking for help. She guided me to a later novel of Wolfe's, *The Web and the Rock*, even citing the precise chapter where the scene occurs.

Monk [the main character] is the acolyte of an older student, Jerry Alsop at Pine Rock University. Alsop has excellent literary taste; however, "He could see no merit in the work of the great Russian writers—Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Turgenev, even Chekhov—he had never even made an effort to understand them. In some strange way, his heart was set against them; he was afraid of them. He had long ago conceived the prejudice that a Russian writer stood for unbroken gloom, grim tragedy... in contradistinction to the works of those writers of whom he approved, and who...represented "the more wholesome and well-rounded point of view."

After becoming a member of Alsop's clique, Monk begins to stray, to run with a fast crowd, visit fraternities, even a brothel. But it is while browsing in the university library that Monk hits bottom. "Alsop's worst fears were realized. The fellow had begun to prowl in the college library all by himself, and had stumbled upon certain suspect volumes that had, in some strange or accidental way, insinuated themselves into those respectable shelves. Notable among them were the works of one Dostoevsky, a Russian...when Alsop finally rounded up his erstwhile neophyte...he found him, as he pityingly described the situation to the faithful later, "gabbling like a loon."

".... Our groping adventurer not only knew nothing about the aforesaid Dostoevsky...if he had even heard of him it was in the vaguest sort of way, for certainly that strange and formidable name had never rung around the classroom walls of old Pine Rock. The plain truth is that he had stumbled over it because he was looking for something to read and liked big books...and this one, which bore the promising name of *Crime and Punishment*, was certainly large and heavy enough to suit his taste.

Thereupon, he began a very strange and puzzling adventure with the book. He took it home and began to read it, but after fifty pages gave it up. It all seemed so strange and puzzling to him; even the characters themselves seemed to have several different names apiece, by which they addressed one another, the whole resulting in such confusion that he did not always know who was speaking. In addition, he was not at all sure what was happening. The book, instead of following the conventional line and structure of story, plot and pattern, to which his reading had accustomed him, seemed to boil outward from some secret, unfathomable and subterranean source...The result was that the story seemed to weave out upon a dark and turbulent tide of

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feeling. As for the talk, the way the people talked, it was the most bewildering and disturbing talk he had ever heard: anyone was likely to pour out at any moment, with the most amazing frankness, everything that was in his mind and heart, everything that he had ever felt, thought, dreamed or imagined. And even this would be broken in its full flood tide by apparently meaningless and irrelevant statements. It was all too hard and confusing to follow, and after reading forty or fifty pages he threw the book aside and looked at it no more.

And yet he could not forget it. Events, characters, speeches, incidents kept coming back to him like things remembered from some haunting dream. The upshot of it was that in a week or two he went back to the book, and in two days' time finished it. He was more amazed and bewildered than ever. Within another week he had read the book a second time. Then he went on and read *The Idiot* and *The Brothers Karamazov*. ...he had stumbled on something new and overwhelming, whose existence he had never dreamed about before."

Now he feels the need to talk about his discovery and he goes to see Alsop and his crowd, carrying the battered copy of Crime and Punishment with him.

"What's this—ah—new book you were telling me about the othah day? I mean," said Alsop smoothly, "you were telling me—about a book you've been reading—by—some Russian writer, wasn't it?" he said blandly, hesitating—"Dusty—Dusty—Dusty—whosky?" said Alsop with a show of innocence and then, before there was a chance for reply, his great belly shook, the fat scream of laughter sounded in his throat. The disciples joined hilariously in. "Lord God!" cried Alsop, chuckling again, "I didn't mean to do that—it just popped out, I couldn't help it...But how do you pronounce his name, anyhow?" His manner was now serious, but behind his winking spectacles his eyes were narrowed into slits of mockery—"How do you spell it?"

"I don't know how you pronounce it—but it's spelled Dos-to-ev-sky."

"I guess that would be Dos—Dos—" Alsop began...

"Oh hell, Jerry, why don't you just sneeze it and let it go at that?" said one of the disciples.

"Don't mind us," says Alsop, "we weren't laughing at the book, it's only that it seems funny to talk about a book when you can't even pronounce the name of the author." Suddenly he heaved with laughter again—"Lord God," he said, "it may be a great book—but that's the damndest name I ever heard of."

There follows a similar exchange about the pronunciation of the name of the main character in Crime and Punishment, spelled "Raskalnikoff." When Monk explains that Raskalnikoff kills an old woman with an axe, Alsop says, "Old Dusty knew what he was about when he called him Raskal-Whats-His-Name, didn't he?"

Why do we remember certain passages that we read and not others? Why has this strange one stayed with me? Perhaps its message, that we should not fear unvarnished truths and difficult-to-pronounce-names, appealed. Who knows? At any rate, I offer up this obscure passage and the other references, above, in

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Kamkin Bites the Dust: But Fahrenheit 451 Averted for the Present

Ted Crump

Victor Kamkin, Inc., the no-frills 20,000-square-foot warehouse in Rockville, Maryland whose estimated 2 million volumes were a Mecca for researchers and Russophiles for 50 years, has come to a dramatic end. In its heyday it was the premier outlet in the United States for the multitude of books and periodicals generated by the Soviet publishing monopoly and made available to Kamkin for low prices. A quarter of the store's business was with the federal government, and indexing services, such as Biosciences Information Service, subscribed to Soviet periodicals under contract with Kamkin. The end of the Cold War brought a sharp downturn in sales, and eventually the present owner fell \$200,000 behind in his rent and reportedly owed thousands to Russian book dealers. The landlord initiated an eviction process in December, and on Monday, March 11 crews were standing by with two 10-ton dumpsters ready to start hauling out the books for a trip to the county incinerator. But in the meantime a front-page article on Saturday on the plight of the bookstore in the *Washington Post* had brought hundreds of customers to the store and had rallied the Russian community, including the writer Vasily Aksenov, to try to save this unique treasure. Representative Constance Morella (R-Md) was contacted, and she in turn contacted James Billington, the Librarian of Congress, who agreed to take some of the books, which will be donated to the LC. The flood of customers, who waited in line for up to two hours to buy at a 30% discount, resulted in \$20,000 in sales, from which the owner paid the landlord \$10,000 to stay another three weeks in the warehouse while homes for the books are sought.

Polyglot *Continued from page 5*

took our Russian to English test. Out of that group only one passed, a young woman with negligible translation experience. What set her apart was natural talent.

Q. Do you regret pursuing languages as your career? What did you gain by devoting yourself to that field?

I have no regrets over my choice of career path, despite the difficulties I encountered along the way. Studying languages was an irresistible urge to me. I would have done it under any circumstances, regardless of financial or other considerations. I am fortunate in being able to make a living out of this strange obsession.

What have I gained from this field? An appreciation for and perhaps a little understanding of other cultures...the opportunity to meet some truly remarkable people with whom I could communicate in their own language...intellectual stimulation and a sense of adventure (learning an unfamiliar grammar to me is like exploring a virgin wilderness).

Q. Would you then recommend languages as a career for young people?

Yes, if they have the genuine talent, passion, and persistence. It's not the easiest path to follow, but one that offers many rewards.

Joel Stern may be reached at SternJ2@state.gov

A longer version of this interview may be found at
www.americantranslators.org/divisions/SLD/index.htm

TRANSLATOR: MEET THE CHALLENGES WHILE AVOIDING PITFALLS

Review of Alex Lane's presentation "Avoiding Pitfalls And Overcoming Business & Technical Challenges" at the 42nd ATA Conference in Los Angeles

Boris Silversteyn

Those who attended this session spent an interesting and challenging (no pun intended) 90 minutes. Although he further described his presentation as "Recent Issues in Russian and English Translation," in my opinion Alex's ideas and suggestions would be equally helpful to translators working in any of the Division's languages.

Having begun with trying to scare the hell out of the audience ("We have cheaper, hungrier competitors; booming MT may blindside everyone"), Alex proceeded to list and discuss the business and technical challenges facing translators, while warning us of possible pitfalls. In doing so, he drew extensively on his rich experience working with NASA on joint US-Russia space projects.

He laid out the basic premises for the ensuing analysis: *long-term associations will be the rule; the "speed" of business will increase; and we cannot be "just" translators (because clients need more than "just" translators)*.

The **CHALLENGES** facing us were reduced to the all-encompassing issue of **CUSTOMER SATISFACTION**. While we all had heard the term before, and the proposition can strike one as obvious, Alex elaborated on the concept in great, not always obvious, and sometimes unexpected, detail.

The **business** challenge is to plan the *execution phase* properly, defining precisely *what the translator must do*, and establishing the "rules of engagement" pertaining to such matters as *file formats/software, terminology, handling of acronyms and abbreviations, document version control, and export control* at the very beginning.

File formats / software must meet *client requirements* while taking into account *translator usability*.

On *terminology*, it was suggested, among other things, that translators *press for (customer) signoff*. To avoid multiple terms, Alex suggests we *transliterate acronyms* and *translate expansions*. I think this

is the right approach in most cases, with the exception of generally accepted translated acronyms (e.g., СПИД and ВИЧ for AIDS and HIV, respectively).

Export control is a pitfall we all should be aware (and wary) of. Alex pointed out that *certain information may not be "exported" to non-citizens* nor to *foreign representatives, regardless of citizenship*. He reminded the audience that *ignorance is not a defense* and, more important, *many customers are ignorant*. This is an area where the translator can provide his/her customer *guidance where none has been sought*, creating a win-win situation.

Technical challenges include the *preparation phase* and what Alex called "*Sharpening the saw*": *mastering the mechanics* of today's technology—Internet, file formats / software, file transfer, databases, fonts, e-mail (including encryption), etc. In this context, he stressed the need for translators to demonstrate a *hassle-free, confident, professional demeanor*.

Examples were given of using the Internet for terminology research (with Runet, Rambler, Aport, Yandex), staying current on the news and new developments in the Russian language (lenta.ru, gazeta.ru, sem40.ru), and generic surfing (livejournal.ru, km.ru, doctor.ru).

And summarizing the issue of customer satisfaction, Alex reemphasized the importance of being *more than "just" a translator* ("*Linguistic talent is common. Customer service talent is rare*") and the need to keep the translator's *customer out of trouble (linguistic, cultural but also logistical, organizational etc.)* by going the "*extra mile*".

Имеющий уши да слышит!

Boris Silversteyn (bsilversteyn@comcast.net) is a freelance translator and interpreter, who is ATA accredited for E<>R translation. He now lives in Florida after a 40 year career as a Mechanical Engineer in less tropical climates on both sides of the Atlantic. He is the chair of the ATA Dictionary Review Committee.

Wolfson on Wolfe

Continued from page 14

the hope that they will be of interest to *SlavFile* readers. Possibly no other work of fiction in English deals with the great Russians at such length and to such vivid effect.

Fondly,
Laura

PS In a startling example of synchronicity, a few weeks after I tracked down the above references, I found a strikingly similar passage (though not close enough to be termed plagiarism) about Dostoevsky, while reading Jack Kerouac's *On The Road*. I don't think it is too much of a stretch to say that Kerouac was probably influenced by the Wolfe passage referred to above.

In the passage, the narrator and a friend of his, Remi, are working as night watchmen at a military barracks. Remi has an unpleasant encounter with their supervisor:

"He came face to face with the barracks supervisor. Remi hated that man's face. He asked me, "What's the name of that Russian author you're always talking about—the one who put the newspapers in his shoe and walked around in a stovepipe hat he found in a garbage pail?" This was an exaggeration of what I'd told Remi of Dostoevski. "Ah, that's it—thai's it—Dostioffski. A man with a face like that supervisor can only have one name—it's Dostioffski."

Later when the narrator berates Remi for getting them into trouble with the supervisor, Remi says, "You go on talking like that and I'm going to start calling you Dostioffski."



Newsletter of the Slavic Languages Division
of the American Translators Association
225 Reinke's Lane
Alexandria, VA 22314

Attention:

Serbo-Croat, Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian < > English translators and interpreters

An effort is underway to investigate the possibility of establishing accreditation for these language pairs. I would like to hear from anyone who would pursue such certification if it were available and especially anyone interested in participating in this (long and arduous and in our case perhaps a little more complicated than usual) process. The first step is to form a "volunteer committee" and then we must demonstrate that there is a desire on the part of membership to establish these language pairs. Please write to me [Paula Gordon, pgordon447@aol.com] if you would be willing to join this initial investigatory committee; and even if you are not, a message simply stating your language pairs and interest in accreditation would be very useful and greatly appreciated.
Hvala i čujemo se!

ATTENTION UKRAINIAN TRANSLATORS! – SECOND CALL

Do you believe the Ukrainian language deserves consideration and respect no less than Russian or Polish, not to mention Hungarian or Finnish? Well, there is one thing our Division can do— set up the ATA accreditation (soon to become certification) for English-Ukrainian and/or Ukrainian-English translators. This idea has been around for several years already, but that is no reason to procrastinate! However, to proclaim is much easier than to accomplish. And the first step should be to make up a list of those wishing to be accredited and those further willing to work to set up a program. We are thus asking all those interested to send an e-mail to Vadim Khazin, our Contributing Editor (Ukrainian), at vadkhazin@cs.com stating your willingness to start the accreditation process. We need 50 people signed up to even start. Please do not forget to mention the accreditation direction (E-U, U-E, or maybe both) that you would like to pursue.