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## A Newcomer's Impression: First ATA Conference

(The 52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference in Boston, October 2011)

Laura Friend



After joining the ATA and hanging out my translator's shingle in 2006, I focused on building a client base, gaining experience, and achieving certification as a translator. In addition, I was intrigued by the possibility of attending an ATA conference. Each year I pressed my proverbial nose to the plate-glass window of the upcoming conference, but there was always an obstacle. First it was graduate school, then a move to Europe. Seattle, New Orleans, San Francisco, Orlando, New York, and Denver all came and went without me. When 2011 rolled around, however, these hurdles had dissolved: I could finally attend my first ATA conference!

Following are a few of my impressions from this event.

### The host city and the accommodations

Boston is a fine city and a great place for a conference. There is so much to see there that one could easily have skipped the conference and stayed busy for five days. As one woman sent to the conference by her company confessed to me over lunch ... but that would be telling. Suffice it to say that the lure of the Museum of Fine Arts was even greater for some than the finer points of terminology. No doubt San Diego will provide similar temptations.

After checking into the hotel, I headed out for a self-guided tour of the vicinity. The Copley Square Farmer's Market was in full swing, offering, among other organic delicacies, sandwiches made with local artisan cheese, with good old New England apple cider to wash them down. An encouraging start. The famous Back Bay area featured landmarks including

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### American Translators Association 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference

Hilton San Diego Bayfront • October 24–27, 2012  
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## SLAVIC LANGUAGES DIVISION

### OFFICERS

Administrator: Lucy Gunderson  
Tel: 917-670-1260  
[russophile@earthlink.net](mailto:russophile@earthlink.net)

Assistant Administrator: John Riedl  
[jriedl@translatingcultures.com](mailto:jriedl@translatingcultures.com)

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Write to ATA, 225 Reinekers Lane  
Alexandria, VA 22314

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Editor: Lydia Razran Stone  
[lydiastone@verizon.net](mailto:lydiastone@verizon.net)

Associate Editor: Liv Bliss  
[bliss.mst@gmail.com](mailto:bliss.mst@gmail.com)

Associate Editor: Nora Favorov  
[norafavorov@gmail.com](mailto:norafavorov@gmail.com)

Associate Editor: Galina Raff (Russian, Layout)  
[galina.raff@gmail.com](mailto:galina.raff@gmail.com)

### EDITORIAL BOARD

Yuliya Baldwin  
[yuliyabaldwin@gmail.com](mailto:yuliyabaldwin@gmail.com)

Roy Cochrun (Dictionaries)  
[roy@royfc.com](mailto:roy@royfc.com)

Stephen Dickey and Janja Pavetić-Dickey  
(Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian)  
[smd@ku.edu](mailto:smd@ku.edu); [jpdickey@sunflower.com](mailto:jpdickey@sunflower.com)

Jennifer L. Guernsey  
[jenguernsey@gmail.com](mailto:jenguernsey@gmail.com)

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[ishenko@aol.com](mailto:ishenko@aol.com)

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[kosir001@gannon.edu](mailto:kosir001@gannon.edu)

Vladimir Kovner  
[19volodya05@comcast.com](mailto:19volodya05@comcast.com)

Christina Sever  
[csever17@yahoo.com](mailto:csever17@yahoo.com)

Lynn Visson  
[lvisson@aol.com](mailto:lvisson@aol.com)

Susan Welsh (Films)  
[welsh\\_business@verizon.net](mailto:welsh_business@verizon.net)



**SLD 2012 Banquet**  
**Thursday, October 25, 7:00PM at**  
**POMEGRANATE**

**Georgian-Russian Restaurant**

2312 El Cajon Blvd., San Diego, California 92104  
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*Pomegranate offers a unique mixture of Russian and Georgian cuisine in a laid-back, light-hearted atmosphere*  
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## Menu (in the Chef's Own Words)

### First Course

#### Salad sampler platter for eight:

**Olivier:** traditional Russian salad

**Salad Vesna:** fresh cabbage, berries, herbs, and serious love

**Kavkaz Beet Salad:** glorious beets, unexpected spices, and herbs

**Carrot Salad:** overwhelms the defenses of all your senses

**Ikra Badrijannaya:** eggplant with a delicate infusion of herbs, onions, olive oil, and garlic

**Lobio:** red beans with walnuts, cilantro, garlic, and feta cheese with *khachapuri*, Georgian cheese turnovers

### Entree

#### Please choose one

**Chicken Shish Kebab.** Tender, flavorful meat served with sweet-and-sour pomegranate sauce – one of our most popular dishes!

**Chakapuli.** Lamb shank cooked in dry white wine with onions, tarragon, plum sauce, and mixed fresh herbs

**Golubtsi.** Stuffed cabbage served with tomato sauce

**Ajapsandali.** Traditional Georgian vegetable stew: eggplant, onions, green peppers, tomatoes, fresh herbs, and khmeli-suneli seasoning

### Dessert

#### Please choose one

**Babushka's Surprise.** Baked apple filled with sweet fruits, walnuts, and honey

**Medovik Torte.** Russian traditional honey cake served with a scoop of ice cream

### Tea or Coffee

**Price: \$45 per person, tax and gratuity included**

*Georgian wines and European beers are available for purchase.*

*Transportation: a 15-minute taxi ride from Hilton Bayfront*

*Please send your entrée and dessert selection to John Riedl ([jriedl@wi.rr.com](mailto:jriedl@wi.rr.com)). Payment of \$45.00 should be made by check or PayPal before October 10, 2012.*

*To pay by check, send a check made out to John Riedl at:*

John Riedl  
1028 East Juneau Avenue, Apartment 725  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

*To pay by PayPal, go to the PayPal website ([www.paypal.com](http://www.paypal.com)) and select the "Send Money" tab. Fill in the amount (\$45.00) and choose the "Friends and Family" option. In Step 2, use the following e-mail address: [jriedl@wi.rr.com](mailto:jriedl@wi.rr.com). A fee may be applied depending on your means of payment.*

## FIRST ATA CONFERENCE

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the Boston Public Library, Trinity Church, and the John Hancock Tower, not to mention the “tortoise and the hare” sculpture that marks the end of the Boston Marathon. The charming Newbury Street neighborhood nearby offered a choice of good restaurants, with excellent seafood and Italian food taking pride of place.

The conference hotel, Marriott Hotel at Copley Place, was big, bright, shiny and clean: a spacious and modern venue for the event. I’m glad I found a roommate to share costs with, though, because the hotel wasn’t cheap. Expenses for travel and lodging for five nights amounted to over a thousand clams. Let it be known that the conference seemed extremely well organized by ATA and expertly supported by the hotel.

### Check-in

Uninitiated as I was, I didn’t stop to think that checking in to the conference promptly might be as important as tourism. What could be important about checking in, anyway? Surely I could just do that hastily on the way to my first preliminary session the next day.

As it turned out, checking in was not merely a two-minute grab-a-nametag-and-go affair. There were loads of greeters eager to “orient” me, representatives of national, regional and local associations offering information, maps, brochures, color-coded tags to stick on your badge (yellow for Russian, blue for French), and – mmm – coffee to drink. The New England Translators Association, as regional host, was especially proactive and ready to help with any aspect of navigating Boston, including providing complimentary tickets for a city trolley tour. Granted, most of this is not what I came for, but still, next time I will be sure to register as a matter of the first order.

### Sessions

The schedule of events, especially the presentations, provided a focus for me in the weeks leading up to the conference. As soon as the preliminary online schedule was published, I studied it eagerly, ticking off all the events I wanted to attend. They were conveniently color-coded by language and specialization. Not long thereafter, an identical print version of the schedule arrived in the mail, and I marked it up in turn. There! I was all set. Silly me: I didn’t stop to think that the final schedule of events distributed at the conference itself might be much different, so I spent the first couple of days working off of the preliminary program – and thereby missing some events that I would have liked to attend. Fortunately, a reasonably satisfactory “re-do” is available from ATA (for

a price) in the form of the conference CD, DVD, and book: you can visit or revisit any and all presentations to your heart’s content, time permitting....

I chose a mix of sessions from my division, mainly in or relating to Russian, and ones from fields of specializations, such as “Legal T&I” and “Terminology.” Sessions concerning the business and technical end of things, such as “Language Technology” and “Independent Contractors” also proved useful. Most of the sessions were worthwhile, both for the presentations themselves and the question-and-answer sessions, which gave me a chance to see my colleagues in action. The ATA Activities for all divisions, such as the “Opening Session” and “Orientation for First-Time Attendees,” provided useful information on the state of the profession as a whole, as well as some upbeat video montages and a good collective pep talk.

### Networking

In contrast to the sessions, which were neatly spelled out in the schedule, the networking possibilities were more open-ended. Who knew exactly whom you would see? First of all, I had hoped to meet some existing clients in person, and I did. It was very enjoyable to spend a little time with project managers and recruiters whom I had known only through e-mail and over the telephone. Now I can assign faces to those names, and I’m already having fun guessing who will show up at this year’s meeting.

It goes without saying that thousands of fellow translators and interpreters were on the scene. I shared an airport shuttle with some translators on the way in, which, in a way, was when the event really began for me. Throughout the conference, there were countless opportunities to meet others, in addition, of course, to the sessions: early morning exercise classes for conference attendees, breakfast every morning, and receptions and happy hours, to name just a few. Some colleagues appeared aloof, some friendly, some calm, some harried, some open, some mysterious – the usual cross-section of humanity. One evening, as I stood next to a tower of chocolate-covered strawberries, the woman I was speaking with suddenly gasped in horror and cried out, “It’s *her*!” before suddenly disappearing. Strangely, the person who inspired such trepidation was one of those friendly translators I had shared the airport shuttle with. Go figure.... Mostly, however, everyone was intent on making the most of the experience, having taken time out from their work and personal lives to make the trip. Wherever I looked, there were purposeful-looking individuals

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## FIRST ATA CONFERENCE

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intently comparing notes or hastening from one event to another, clutching their complimentary ATA bags (note to self: no need to lug along a briefcase).

I very much enjoyed the “Speed Networking Session,” where each participant spent a minute or two with another before a bell signaled the next rotation. I didn’t actually meet anyone from my fields there, but it was great fun nevertheless, and a welcome change of pace. One advantage it provides participants is the chance to rehearse and refine their personal “elevator speech.”

Events of the Slavic Languages Division, my own ATA language division, provided especially welcome networking opportunities. While I very much looked forward to meeting colleagues in Slavic, I had not previously formed a clear sense of the division as an entity, beyond reading *SlavFile* (through no fault of the division). Now, at the conference, I not only met the interesting members of “Slavic” but also saw them working together to pull off a range of successful presentations and events. I observed the loyalty of members who attended every single Slavic event, no matter what other worthwhile events were competing for attention. I was warmly welcomed and immediately charmed into writing a review of a technical presentation.

One event that generated special enthusiasm was “Translating the Songs of Bulat Okudzhava,” which was so well received that one of the presenters was invited to perform one of the translated songs at the Slavic Division dinner.

The dinner deserves special mention, as it brought together members of the division who specialized in various Slavic languages to enjoy a well-chosen fixed menu in a Balkan restaurant. The dynamic was different from that of the regularly scheduled events, in that there was time to relax and get to know a few people better. I’m glad I went, and I look forward to our dinner at a Georgian restaurant this year!

I was fortunate in my choice of roommate, whom I met through an ATA blog set up for that purpose: she was friendly as well as generous with advice, and we found we shared many professional interests.

### **Promotion: Business cards and goodies**

Quite a few sponsors and exhibitors sprang for small promotional gifts bearing their information: magnets, pens, mouse pads, even fanciful flash drives, some of these tucked into each registrant’s introductory package. Any conference attendee would probably be free – cost permitting – to promote his or her business in this way.

The most important physical item (not to go into web-based resources) was business cards. I brought a goodly supply of these, as recommended. Many went to the “Job Marketplace,” where display tables were labeled by language. I was a bit dismayed when one colleague told me about the special display case she had designed and brought with her for this purpose, but I needn’t have worried: most people simply left their cards on the table in little stacks or boxes.

### **Heading home**

Having fit in as much as I could during the conference, I finally cried uncle and skipped the Conference Dance on Saturday evening, even though this meant foregoing the chance to groove to the beat of DJ Funky J in the company of clients and colleagues. It was probably a great bonding experience for those who braved it.

A New England snowstorm crippled much of Massachusetts on Sunday, but fortunately, Boston itself was largely spared, and airport transportation carried on without a hitch. I made it to the airport unimpeded, only to find that my flight had been canceled, but United/Continental stepped up with a convenient replacement itinerary.

As luck would have it, I was seated next to chatty SMEs (subject-matter experts) on both legs of my flight home. One was a forensic psychiatrist specializing in providing courtroom testimony; the other, an accountant. They generously answered all my burning questions pertaining to their chosen fields. My enthusiasm for these discussions may say more about residual psychic energy from the conference experience than my actual interest in accounting and such-like....

Now it’s time to gear up for the 53<sup>rd</sup> ATA Conference in San Diego, only two months away. San Diego is closer to Seattle than Boston, so no excuses. I was amused by a recent notice from ATA suggesting we prepare by breaking in some comfortable footwear! San Diego is easily the most casual city I have ever experienced, so that footwear will include a pair of flip-flops for after hours. The proximity of beaches everywhere makes for an easy-going atmosphere. But do be sure to make the most of the conference itself! I’m looking forward to the upcoming conference and all that I expect to learn there.

Laura Friend is a freelance translator currently living in Seattle, Washington. She translates mostly from Russian into English, but also speaks French, German, Spanish and Czech. She enjoys modern art, nature and film. She can be reached at [laura-friend@comcast.net](mailto:laura-friend@comcast.net).



# Notes from an Administrative Underground

*Lucy Gunderson, SLD Administrator*

I am lucky to have been able to spend the summer in a small town in upstate New York, but I do have to say that the level of customer service there is not anything to write home about because there is hardly any com-

petition. I would like to share three examples of poor customer service I have experienced this summer and show how we can apply lessons from these incidents to keep our own translation practices competitive.

1) I was having car trouble, so I took my car into a garage that was highly recommended by several friends. I won't bore you with the details, but even though the mechanics who looked at the car could tell there was a problem, they said they weren't able to do anything about it. When I pressed them on this, the response I received was "You won't know what's wrong until it really breaks down. It's like a person who goes into the hospital with chest pains, but the doctors can't find anything. Then the next day he has a massive heart attack."

2) My mother and I attended an art show at a small gallery. She saw a painting that she liked, but she wasn't sure about buying it. A few days later, we ran into the gallery owner at a café. My mother asked when she could come by to take another look at the painting, and the owner said, "Well, the times we are open are listed on that poster over there." My mother decided not to bother with the painting, and the owner never called her to follow up.

3) Another day, we went to the same café in search of lunch. I am allergic to wheat and gluten, but all they had out were sandwiches. I asked if they could throw together a salad or something like that for me since their sandwiches contained various veggies. They said they couldn't, but suggested I buy a large (expensive) box of gluten-free crackers and a hunk of cheese for my lunch.

Lessons learned:

1) Never compare anything to a massive heart attack. Ever.

2) If a potential customer doesn't follow up with you, FOLLOW UP WITH THEM.

3) Be flexible. If you don't offer the service a customer is requesting, do the research for them and recommend a colleague. If they are asking you to use TM software that you don't normally use, don't say no, just ask for a couple of extra days to familiarize yourself with a trial version of the software. Customers will remember this and come back to you.

I would like to remind all our voting members that we have an election this fall for spots on ATA's Board of Directors. Only 25% of voting members actually vote, but this is our association and it is vitally important that we familiarize ourselves with the candidates and find out where they stand on any issues of concern. Don't be shy about contacting the candidates directly with any questions you may have, or you can send them questions through me ([russophile@earthlink.net](mailto:russophile@earthlink.net)) if you prefer. If you won't be attending the conference in San Diego, you can still vote using the electronic proxy that all voting members will receive from ATA in their inboxes. Remember that if you are not certified in any language pair, you may still become a voting member through the very simple process known as membership review (see [http://www.atanet.org/membership/membershipreview-process\\_overview.php](http://www.atanet.org/membership/membershipreview-process_overview.php)). So, please do vote in person or by proxy and please do consider becoming a voting member if you are not one already.

I hope to see many of you in San Diego. SLD highlights will include our Division Dessert Reception on Wednesday, October 24, our annual banquet at Pomegranate Restaurant, the Greiss lecture to be given by Marijana Nikolić on Saturday, October 27 at 2pm (please note the new time and day), and, best of all, the SLD Annual Meeting, which will be held at 11:30am on Saturday, October 27.

## ATTENTION: POETS, SONG WRITERS, AND LITERARY TRANSLATORS

Every year at the ATA Conference the Literary Division holds a Friday evening "After Hours Café" at which conference attendees can read their works (poems, songs, or short prose excerpts). THERE IS NO PRESELECTION INVOLVED. If you want to read it, the audience wants to hear it. Interested? Remember to prepare and bring a piece or pieces to read. Even if you think you will lose your nerve, bring them just in case you get it back.

**Friday, October 26, 9:00-11:00 pm.**

# An Interview with Our 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Susana Greiss Lecturer

*Interview conducted by Janja Pavetić-Dickey*

This year's Greiss lecturer is Marijana Nikolić, a Croatian interpreter and translator and former Head of the Conference Interpretation Unit at the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in The Hague. Ms. Nikolić began working as an interpreter and translator 20 years ago when she was hired by the United Nations Protection Force in her native country of Croatia. She joined UN ICTY in 1995, where she worked as a translator and conference interpreter before accepting the position of the Head of the Interpretation Unit, which she held for seven years. Ms. Nikolić interprets from English and French into Croatian and currently lives in Brussels, where she is the Language Correspondent for the Croatian Unit at the European Parliament.



Marijana Nikolić

**Ms. Nikolić's lecture is scheduled for 2:00 pm on Saturday, October 27. NB: This lecture has been rescheduled to a time different from the one in the preliminary conference program.**

**1) I see from your biography that you have had a long and impressive career as an interpreter, translator, and head of interpretation services. Please tell us how you first got involved in interpreting/translating. At what point did conference interpreting become your main focus and why?**

It is not unusual for language professionals from small language communities to have done both interpreting and translating at some point in their careers or to do both regularly. My first full-time translator position was with the UN peacekeeping mission – UNPROFOR – in Croatia in 1992. I was part of a small team of translators in charge of translating, among other things, cease-fire and peace agreements, which were later used as basic texts during peace negotiations and other high-level meetings. As you can imagine, these were highly sensitive documents crucial for the outcome of peace negotiations, and the meetings at which the warring parties discussed them also required interpretation due to the presence of foreign observers and representatives of international organizations. At the time, I had an MA in translation but no formal training in interpretation. Nevertheless, when I first agreed to interpret (consecutively) at one such meeting, the task was less daunting than I had thought it would be because my work as a translator

had given me in-depth knowledge of the texts and the issues being discussed. It was also helpful that I had worked closely with the people I had to interpret for, so I did reasonably well. Three years later, when I joined the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in The Hague, I still considered myself a translator and was indeed hired as one. The Tribunal had just been established at that time, and its functioning involved very little that would require Croatian interpreting. But it wasn't long before the first arrests were made, and soon the Tribunal and its language section were gearing up for the first trial.

I was encouraged by the chief of the section at the time to take part in the on-the-job training in conference interpretation organized for staff translators. I liked interpreting, seemed to have some talent for it, and worked hard to master the techniques. I was very fortunate to have regular booth assignments soon and that they pertained to situations that I already was quite experienced with.

The ICTY Conference and Language Services Section (CLSS) provides both translation and interpretation services, and while there is a separate Interpretation Unit, there is some organizational flexibility, and section members with both skills can perform either, depending on the needs of the service. That is why I didn't have to bid farewell to translation completely but could continue to do some legal translation and revision from time to time, in addition to interpreting. However, in 2004, when I became Head of the Interpretation Unit, I left translation and became involved exclusively with interpretation services management. Thus, on the one hand, my career at the ICTY followed the changing needs of its language section; on the other, it was also a reflection of my own professional development and my temperament, both of which demand variety.

**2) As Head of the UN ICTY Interpretation Unit you were in charge of organizing and supervising courtroom interpretation services for a total of 5,000–6,000 interpreter days a year, as well as managing 40 staff interpreters and up to 25 freelance interpreters per week. Which languages did the ICTY Interpretation Unit cover and what were the**

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**greatest challenges you faced in organizing interpretation services for so many different trials over the years?**

The ICTY Interpretation Unit covered the two official languages of the ICTY, English and French, plus the language (or languages) of the accused and victims. In the great majority of the trials, we had three interpretation booths: English, French, and the Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian (B/C/S) booth. A fourth booth was added if the language of the accused and the language of the victims were different, as was the case with trials involving individuals of Albanian or Macedonian nationality. Occasionally we would also get a request to provide interpretation for a fourth (or a fifth) language; this happened when a witness or a state representative speaking a “non-Tribunal” language appeared before the court. I will speak more about the functioning of the Conference and Language Services Section during my lecture and provide practical examples which may be of interest to other translators and interpreters.

While it is true that organizing interpretation for so many trials and so many languages is no small feat, especially since the trial schedule changes frequently and unexpectedly, I would say that the greatest challenge is the very setting in which ICTY interpreters provide their services. Simultaneous interpretation is most commonly practiced in multilingual conferences where speakers give presentations or make statements using a standard language or register and seldom engage in disorderly or acrimonious debate. What they say may be “open to interpretation,” but their words are rarely disputed and cannot be used as evidence. The ICTY, on the other hand, is a criminal court, and during its proceedings, the prosecution and defense are pitted against each other, and both the accused and the witnesses experience considerable stress when they take the floor. The Tribunal depends

on interpreters in all its hearings and for all speakers appearing before it. And they range from grief-stricken witnesses to silver-tongued lawyers. Witnesses are cross-examined, and lawyers must respond to counter-arguments. The issues at stake are high, the subject matter complex, and the stories often told with intense emotions. It comes as no surprise that there are occasional attempts to use interpreters as scapegoats. For instance, in order to avoid answering an uncomfortable question during cross-examination, witnesses would sometimes say “This is not what I said, there was an error in interpretation,” or something to that effect.

Moreover, all public sessions of the ICTY are webcast and all its proceedings, whether in public or in closed session, are recorded and transcribed, which places additional burden on interpreters who, unlike translators, work in real time. The level of accuracy expected of ICTY interpreters is quite a bit higher than in a typical conference setting and can be likened to the one required for translation. For me as the Head Interpreter, the greatest challenge was to raise our clients’ awareness about the nature of conference interpreting and, in the event of a language dispute, to defend the interpreter’s legitimate choice of words and expressions without succumbing to the pressures of an adversarial courtroom. And to ensure, of course, optimal working conditions for our interpreters.

**3) As someone who has worn many different hats in the course of a 20-year career, i.e., that of a translator, reviser/editor, interpreter, and head of interpretation unit, you have a unique perspective on different types of jobs/roles available to language professionals. Which of those roles did you enjoy the most and why?**

*Continued on page 9*

## **ANNOUNCING SLD’S 15th ANNUAL GREISS LECTURE**

### **“Translating and Interpreting War Crimes Trials”**

**At the 53rd ATA Conference, San Diego, California**

**Delivered by Marijana Nikolić, who worked for 17 years as Croatian interpreter and translator for the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.**

**Saturday, October 27, 2:00 pm – 3:15 pm**

## Ján Buzassý (Slovak)

Introduction and Translation by John Minahane

Ján Buzassý, born in 1935, has been a leading Slovak poet for half a century. Hence he has lived through social and political upheavals, including the establishment and disestablishment of Communist Czechoslovakia. But although echoes of these events may be found in his poetry (and during the 1960s he was editor of the controversial literary journal *Mladá tvorba*, banned in 1970), they have never defined his work. Buzassý is concerned with themes that transcend all political systems and passing cultural phases. He writes about permanent human problems and lasting themes in literature and art. Above all, he is a lover of beauty.

The first of the poems translated here has the feel of mid-November in Slovakia, when a harsh wind can signal the approach of winter. Buzassý thinks of the wind as clinging to the ground, no longer flying as in summer or autumn. The only things still flying are the birds, which seem to be hurrying off to the Ice Age; the poet blows them a kiss, or peck of the beak, as they go by. In *Leaves* the same time of year evokes a melancholy reflection on human transience. Angel will be read variously by different readers, but it's worth saying that the "someone" in the second verse who weighed hearts in an iron glove is almost certainly the Czechoslovak communist regime. For that regime in its paranoid moments, any raw spontaneous impulse that was not politically smoothed down could be seen as dangerous.



Ján Buzassý

"Load every rift with ore!" John Keats advised, and that is Buzassý's policy too. When the thought is so highly concentrated, how can the translator hope to convey its every aspect? And there's also the problem of sustaining rhythms and rhymes without introducing extra elements. Robert Frost's taunt, "Poetry is what gets lost in translation!" rings in the translator's ears.

I don't agree with Frost, of course.

But I do think that something gets lost in translation, and the translator is forced continually to make choices: either the sound or the full sense, either this line at its very best or that line. For example, in the first line of *The Wind's Grown Hard* I would like to get the direct effect of the plain Slovak verbs ("no longer flies," "is settling down"), but the meter exerts its claims.

Aside from all technique, I think one must try to be an alchemist when translating poems like these. How close the results come to genuine gold is for others to judge.

John Minahane is Irish and has published translations from Irish, German and Slovak. His translations of Slovak poetry include: Ladislav Novomeský, *Slovak Spring* (Belfast, 2004); Milan Rúfus, *To Bear the Burden and Sing*, ed. Viliam Marčok (Martin, 2008); *Six Slovak Poets*, ed. Igor Hochel (London, 2010). An essay on the poets of post-Communist Slovakia is forthcoming online in the Autumn 2012 issue of the *Dublin Review of Books* ([www.drbb.ie](http://www.drbb.ie)). He can be reached at [johnminahane@yahoo.ie](mailto:johnminahane@yahoo.ie).

### Vietor pritvrtil

Vietor pritvrtil, už neletí, už sadá,  
tisne sa k zemi, ktorá kamenie,  
akoby v chlade zasadala vláda,  
a riešila, čím sa dnes zahreje.

To iba vtáky, milované vtáky  
v letku sa trasú, dám im vtačí zob,  
sýkorky, vrabce, pinky, aj zlé straky  
sedia vo vlaku do ľadových dôb.

### The Wind's Grown Hard

The wind's grown hard, less flighty, more controlled.  
It clings to earth, which turns to stone-hard clay,  
as if a government sat in the cold,  
considering how best to warm the day.

Only the birds, beloved birds, still fly,  
shivering. – Here's my beak's-kiss! – and again! –  
to sparrows, larks and finches, and the sly  
thief magpies, traveling on the Ice Age train.

Send comments or translated Slavic poetry to Martha Kosir  
at [KOSIR001@gannon.edu](mailto:KOSIR001@gannon.edu).

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<p><b>Anjel</b></p> <p>Prichádza anjel, aby vážil srdcia, nie na váhu, berie ich len do ruky, ohmatá, kde je kôra mäkkšia, kde tvrdšia, vanie hrôza, svet má poruchy.</p> <p>Srdcia sú drsné, tu už niekto vážil v železnej rukavici, každý cit sa javil ako nebezpečný bacil do toho sveta, v ktorom musíš žiť.</p>	<p><b>Angel</b></p> <p>Here comes the angel who will weigh our hearts. He'll take them in his hands (he needs no scale); by touch he'll tell what's tender and what's hard. The world has flaws, there's horror in the air.</p> <p>And hearts are rough-hewn. Somebody here weighed hearts in an iron glove: then feelings seemed a menace to the world, come to invade our daily lives, plague-carriers indeed.</p>
<p><b>Lístím</b></p> <p>Brodím sa chladným lístím, októbrovým, novembrovým, čo bolo krásne, vialo vo vetre, trepotalo sa, triaslo krovím, zostalo z neho iba málo.</p> <p>Zdvihnem list, jeho jemné žilkovanie prekrýva cudzia farba, napätý už vidím, že tu prešli krásne panie, s vysokou hlavou, v šatách po päty.</p>	<p><b>Leaves</b></p> <p>I am trudging through the cold leaves of October, November, that were beautiful and blew in the wind, fluttered on the trees high over. Now what is left of them? The final few.</p> <p>I raise a leaf, veins delicately marked, an alien color shrouding it. I feel rapt, as I see that beautiful women have passed, their heads held high, in clothes down to their heels.</p>

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**SUSANA GREISS LECTURER** *Continued from page 7*

I enjoyed them all equally but at different times. Each of the “hats” I’ve worn over the years had its best moments, and they were neither at the beginning nor at the end of the period I wore them. I think there is a particular point in the development of a skill when you have mastered it sufficiently to be able to truly enjoy what you’re doing. And if I may extend the hat metaphor even further: the most satisfying time is when your hat feels very comfortable but it’s still a relatively new hat, and you wear it with a certain professional panache. You continue to be humble, of course, but you feel connected and you can see clearly how your particular task fits in with a larger purpose, namely communication. You are able to reflect on the nature of your task, which in turn enables you to choose your approach and your strategies, whether you are translating, revising, or interpreting. When you become the manager of a language services section, you are taking your profession, skills, and experience to the next level: you are no longer a sole, star performer but become responsible for the work of others. It’s a painful transformation, and not many language professionals have the knack for it. For me, it was a tremendous learning experience and, on balance, more rewarding than frustrating, partly because I acquired it in a familiar and inspiring setting working alongside competent and committed colleagues.

In my new job as the Language Correspondent for the Croatian Unit at the European Parliament, I divide my time between interpreting duties and administrative tasks related to the setting up of the Croatian booth and quality control. So far the greatest challenge has been to ensure the smooth entry of this new booth into the amazing, wonderfully multilingual world of European parliamentary democracy, where debate topics range from the labeling of infant foods to motor vehicle noise to the common corporate tax base. Our glossaries are works in progress; official documents are not yet available in Croatian and we don’t have the passive knowledge of as many languages as other, older booths in the European Parliament. This means that we often have to take relay from other booths. However, we are part of a large, well-structured service, and colleagues from other booths have been more than willing to help us learn the ropes and share the tricks of the trade with us.

Ms. Nikolić can be reached at [marijana.n@gmail.com](mailto:marijana.n@gmail.com).

# SLAVFILE LITE: NOT BY WORD COUNT ALONE

Lydia Razran Stone

**The latest item in my collection of U.S. media references to Russian classics.** From a Yahoo news report about a government case being dropped because the evidence was taking up too much room on the agency's computer: "As the Associated Press notes, the collection of evidence against A\_\_\_\_, who is charged with illegally selling prescription medicines online, is enough to print the classic novel *War and Peace* 625,000 times." This gives me an idea. You know how units of measure are named after great scientists – Gauss, Watt, Ohm, Curie? Well, don't we really need a unit for measuring large numbers of words or perhaps number of pages? (Those who work in both the Russian and U.S. markets can convert as needed.) Why should this unit not be named after Lev Nikolayevich – the *tolstoy* (*ty*) being equal to approximately 1358 pages (rounding acceptable), the length of Anthony Briggs' translation of *War and Peace* (by far the best, IMHO)? Translators could go around reporting their yearly output in *tolstoys* or perhaps their daily workload in millitolstoys (*mty*). Or do you think *millilevs* has more of a ring to it? Anyone want to start a campaign to make this official? Unfortunately, it is too late for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the great man's death, but the bicentennial of his birth is coming up in a mere 16 years. If I am not around then, though I fully intend to be, don't forget to tell everyone that this was my idea.

I have been outputting a fair number of *ctys* (aka *centitolstoys*) myself these days – I am curating (the publisher's word, not mine) a bilingual edition of the journal *Чтения* (Chtenia/Readings). As a break from including excerpts from Tolstoy's works, I decided to collect as many English translations of a single passage as possible and compare them. The one I chose was from *Anna Karenina*, at the very end where Levin experiences an epiphany after talking to one of his peasants – deciding that the fact all people have an internal idea of goodness that cannot be explained by self-interest is the miracle he has been seeking. I learned a number of interesting things from this exercise.

First, if you find a used bookseller claiming to have a hard-to-find translation in stock, there is a significant danger that you will simply be sent some other translation of the same work. When you complain they offer to refund you less than half of the total you spent for the express delivery order. However, in this case the empor has a small but satisfying recourse – I am going to give such sellers the worst possible rating on the Amazon.com rating scale. And, in late-breaking

news, the bookseller has finally agreed to a full refund including postage, giving me a small victory, however Pyrrhic, so I intend to upgrade their rating to at least a 2.

The second thing that I discovered, is that new English translations of AK (Does this abbreviation mean *Anne Klein* to you? For shame!) were published in the U.S. and Britain in three periods: three between 1886 and 1918; three between 1954 and 1961, and two so far in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. The pattern is highly similar for *War and Peace*. I wonder what, if anything, it all means.

Third, all of the six translations I looked at convey Tolstoy's overall meaning in this important passage just fine, though there are some differences and I prefer one version over the other. No one reading even a very early translation (the 1886 one is not available so I cannot comment on it) or less well-known translation is going to fail to read the "true" *Anna Karenina*. This is good news indeed, except for those of us who are still hoping to get a sudden commission to retranslate the Russian greats. Admittedly, this is only my opinion and it is based on comparisons of a very small sample.

Through no doing of my own, we have become a multi-kayak family. When we purchased our first one, I, as a proud first time boat owner, insisted it be christened *Lidochka*. When the second one followed, the appropriate name was laughably obvious—*Lodochka*.

The following had been going around the Internet under the heading of *великий и могучий русский язык* (the great and mighty Russian language). I will translate for readers who do not read Russian. (Although written originally in English, the web version is making the rounds in Russian.) This excerpt evidently comes from a scanned copy of the *London Times* for 1904 from the report of a correspondent writing from Port Arthur.

"With ferocious cries of [phonetic rendition of the Russian impolite suggestion that the addressee violate the incest taboo] the Russian soldiers counterattacked and beat off the Japanese advance on the mountain. After the attack, I asked a Russian officer what the words [aforementioned phonetic rendition] meant, and he answered, "We are dying for tsar and Fatherland."

Hope to see many of you in San Diego!



# IDIOM SAVANTS: THE PHRASES OF SIN

Vladimir Kovner and Lydia Stone

Some time ago the two authors of this column were discussing how to translate a line in an Okudzhava song: Говорят, что грешил, что не к сроку свечу затушил. (They say he sinned, causing his candle to go out before its time.) This line is a reference to Okudzhava's fellow bard Vysotsky, who died young, possibly because of a less than healthy lifestyle. Lydia did not want to translate the line literally using the word sinned or sin. She argued that sin in English either carries an obviously religious connotation or is used jocularly or ironically. Vladimir, on the other hand, asserted that references to sin are a kind of "my bad" in Russian and do not in conversation evoke religious connotations, straightforward or ironic. Well, we had a good way to further investigate possible differences. Ladies and gentlemen, we give you Russian and English sin idioms.



## RUSSIAN SINIDIOMS

1. **Брать (взять) грех на душу:** 1) совершить дурной, предосудительный поступок, 2) нести моральную ответственность за предосудительный поступок, совершенный по принуждению или по своей воле. (В романе Владимира Максимова беглые лагерники заставляют заводского мастера, предавшего их, повеситься.) *Мастеру пришлось насильно вкладывать ремень в руку... Валет, стискивая мастеру кулак с зажатым в нем ремнем, ожесточено приговаривал: «Ну, ей Богу же... Не заставляй греха на душу брать...»* To do wrong, to accept blame, responsibility or consequences of an action one knows to be wrong.
2. **Вводить (ввести) в грех:** 1) соблазнять кого-либо; побуждать к чему-либо недозволенному; 2) сердить, раздражать кого-либо. Ср. Доводить до греха. 1) (Из Горького) *Прости, господи... Опять ты меня, Василиса, в грех ввела...* 2) *Прекрати эти разговоры, не испытывай моего терпения! Не вводи в грех!* To lead someone into sin, to corrupt someone; to make someone angry; to exhaust someone's patience. **He вводи в грех! = Don't make me do (say) something I'll (we'll both) regret.**
3. **Вот грех-то какой** (просторечие): выражение чувства сожаления по поводу неожиданной беды, неудачи. *«Вот грех-то какой», — сказал старик-охотник. «Как же я так промахнулся?»* **That's a crying shame.**
4. **Грехи наши тяжкие** (устар.; в наше время иногда используется иронически): выражение досады по поводу чего-либо неприятного, сетования на свою судьбу. *«Эх, грехи наши тяжкие», — сказала нянька, поднимая сброшенную кем-то со стены картину.* As a punishment for past sins or sins in a past life; **for my (our) sins.**
5. **Грехи молодости:** ошибки, заблуждения юности. Часто используется как форма оправдания поступков в молодые годы. *О грехах*

*молодости далеко не всегда приятно вспоминать в старости. Youthful indiscretions; sowing of wild oats.*

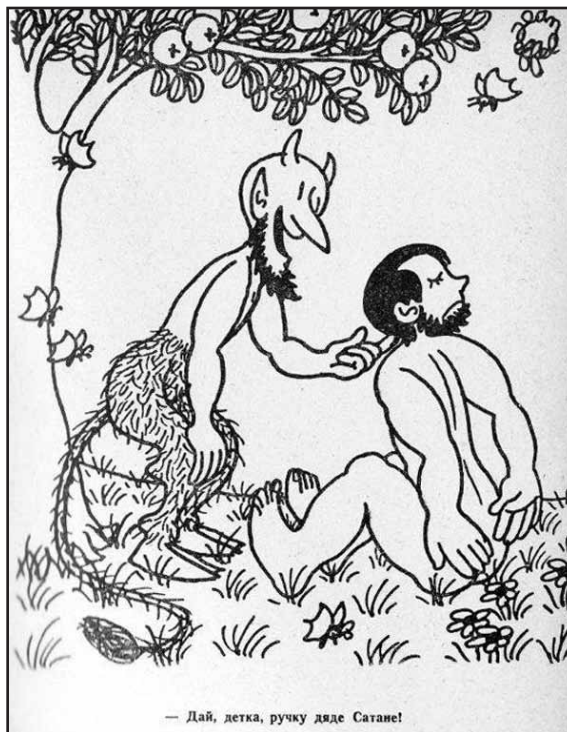
6. **Грех попутал:** кто-либо поддался соблазну сделать что-либо предосудительное. (Вяземский «Дорогою») *«Я на себя сержусь и о себе горюю. Попутал грех меня оставить сень родную, Родных привычек нить прервать, пуститься в путь».* **The devil made me do it.** (Ironic catchphrase, based on earlier serious religious belief, popularized by comedian Flip Wilson in the 1970s.)
7. **Грешным делом** (вводное слово): к сожалению; следует признаться. *А я было, грешным делом, подумал, что ты проспал.* **I must confess that...**
8. **Довести до греха:** (То же, что 2.2.) See second meaning of #2.
9. **Долго ли до греха?! —** легко, быстро, внезапно может случиться что-либо такое, о чем потом придется пожалеть. (Эдуард Успенский) *Долго ль до греха? Ведь соблазнят. Уж род такой проклятый.* Вариант этого же выражения в утвердительной форме: **Так не долго и до греха. Isn't (wasn't) that just asking for trouble? or That is just asking for trouble.**
10. **Есть (был) грех:** есть, было, случилось (употребляется при подтверждении мысли о чем-либо проступке, преступлении, недостатке и т.д.). *«Говорят, ты выпиваешь?» «Есть грех.»* **Unfortunately, that** (negative statement about oneself, someone else or a situation) **is only too true. There's no denying it.**
11. **Водятся за ним/за ней грешки:** утверждение, что кто-либо виноват в каких-то проступках, неблагоприятном поведении и т.д. *Водятся за ним грешки: любит похвастаться, а то и приврать.* **S/he has her/his little faults.**
12. **Иди/отдай и не грехи:** (современный, обычно не имеющий религиозного контекста, разговорный вариант фразы Иисуса Христа: «Иди и впредь не

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греши!») Знаешь, что неправ или виноват, или должен что-то, так иди или отдай без спора, без пререканий, иначе хуже будет. *В России сейчас просто. Обложат новый бизнес 90-процентным налогом и все. Отдай и не греши!* Reference to Jesus' words in John 11:8, "Go and sin no more." Phrase not quoted frequently in English unless in a religious context. **I will forgive you (let you off) this once, but be sure you do not do it again.**

13. **И смех, и грех:** трагикомично; одновременно и смешно, и грустно. *Надо видеть мою сестру за рулем! И смех и грех.* **You don't know whether to laugh or cry.**
14. **Как на грех:** как назло; как нарочно. *Останавливает меня полицейский. А я, как на грех, водительские права дома забыл.* **As if to spite me (you, him); as if I didn't have enough trouble; just my luck!**
15. **Не без греха:** не совсем честно, с нарушением каких-то правил, обязанностей и т.п. *Все мы не без греха, но адвокаты – особенно.* **Not entirely on the up and up.**
16. **Не грех:** можно, следует, не предосудительно (сделать что-либо). *В такую мерзкую погоду не грех и выпить что-нибудь покрепче.* **No harm done; there's no harm in that; it wouldn't hurt to...**
17. **(Уйди) от греха:** выражение сильного предостережения уйти от беды, от неприятностей; иногда звучит как угроза. (В. Высоцкий) *Не жалко мне таких парней. / «Ты от греха уйди», – твержу я снова. / А он – ко мне, и все – о ней...If you do that you'll be very sorry.*
18. **От греха подальше:** во избежание неприятностей; опасаясь нежелательных последствий. *Накануне финального футбольного матча поляки выслали из страны группу русских болельщиков, замеченных в драках на стадионе в предварительных играх. Как говорится, подальше от греха.* **In order to avoid trouble; to stay out of harm's way.**
19. **С грехом пополам** (то же, что **С горем пополам**) с трудом; еле-еле; едва-едва; кое-как. *На этот раз он сдал экзамен с грехом пополам.* **Badly; just barely; barely managing to do something; with difficulty and almost not succeeding; full of errors; barely adequate.**
20. **Смеяться, право, не грешно / Над всем, что кажется смешно.** (Крылатая фраза из написанного в 1796 г. писателем и историком Н.М. Карамзиным стихотворения): употребляется для оправдания смеха, насмешки, иронии и т. д. (особенно, когда такая реакция кем-либо порицается). **Why shouldn't I (we) laugh when something is funny?**



— Дай, детка, ручку дяде Сатане!

From: Jean Effel, Юность Адама (Adam's Youth), University of Kiev Press, 1962.  
Translated from the French: La Création du Monde (1945).  
Caption translation: Come on, baby, give Uncle Satan your hand!

21. **Смертный грех:** очень большой порок; непростительный поступок. Известен список семи самых страшных, смертных грехов, как они понимаются в христианской традиции. Это сладострастие, гнев, зависть, чревоугодие, лень, гордыня и алчность. (Из Интернета) *Фанаты лондонского «Арсенала» считают, что капитан команды Ван Перси совершил смертный грех, согласившись за 22 миллиона перейти в другую команду.* **Cardinal sin. One of the seven deadly sins.**
22. **Страшен/страшна, как смертный грех:** уродлив, безобразен в высшей степени. Современный синоним этого выражения **Страшен, как атомная война**. *«Невеста была страшная, как смертный грех, а я из нее конфетку сделал», – хвалился фотограф.* **As ugly (or awful) as sin.**
23. **Чего греха таить?** – незачем скрывать. *Чего греха таить? Будь я помоложе, и я бы за ней приударил. Уж больно девочка хороша.* **What's the use (sense) of denying it?**

## ENGLISH SINIDIOMS

1. **As black (ugly or guilty) as sin.** Very black, ugly or guilty. *Good coffee is as black as sin, pure as the angels, strong as death, and sweet as love. We adopted a dog who is ugly as sin, but we all adore. All you have to do is watch him in court and you will know he is guilty as sin.* 1) Черный, как грех/ночь. (Черный цвет и ночь олицетворяют грех. Загадка: черный, как грех, горячий, как ад и сладкий, как поцелуй. Разгадка: кофе.) 2) Уродливый, страшный, как смертный грех; страшный, как атомная война. 3) Виновен, как грех (видимо ассоциируется с первородным грехом); виновен вне всякого сомнения.

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2. **Cover a multitude of sins.** Originally a Biblical reference meaning that being a loving or charitable person compensates in God's eyes for the commission of multiple minor sins. Used frequently simply about concealment. *That loose dress will cover a multitude of sins.* Покрывать/скрывать множество грехов. (Происхождение этой фразы – от библейского 1-го Послания Петра, 4-8: «Имейте друг ко другу усердную любовь, потому что любовь покрывает множество грехов»). Эта фраза может быть использована, когда говорится о прикрытии, сокрытии каких-либо мелких недостатков, погрешностей.
3. **For my sins.** Used as a jocular retort when someone makes a comment or even compliment; used to suggest that the quality noted is really a lot of trouble and can be seen as a punishment from God. *“My goodness, your three daughters have grown up to be stunning girls.” “For my sins.”* (Шутливо. За мои прегрешения. «Боже мой! Твои три дочери стали очаровательными девушками». «За мои прегрешения (грехи мои тяжкие)»).
4. **Hate the sin, love the sinner.** Used by religious people to reconcile various implications of religious teaching, such as loving one another, while still condemning behaviors. *The preacher acknowledged that he condemns homosexuality, but claims he feel nothing but love for the individuals who practice it and that his church believes in hate the sin, love the sinner.* Ненавижу грех, но люблю грешника.
5. **It's a sin to waste this.** Used to justify eating or drinking something that one shouldn't, also may be used without “waste” in similar contents. *It's a sin to sit inside in such beautiful weather.* Грешно пропустить такую возможность. (Грех сидеть дома в такую прекрасную погоду.)
6. **Let he who is without sin cast the first stone.** (John 8 : 11) Used to say: do not criticize/condemn if you are not perfect. *I just hate it when she starts to list the faults of all her friends. Let she who is without sin, cast the first stone.* Кто из вас без греха, первый брось [в нее] камень (от Иоанна, 8-7). Ср. с расхожим выражением: «Я в него/в нее камень не брошу».
7. **Live in sin.** Live together in a sexual relationship without marriage. *What some people call a trial marriage, others call living in sin.* Жить в грехе.
8. **More sinned against than sinning.** Used to say that someone is more of a victim than a culprit in a given situation or in general. *Yes, her son went to jail but, really, he was more sinned against than sinning.* Больше жертва, чем виновный/грешник.
9. **Poverty is no sin.** Self-explanatory but still used as an adage. Бедность не порок. Шутливый вариант: Бедность не порок, но большое свинство.
10. **Sin bin.** Punishment box in hockey. *Two of the team members spent almost the entire second half in the sin bin for fighting.* Скамейка для штрафников в хоккее.
11. **Sin in haste, repent at leisure.** Variation on the proverb *act in haste, repent at leisure*, which is probably most known now as *marry in haste...* May mean that something you have decided to do in an instant and gotten only short term pleasure from may cause you regret for the rest of your life. From the Internet: *The Greek people are paying a terribly high price for living beyond their means, but, as the saying goes, “sin in haste, repent at leisure.”* On the other hand, it is sometimes interpreted to mean if you want to do something that you know is wrong, go ahead and do it. There will be all the time in the world to repent and make up for it. Сорешить в спешке, а потом жалеть всю жизнь. Варианты этой поговорки: Действовать опрометчиво, а потом сожалеть на досуге; жениться на скорую руку да на долгую муку; жениться опрометчиво /не думая, а потом раскаиваться. Циничный вариант: **Греш и кайся, кайся и греши.**
12. **Sin of omission.** Reference, frequently jocular, to the fact that one can do wrong by failing to do the right thing. *I have never done anything really, really bad but all those sins of omission prey on my conscience.* Грех несвершения. Совершить грех/ошибку/преступление не неправильным, плохим, предосудительным поступком, а бездействием, не сделав что-то правильное, необходимое.
13. **Sin tax.** Luxury tax imposed by governments for the seemingly contradictory purposes of raising money and discouraging behavior they disapprove of (e.g., smoking cigarettes). *The sin tax on cigarettes may actually have something to do with the diminished rate of smoking.* Налог на «пороки» (алкоголь, сигареты, азартные игры).
14. **Sinfully**+positive adjective: used (particularly but not exclusively in advertisements) to indicate that something is so pleasant to the senses that it borders on sin; almost never is anything that even the most religious would consider a sin implied. *Our yoghurt tastes sinfully rich but has only 100 calories.* О чем-то: Восхитительный, замечательный, приятный, чудесный... почти как плотские наслаждения/грехи/страсти; как плотская любовь.
15. **The sins of the fathers.** Reference to the fact that children are suffering as a result of wrong acts committed by their parents (Rom. 5) From the Internet: *For nearly two millennia, Western law visited the sins of fathers and mothers upon their illegitimate children.* За грехи отцов.
16. **We're all sinners.** Acknowledgment that no one is perfect, either as self-justification or to discourage condemnation of someone else. *Who am I to condemn him – after all, we're all sinners.* Все мы грешники; мы все не без греха.



## The Note: A Great Musician's Life of Creation and Discovery

Alla Panvini

*Homa (The Note)*, a documentary on the life of musician Rudolf Barshai, 2011

Director: Oleg Dorman

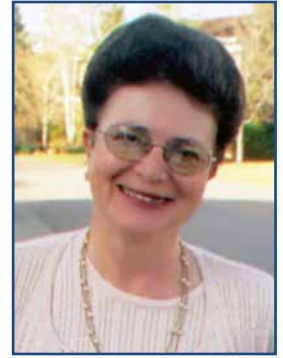
Camera: Oleg Dorman

Producers: Felix Dektor, Oleg Dorman

Studio Dom

90 minutes; in Russian, no subtitles

Available at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=9hUj92\\_wXFo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9hUj92_wXFo)



Oleg Dorman's latest poetic documentary was first shown to the public on April 27, 2012. Like his 2009 film *Подстрочник (Verbatim)*, on the life of Lilianna Lungina, reviewed in *SlavFile's* Winter 2011 and Spring 2011 issues), it is a monologue by one of the passing generation of exceptional Russian cultural figures. In this case, the subject is the conductor and musician Rudolf Barshai—his last message to his contemporaries and posterity. He died at the age of 86 on November 2, 2010 in Basel, Switzerland, a month after the shooting of the film was completed.

One of the great conductors and musicians of our time, Rudolf Borisovich Barshai was born in 1924, in Kuban, southern Russia. He studied in Moscow in the 1940s and '60s, receiving the kind of training that produced all the famous Russian musicians of the 20th century. In 1945 he founded the Borodin Quartet, long considered one of the finest string quartets in the world. Early in his career, he performed extensively as a viola soloist (a recording of Barshai's performance of Bach's "Ciaccona" is available at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=uEMbt7NFU7M](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uEMbt7NFU7M)).

Barshai was best known as the founder and long-time conductor of the Moscow Chamber Orchestra, which he established in 1955. Margalit Fox wrote in an obituary for Barshai in *The New York Times* on November 10, 2010: "The orchestra performed on occasion in the United States during the cold war years. Reviewing its American debut in 1963 for *The New York Times*, Howard Klein called the group 'superb.' 'The high expectations were so far exceeded,' he added, 'that one was left open-mouthed in admiration.' "

Barshai was renowned in particular for his interpretations of the works of Dmitri Shostakovich, a mentor and close friend. Leading the Moscow Chamber Orchestra, he conducted the world premiere of Shostakovich's Fourteenth Symphony in Leningrad in 1969. His orchestration of the composer's Eighth Quartet is especially widely performed.

Dorman was interviewed about *The Note* on Radio Svoboda, April 27, 2012 ([www.svobodanews.ru/content/article/24561038.html](http://www.svobodanews.ru/content/article/24561038.html)). Journalists Yuri Vasiliev and Yuri Timofeev observed in their introduction to the interview: "Even though the formal principal structure of the film—a monologue—is preserved (Rudolf Barshai is the only one on screen, except for occasional appearances by his wife), there are many more characters in *The Note*. Among them are Johann Sebastian Bach, Gustav Mahler, and their unfinished works—"The Art of the Fugue" and the Tenth Symphony, which Rudolf Barshai completed. Another important film character is the director and cameraman, Oleg Dorman, who never appears on the screen."

Dorman recalls: "When we arrived in Switzerland to get acquainted, both of us had a rare feeling that we had known each other for a long time. Soon it became obvious that there would not be another chance for us to see each other. Originally, we had planned that Vadim Yusov [the legendary cameraman who filmed *Verbatim*] would shoot the film. But my co-producer, Felix Dektor, said: 'Shoot immediately, and do it yourself.' For ten days we recorded Barshai's story. It was not so much his 'farewell' view of his life, but the view of a person from another dimension. Barshai, terribly frail and near the end of his life, was not concerned about his physical weakness. Quite the opposite—he was giving us the gift of hope." In *The Note*, as in *Verbatim*, the panoramic history of the Soviet Union during those years rises up on the screen and behind the scenes. This panorama is terrifying.

Dorman reports, for example, how Barshai in the film "describes, very simply, without any affectation the episode of his visit to Dmitri Shostakovich, during the time that the composer was being persecuted. There were no words exchanged.... Shostakovich took out some wine.... When Barshai was getting ready to leave; Shostakovich simply thanked him for his silent support."

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Throughout his career in the Soviet Union, Barshai, the world-renowned conductor, was kept under tight government control. At one point he was branded *невъездной*—"not allowed to travel abroad"—because at the time he was married to a Japanese citizen. Renowned pianist Sviatoslav Richter, a good friend of Barshai, refused to perform in Japan without him, saying: "I only play with two conductors: Britten and Barshai."

There were several factors that forced Barshai to emigrate. The main one was that he was asked by Shostakovich and other Russian composers to finish Mahler's Tenth Symphony and Bach's "The Art of the Fugue." He could not complete this work in the Soviet Union, in part because it required access to the composers' precious manuscripts, which were located abroad. This work became his lifelong mission, which he fulfilled two days before his death. Another reason for his decision to leave his country, his friends, and his orchestra, was that in the Soviet Union he could not perform contemporary music, music that was already considered classic all over the world but was banned in his own country.

Barshai left his country in 1977.

On April 27, 2011, Barshai's widow, Elena Barshai, was interviewed by Russian channel Kultura, immediately before Kultura aired *The Note*. Ms. Barshai said that after Barshai emigrated to the West in 1977, the Russian Federal State Fund (the archive for television and radio recordings reflecting the history, culture, and art of 20th-century Russia) was ordered to demagnetize all of his tape-recordings. They didn't do it; they hid the recordings at their own risk, feeling they had a mission to preserve these precious recordings for future generations.

### Why The Note?

Sergei Baimuhametov, in an article in Russian Bazaar (April 2012) (<http://russian-bazaar.com/ru/content/85601.htm>), told the story behind the title of the film:

As soon as Barshai arrived in the West, he devoted himself to his mission. "Both pieces—Bach's 'The Art of the Fugue' and Mahler's Tenth—came to us unfinished, and often could not be deciphered. It



Rudolf Barshai (1924-2010)

meant that Barshai literally needed to recreate them. This meant putting himself on the same wavelength with geniuses. How can this be explained in words? Barshai tries to explain it to us but can only try, because words are meaningless. We are mere mortals, and the great music of Bach and Mahler came 'from beyond.' The composers are only the messengers."

Barshai told Dorman about his work with the Mahler symphony: "I started studying the manuscript all over again from the very beginning ... took a magnifying glass ... thought I would find something, some note.... And I found one, ... a note written in one of the lower voices, just an ink blot ... illegible.... And then I told

myself, it doesn't matter; it's going to be *sol bemol* [G-flat]. I said it, because I heard it! And after I wrote *sol bemol* in my mind, everything inside me just exploded! I was still in bed, half-asleep.... I ran downstairs and wrote down the note. Then I came back up again and fell asleep. I slept peacefully for many hours...."

The work was finished in 2000. The renowned Mahler specialist Jonathan Carr came to the premier of the Tenth in Frankfurt, and after the concert told Barshai: "Finally, we have Mahler's Tenth Symphony!"

Dorman reported that "Barshai became inspired when he started talking about his creative work. When he told the story of deciphering the illegible note in the manuscript of Mahler's Tenth, it was like Dmitri Mendeleyev's description of the night that his Periodic Table of the Elements appeared to him in a dream" ([www.rg.ru/2011/11/07/dorman-site.html](http://www.rg.ru/2011/11/07/dorman-site.html)).

### An Exceptional Director

Oleg Dorman, the creator of *The Note*, is, at 45, still a young man. It is not common for a young person to listen to the stories of his parents and grandparents, which requires a special person. Such a person needs to understand the importance of the flow of human life from generation to generation and to have the curiosity and sensitivity to listen attentively to the older generation's stories, write them down, film them. Dorman is this kind of person. He understands, wrote columnist Baimuhametov, that "a whole piece of Russian social and cultural history is disappearing" and that he needs to preserve it, by making films about it.

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This movie by a brilliant director is about a genius, a musician and conductor, and two of the greatest composers of all time, Bach and Mahler. As an art lover who left Russia in 1978, the film moved me deeply: its timeless music, the musician himself, his simple and profound way of relating the story, the director who put it all together—and the intimate connection of the souls of these geniuses with the timeless and infinite Absolute.

Alla Parvini was born in the former Soviet Union and currently teaches an adult education course in Russian literature at the University of Denver in Colorado. The course covers authors from Pushkin, Gogol, and Tolstoy to Nabokov, Solzhenitsyn, Bunin, and many others. Alla's educational background is in engineering. Her publications include papers in major technical magazines in the Soviet Union and the United States. She can be reached at [apana@comcast.net](mailto:apana@comcast.net) and welcomes feedback.



Elena Barshai, Oleg Dorman (on the left)  
and Felix Dektor in Moscow  
Image: Rossiya TV



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# TO TWEET IN PLAIN RUNGLISH

Yuliya Baldwin



When **Twitter (Твитер)** – a new online social network (**социальная сеть**) and microblogging (**микроблоггинг**) service – came to life in 2006, my first question was “whaaaat???” Being a very skeptical person, I wondered

who on Earth cared what I was



doing at this very moment and, most importantly, why I should share it with the whole world! I couldn’t believe that the project would live a long life, especially with a ridiculous name like Twitter (**щебетать, чирикать**).

Nevertheless, ‘*what are you doing*’ is one of the first questions we ask our friends and family. Even if the answer is very simple – like eating pizza, riding a bicycle, or doing laundry, it’s intrinsically interesting to us. Perhaps it makes us feel connected and a part of each other’s lives? Twitter does both – satisfies our curiosity (what fun to read intimate facts about all those celebrities) and grooms our social vanity (there’s somebody who is interested in me). As a result, sharing minute details of one’s own life and following others’ daily existence has proved to be a most intriguing obsession for our modern times and modern cultures. Within a few years, the iconic Twitter logo – the Blue Bird – boldly spread its wings and gained worldwide popularity with more than “500 million active users as of 2012, generating over 340 million tweets daily and handling over 1.6 billion search queries per day” (according to Wikipedia).

How does Twitter work? At its heart are bite-sized bits of information known as *tweets* (**твиты**). The trick is that these text-based messages cannot exceed 140 characters, the same as your cell phone texts (**эсэмэски**). Interpreters should keep in mind that the Twitter terms *followers* and *follow* are translated into Russian in a rather unorthodox way – «**читатели**» and «**читает**». Once you create a Twitter account, you can choose who to follow (**кого читать**). It can be done by either finding your friends or persons of interest on Twitter, or browsing the Twitter categories (**просмотр категорий**). The categories cover a wide spectrum, ranging from light fare such as Sports, Music, and Entertainment to weightier subject matter such as Faith and Religion or the U.S. Elections 2012.

Tweets fall into several categories:

- **tweets – твиты** (обычные сообщения до 140 знаков)
- **direct messages (DM) – личные сообщения** (сообщения, которые пользователь может отправлять своим читателям и получать от тех, кого он читает)
- **@replies – @отклики** (ответы на сообщения других людей, которые начинаются с символа @, после которого идет логин пользователя, например, @cheburashka **Мы тебя приручили, мы за тебя и в ответе теперь**)
- **mentions – упоминания** (во вкладке «Упоминания» появляются все твиты, в которых упомянуто имя пользователя, например, «Собчак живьем» с @fkirkorov – одна из самых востребованных передач на “Дожде”!)

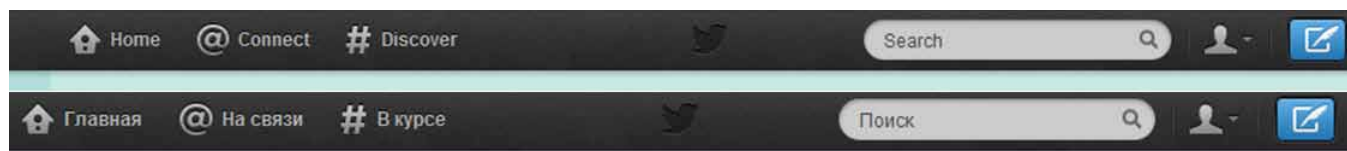
The main page of **Twitter’s** interface (what you see when you open your account) has three central **Tabs (вкладки)**, **Search Window (окно поиска)**, the symbols  for **Profile Page (показать мой профиль)**, and  for **Compose New Tweet (написать твит)**.

The **Tabs (вкладки)** are further divided into several straightforward subgroups:

<b>Home</b> Tweets Follow Followers Favorites Lists	<b>Главная</b> Твиты Читает Читатели Избранное Списки
<b>Connect</b> Interactions Mentions	<b>На связи</b> Отклики Упоминания
<b>Discover</b> Stories Activity Who to follow Find friends Browse categories	<b>В курсе</b> Истории Действия Близкие по духу Поиск друзей Просмотр категорий

As a social network, Twitter revolves around the principle of amassing followers (читатели). Tweets are publicly visible by default; however, users can restrict message delivery to just their followers. Twitter

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is very simple to use: just type your ideas on the latest tennis match or how bad your toenail fungus is, click 'tweet' and it gets delivered to your followers.

The social aspect of Twitter is both captivating and puzzling, yet linguists should be fascinated by its tendency to spawn sticky neologisms that are almost immediately adopted into other languages and swiftly modified to fit native grammars.

## Twitter Terms (Тви-термины)

Disclaimer: Twitter is not fully Russified; its interface and some Help articles began supporting Russian only in 2011. I had to surf the Internet and study the Russian and English Twitters, as well as employing the help of real-life Russian tweeters/twitterers to figure out the translations of many official and slang terms used in and around Twitter.

English	Русский	Твиттер-сленг	Comments
# (hash)	# (октоотрп)	решётка	Знак используется для упрощения навигации по конкретным темам
@	@	собака	Знак предвещает написание логина пользователя
CAPTCHA	проверочные слова	капча	<i>Completely Automated Public Turing test to tell Computers and Humans Apart</i> (тест для различения компьютеров и людей)
account settings	настройки учётной записи		Выбор языка интерфейса, параметров страны и пр.
account	учётная запись	учётка, аккаунт	Запись, содержащая сведения о пользователе
direct message (DM)	личное сообщение	директ	Чтобы отправить сообщение в частном порядке, необходимо добавить перед именем адресата букву <b>d</b>
follow	читать	фолловить/ зафолловить	Автоматически получать твиты любого пользователя, который вам интересен
followers	читатели	фолловеры	Те, кого пользователь читает, или те, кто читает твиты другого пользователя
following	читать	фолловинг	Действие, обозначающее начало чтения пользователя Твиттера. Неписанные правила этикета в социальных сетях предполагают, что если другой пользователь добавил вас в друзья, то вы должны ответить тем же.
hashtag#	пометка #	хэштег	Ключевое слово в сообщении. Пометка # была придумана самими твиттерьянам. Например, если пользователь @cheburashka отметил в своем сообщении слово «крокодил», то это сообщение появится в результатах поиска твитов по запросу «#крокодил».
Help Center	Справочный центр		Информация и техническая поддержка для пользователей Твиттера
impersonation (a violation of Twitter rules)	самозванство		Самозванец притворяется другим человеком или компанией с целью введения в заблуждение других пользователей. Самозванство является нарушением правил Твиттера и может привести к безвозвратному удалению учётной записи.
lists	списки	листы	Читателей Твиттера можно организовать в группы или «списки»
mention	упоминание		Когда кто-то упомянул @логин пользователя в своем твите. Например, <i>Ксения Собчак не согласна с последним постом @fkirkorov</i> [Когда Твиттер распознаёт в тексте твита чьё-то имя (в данном случае Киркоров), программа автоматически изменяет его на ссылку к странице этого пользователя (@fkirkorov)]
@replies	@отклики	реплей	Ответ на ваше сообщение. В начале такого сообщения будет указан символ @ и имя реагирующего пользователя. Например, @fkirkorov может ответить на критическое замечание от пользователя @KSobchakTV советом мыть посуду на кухне и стирать носки мужу.
post	опубликовать	запостить	Отправка твитов

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English	Русский	Твиттер-сленг	Comments
private account	<b>закрытая учётная запись</b>	приватный аккаунт	
profile page	<b>профиль</b>		Личная информация и фотография пользователя
public account	<b>публичная учётная запись</b>	публичный аккаунт	
reply	<b>ответить</b>	реплеить	Написать ответ на сообщение
retweet (verb)	<b>ретвитнуть</b>		
retweet, RT (noun)	<b>ретвит (РТ)</b>		Сообщение другого пользователя, которое кто-либо из ваших читателей ( <i>фоллоуингов</i> ) решил показать своим читателям ( <i>фолловерам</i> )
suspension	<b>блокировка</b>		Если ваша страница заблокирована, то, скорее всего, вы нарушили правила пользования Твиттером
timeline, TL	<b>лента</b>		Поток твитов в хронологическом порядке или лента посланных вам сообщений
timestamp	<b>временная метка</b>		Информация о том, когда твит был отправлен
trending topic	<b>актуальная тема</b>	трэнд	Самые обсуждаемые твиттер-сообществом темы
tweet (noun)	<b>твит</b>		Сообщение в Твиттере, до 140 знаков
tweet (verb)	<b>твитнуть</b>		Послать сообщение в Твиттере
Twitter	<b>Твиттер</b>		Работающая в режиме реального времени информационная сеть, которая держит пользователей в курсе всех текущих событий, идей, точек зрения и новостей по интересным для них темам
Twitter Revolution	<b>твиттер-революция</b>		Политические флэш-моб-акции, организованные через Twitter и приведшие к беспорядкам и парламентским перевыборам
Twitter Tutorial	<b>учебное пособие</b>		Интерактивная экскурсия по Твиттеру, включена в Справочный центр
twitterers	<b>твиттеряне, твиттерянин</b>	твипл	Активные пользователи Твиттера, аналогично «жителям» – минчанин, минчане
unfollow	<b>отмена</b>	анфолловить/отфолловить	Перестать читать какого-либо пользователя
username	<b>имя пользователя</b>	логин	Ваше имя (реальное) или придуманный ник

Today, the contents of most tweets are presented by Pear Analytics and quoted on Wikipedia as follows:

Pointless babble	<b>Светская беседа</b>	40%
Conversational	<b>Разговоры</b>	38%
Pass-along value	<b>Повторяющиеся сообщения (ретвиты)</b>	9%
Self-promotion	<b>Самореклама</b>	6%
Spam	<b>Спам</b>	4%
News	<b>Новости</b>	4%

I myself did the expected and opened a Twitter account in 2006, but due to lack of time and, most importantly, of any interest in all of the above topics, I have never become a very active twitterer/tweeter. However, I do check my page from time to time, plus Twitter quite often sends reminders to its registered users. In addition, while writing this article I got somewhat excited about Twitter, and started to follow a few people as an experiment. Yet, in any event, I certainly don't see myself ever being the patient who goes

to a doctor with the following complaint:

- Доктор, за мной всё время следуют несколько тысяч человек! Что со мной?
- Да у вас, батенька, твиттер.
- Doctor, I am constantly being followed by thousands of people! What's wrong with me?
- Hey, man, you've got a bad case of the twitters.

Are you a Twitterphile? Can you explain to the uninitiated the value of Twitter to your personal and/or professional life? Have you developed efficiencies to prevent it from swallowing up all your nonworking hours? Or is there someone you follow who shares interesting insights about translation? If so, we encourage you to share your thoughts with SlavFile readers to help us keep this conversation going.

# In Memoriam

## MISHA PERELTSVAYG

1935–2012

*Appreciation by Michael Ishenko*

Mikhail Izrailevich (Misha) Pereltsvayg, one of the best Russian technical translation editors in the United States, died on August 9, 2012, just one day after his 77th birthday, on the island of Maui, Hawaii, where he was vacationing. Death struck as he was driving two people he loved dearly to Lahaina. He had saved the lives of his passengers by swerving the car off the road and parking before he lost consciousness.

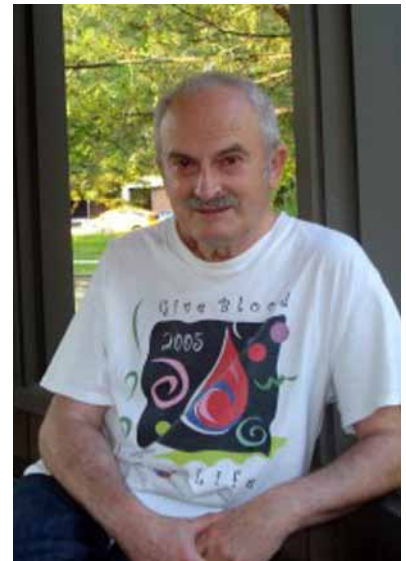
Misha immigrated to the United States in 1993 from Leningrad where he worked as a mechanical engineer after graduating from the prestigious Military Institute of Mechanical Engineering (“Voyenmekh”) and receiving a Ph.D.-equivalent degree. Soon after his big move to San Francisco, he was hired by Polyglot International as an in-house Russian editor. He was fluent in English and French and successfully used his engineering background as editor of highly technical translation projects, including those related to the petroleum, aerospace, chemical, and nuclear industries. He mastered his new profession, which he acquired at a relatively advanced age, and learned how to use computers and other high-tech equipment in a flash.

At a time when translation agencies refer to all freelancers as “resources” or “linguists” and appear to make no distinction between translators and editors, Misha seemed to exemplify the latter as a “stand-alone” profession. In a manner that was so characteristic of him as a human being, he treated both translations and translators very respectfully and always knew where to draw a line in order to maintain the translator’s individuality while improving technical quality and style. A gentle and soft-spoken person, he was adamant when he had to prove a point that he regarded as a matter of principle. Even though he had no formal linguistic education, he had tremendous respect for language and culture. He knew Russian grammar and punctuation much better than many translators with a linguistic background. In this respect, he could definitely be described as one of the last of a vanishing breed.

He could be described so not only professionally, but also as one of the last remaining members of the Russian intelligentsia in the true sense of the word. More than one speaker at his funeral characterized him as *благородный человек* (“a man of noble character”) — a very appropriate application of this old-fashioned term.

Misha is survived by his sister and his daughter, a brilliant scholar and Stanford professor of linguistics, Dr. Asya Pereltsvaig.

He will be missed by his family and many friends and the entire translation community. You can find out more about him at his memorial website at [www.misha.pereltsvaig.com](http://www.misha.pereltsvaig.com).





# SLAVIC RELATED SESSIONS AND RECOMMENDED EVENING EVENTS FOR THE 2012 ATA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

<b>Wednesday 10/24</b> <b>6:00-7:00 Welcome Reception</b> <b>7:00-8:00 SLD Open House</b> as part of Division Open House (dessert and coffee provided)		Please see your final program for locations. Note: where session topic is not self-explanatory, we provide a brief description. You will find more extensive abstracts of sessions on the ATA website and in the printed program.	
	Thursday 10/25	Friday 10/26	Saturday 10/27
8:30-9:30 am	NOTE: SESSION TIMES FOR THURSDAY ARE DIFFERENT THAN THOSE OF THE OTHER TWO DAYS.		<b>Specific Use of Metaphor in Fiction and Its Translation (L-7)</b> Russian translation of pervasive metaphors in works by Ray Bradbury and others. <i>Roza Allyametdinovna Ayupova</i> <b>A Literary Division session.</b>
10:00-11:00 am		<b>Approximately 25 Dreams of Dagestan (SL-2)</b>  Comparing translations of a Lermontov poem.  <i>Lydia Razran Stone</i>	
11:30 am-12:30 pm	<b>11:00-12:00 am</b> <b>Sexist Language in Translation and Interpreting (L-1)</b> An exploration of gender-related issues that arise in translation, including examples from Russian, among other languages.  <i>Laurence H. Bogoslaw</i> <b>A Literary Division Session.</b>	<b>Objects, Subjects, Power Verticals, and Party Lines: Differing Mental Constructs in Russian and English (SL-3)</b>  Practical solutions to dealing with imperfect cognates in translating from Russian to English.  <i>Nora Favorov</i>	<b>Slavic Languages Division Annual Meeting (SL-6)</b>  <i>Lucy Gunderson, Administrator</i>
LUNCH	SLD newcomers welcome lunch. All members invited. Meet at ATA reception desk at 12:05.	12:30-2:00 AIIC USA LUNCH for interpreters, see page 16.	
2:00 pm-3:15 pm	<b>2:15-3:15 pm. The Fifth Business in Five Languages (L-3)</b> Translations of Robertson Davies novel into five languages, including <b>Czech</b> .  <i>Zuzana Kulhankova</i> <b>A Literary Division session.</b>	<b>Autopsy Reports in Polish and English: Translation, Terminology and Style (SL-4).</b>  <i>Magdalena Perdek</i>  <b>Rescheduled from Saturday.</b>	<b>ANNUAL GREISS LECTURE</b> <b>Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian: Translating and Interpreting War Crimes Trials. (SL-7)</b>  <i>Marijana Nikolic</i>  <b>Rescheduled from Friday.</b>
3:45-5:00 pm	<b>Slavic Languages Division Roundtable: Translation versus Interpreting (SL-1)</b>  <i>Jennifer Guernsey, Yuliya Tsaplina, Emma Garkavi, Natalia Petrova, Lynn Visson, Boris M. Silversteyn, Elena Bogdanovich-Werner</i>	<b>Lacunas in Translation (SL-5)</b>  How to deal with holes in the source or target language when translating.  <i>Anastasia Koralova</i>	<b>How to Enter the Russian Translation Market (SL-8)</b>  Tips from the head of a Russian language services company.  <i>Natalie Shahova</i>
Evening	<b>SLD Banquet 7:00-??</b> At <b>Pomegranate</b> Georgian-Russian Restaurant <b>See details on page 2. To guarantee a place pay by October 10.</b>	<b>After Hours Café (9:00-11:00 pm)</b> Readings of poetry and short prose.  Bring something to read or just come to listen.	<b>ATA Closing Reception 5:15 – 7:00</b>  <b>Conference Dance Party 9:00-12:00</b>