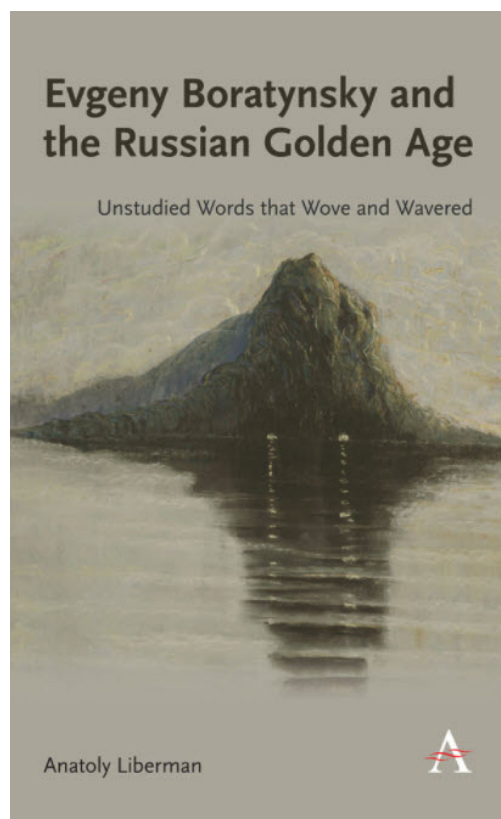


## “The Golden Age of Russian Poetry in English”

### SLD’s 2021 Susana Greiss Lecture

*Presented by Anatoly Liberman*

*Reviewed by Laurence Bogoslaw*



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Every workday, Anatoly Liberman walks more than four miles between his home in Minneapolis and his office in the German, Scandinavian and Dutch Department at the University of Minnesota. He takes this round trip on foot not so much for the sake of the physical environment as the literary environment. For decades, Professor Liberman has spent many of these hours recalling thousands of lines of Russian poetry from its so-called “Golden Age” (the early nineteenth century) and working through countless ways to express their ineffable beauty in his adopted language of English. The solutions he has reached thus far can be found in several volumes of annotated translations from the works of Mikhail Lermontov (1982), Fyodor Tyutchev (1993) and, most recently, Evgeny Boratynsky (2020).\*

As the SLD’s invited Greiss Lecturer at ATA62, Prof. Liberman gave a witty, erudite, and inspired lecture on why and how he attempts the formidable task of translating poetry. First the “why”: His purpose is to try to enrich the corpus of English literature by introducing a great poet and conveying his genius. Liberman acknowledged right away that the task is “almost undoable”—for one must in effect transplant the work of the original poet into new soil, but without distorting his identity by imitating an existing English poet. For example, literary commentators have compared Lermontov to Byron, but he is not Byron. Similarly, Boratynsky and

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Thanks to Jamie Padula of ATA Headquarters for his advice and help.

Tyutchev read like French and German poetry, but the translator should try not to mimic poets from those countries. Liberman also noted that there is an innate “foreignness” in the Russian verse of all these Golden Age poets because, like most compatriots of their class, they spoke and wrote French in their everyday lives.

Liberman summarized the ideal approach of a verse translator as follows: to become the poet’s “other self,” asking oneself what the poet would have written if he had been born in England. Not in the present day, mind you, because almost all modern English poets avoid the traditional structures of rhyme and meter. Liberman acknowledged that the market for rhymed verse is “tiny,” but he considers it imperative to preserve the formal characteristics of the original poems. “Free verse is easy,” he claimed (and to prove the point, he spontaneously composed an unrhymed meditation on a COVID mask). Furthermore, a Russian Golden Age poem rendered in free verse, under the rationale of eschewing “form” in favor of “content,” would be a parody of the original. This distinction does not exist here, Liberman argues, because in verse the content is the form. Otherwise, poetry is “about nothing.” For example, a paraphrase of Pushkin’s immortal lyric “Я вас любил” might be: “I loved you once, maybe I still do... so what?!”

Having dispensed with the idea of dispensing with rhyme and meter, Liberman turned to technical issues. For example, he explained that in most cases he replicates not only the patterns of rhymes within a stanza (e.g., AbAb) but also the prosody of each rhyming word (masculine, feminine, dactylic). The last variety is especially difficult to find in English. He quoted an example from Lermontov’s poem “Молитва” (“Prayer”) in which he reproduced three-syllable rhymes (e.g., anxiety/quietly, simplicity/felicity), but noted that in the odd-numbered lines of Boratynsky’s “Две доли” (“Two Fates”), he replicated only the dactylic endings, not the rhymes.

Liberman has also taken on the challenge of reproducing Russian metrical forms, although he mentioned that English meters follow somewhat looser rules of rhythmic phrasing. Even so, there are some “capricious” forms that allow little room for deviation, and he follows the constraints of these as well, such as the two-beat amphibrachs of Tyutchev’s “Листья” (“Leaves”: “Let cedars and spruces / In blizzards enwrapped / Take pride in their juices / By winter unsapped”) and the two-beat iambs of Boratynsky’s “Дорадка” (“Enigma”: “Of passion fervent / I knew each sign / Once love was mine / And I its servant!”). Liberman also successfully reproduced the metrical variations in Lermontov’s “Demon,” including the lines of trochaic tetrameter in the title character’s monologue:

На воздушном океане,	On the infinite expanses
Без руля и без ветрил,	Of the boundless cosmic void
Тихо плавают в тумане	Planets dance their measured dances,
Хоры стройные светил...	Unconducted, undeployed...

Clearly some lexical liberties are taken in order to maintain poetic structure; for example, Lermontov’s images of ocean, rudder, fans and mist are either omitted or reconceptualized.

However, within each poet's corpus, Liberman takes note of favorite words and key phrases (in the cases of Tyutchev and Boratynsky, with the help of lexical concordances) and tries to match them case for case.

For example, in his Tyutchev collection, he consistently rendered Tyutchev's oft-repeated verb *обвевать* as "waft" (but the passive participle *обвеян* as "enwrapped") and attentively reproduced the key phrase *время золотое* ("golden time"), which appears in two separate lyrics: "Я помню время золотое" and "Я встретил вас – и все былое..." Similarly, Liberman crafted a familiar-sounding refrain to match the captivating *баюшки-баю* in Lermontov's "Cossack Cradle-Song": "Lulla, lulla-by."

Liberman closed his talk with an example of particularly challenging lexical repetitions: a stanza from Boratynsky that reads as follows in Russian:

Есть что-то в ней, что красоты прекрасней,  
Что говорит не с чувствами — с душой;  
Есть что-то в ней над сердцем самовластной  
Земной любви и прелести земной.

Then he quoted his own translation:

There is some charm in her that's more than charming:  
It is the soul, not senses that it moves;  
There's something in her that is more disarming  
Than earthly grace—the earthly form one loves.

Liberman acknowledged as a "hopeless ambition" the idea of making Russian poems as famous and important in the English-speaking world as in their country of origin. However, he has surely accomplished what many an artist hopes for: to create work that is in its own right harmonious, touching, powerful and, yes—more than charming.

\*Throughout this article, in deference to Prof. Liberman, I use his preferred spelling for the name of this underrated poet (1800-1844), which I learned as "Baratynsky."

Larry Bogoslaw is part of a hereditary line of language nerds. After studying Latin, Spanish, and German, he earned an M.A. in Italian (University of Connecticut) and a Ph.D. in Slavic Languages and Literatures (University of Michigan). Larry directs the Minnesota Translation Laboratory, a community language service he co-founded in 1996, and also heads East View Press, an independent academic publisher. Larry has taught Russian and translation courses at various colleges and universities in Minnesota, and currently serves as Grader Trainer for the ATA Certification Program. For fun, he likes translating poetry and songs.

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## ANNOUNCING OUR POLISH-FOCUSED SPRING 2022 ISSUE OF SLAVFILE:

### TRANS-ATLANTYK: FOCUS ON POLISH IN COLLABORATION WITH PRZEKŁADY, THE ITI POLISH NETWORK NEWSLETTER

Under the guest editorship of SLD member Peter Nicholson, we are working on a joint issue of *SlavFile* with the Polish Network of the UK Institute of Translation and Interpreting devoted to Polish translation and interpretation. The idea is to have a set of articles, some produced by ITI members, some by ATA members. These articles would be published on both sides of the Atlantic, in *SlavFile* and in *Przekłady*, the UK ITI Polish Network newsletter. The name of the joint issue takes its inspiration from a 1953 novel by one of Poland's greatest émigré writers, Witold Gombrowicz's *Trans-Atlantyk*.



**ITI POLISH NETWORK**

Contributions were due March 1, but if you have an article, glossary, or announcement you would like to submit after that date (but before **March 20**), please contact Peter Nicholson ([peter.nicholson@wp.eu](mailto:peter.nicholson@wp.eu)).

ITI is the only UK-based independent professional membership association for practicing translators, interpreters and language service providers. Founded in 1986, the organization

has over 3,000 members, both in the UK and internationally. Much like ATA, it has the stated goal of representing the interests of its members, and those of the industry itself, raising the profile of the profession.



# Notes from the Administrative Underground

*Eugenia Tietz-Sokolskaya, Administrator*

In case you missed it, Steven McGrath and I were reelected as your administrators in an entirely uneventful (and uncontested) election this summer. So we're back for another two years! That means that if you, dear reader, have any ideas for how the division could better serve you, we're the ones to talk to (our emails can be found on the masthead and the division website).

The big event since the last issue was, of course, ATA62, the ATA Annual Conference. We heard glowing feedback about our Greiss lecturer this year, Professor Anatoly Liberman, as well as about the other Slavic track sessions. Despite the ongoing pandemic, many people were able to enjoy most of the familiar elements of an in-person conference, including the SLD dinner, albeit in an altered and pared-down format. Even those of us watching sessions online (including me) could sense the energy in the room as attendees engaged with speakers and worked together to come up with creative solutions. The conference is always a highlight of the year, both for me personally and for our division, and this year was

no different! And the party goes on: all attendees, both in-person and online, can watch recordings of all the sessions online whenever they want.

Looking ahead, we will be continuing to offer Zoom networking events throughout 2022. Those have been a big hit in 2021, providing some of the excitement of networking at the conference in a more spaced out and accessible way. By the time you read this, we should have had our first networking event of the year. Watch your email and our various social media channels for news of future sessions!

Finally, I'm happy to share the news that Elizabeth Adams has taken over the SLD Twitter account (@ATA\_SLD) and has been actively posting articles about new releases of literature in translation, industry news, and CPD opportunities. If you're on Twitter, be sure to check it out!



The 2021 SLD Annual Dinner was a fairly intimate affair at Minneapolis's excellent Hammer & Sickle Soviet-themed restaurant. This shot was taken a few minutes after we received the wonderful news that SLD's own Veronika Demichelis (center in blue scarf) won her bid to become ATA President-Elect. Congratulations Veronika!

# Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Slavic Languages Division of the American Translators Association

October 10, 2021

Held online via Zoom

Eugenia Tietz-Sokolskaya, Administrator; Steven McGrath, Assistant Administrator

1. The meeting was called to order shortly after 4:00 PM ET.
2. The agenda was accepted with no changes.
3. The 2020 Annual Meeting minutes were accepted with no changes.
4. Eugenia and Division members presented an overview of Division events in 2021.
  - a. Report on *SlavFile*
    - i. Editor Nora Favorov reported that previous editor Lydia Razran Stone had stepped down, and that she (Nora) had taken over and was planning to stay on as chief editor for a couple of years, after which she is hoping a younger SLD member will take over. Three issues had been published since the last meeting: a winter issue, a spring (with a special focus on legal T/I), and a summer-fall combined issue. The legal issue was a success, and the plan going forward is to make each spring issue a focus issue. The next spring issue will focus on Polish, as a collaboration with the ITI Polish Network. Nora also solicited reviews for sessions in ATA62's Slavic track, a conference newcomer review, and a virtual attendee review, and mentioned that *SlavFile* was looking for a backup layout editor who would work with the current layout editor, Galina Raff.
  - b. Report on blog
    - i. Blog editor Marisa Irwin reported that she had taken over from Veronika Demichelis after serving with her as co-editor. The blog has published 3 articles in its membership profile track, and would like to publish profiles of members who work with languages other than Russian. There have also been several guest articles. Marisa invited anyone who has an idea for something to contribute to get in touch with her.
    - ii. Eugenia added that, for a previous conference, session reviews that were not strictly in the Slavic track were published on the blog and encouraged members to consider submitting such reviews for ATA62.
  - c. Report on SLD networking sessions
    - i. Steve McGrath reported that three Zoom networking sessions had been held in 2021 (January, April, and July), with declining attendance, from around 25 for the first session, down to about 10 for the last. The short notice for the last session may have played a role. Feedback was solicited regarding the frequency, and the response was one of general approval of the current 3-times-a-year schedule, but with more advance notice.
  - d. Report on website, online forum, and social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter)
    - i. Eugenia reported that the division's website and online communication channels remain open, albeit not very active. The website is maintained by Eugenia; Julia Thornton runs the online forum; Anna Livermore runs the Facebook group; and Maria Guzenko runs the LinkedIn group. Lucy Gunderson has handed off responsibility for the Twitter account. Eugenia asked for volunteers to run it, but no one came forward.
  - e. Report on SLD Outreach initiative
    - i. Eugenia voiced a suggestion from Nora Favorov that rather than having one person be responsible for outreach to other countries' T&I organizations, those responsibilities can be distributed to various members who work in various languages. The *SlavFile* collaboration with the ITI Polish Network was mentioned as an example of such outreach.
  - f. Report on SLD Podcast (*Slovo*)

- i. Eugenia reported on behalf of host Maria Guzenko that the podcast continues to publish new episodes. Suggestions for speakers and topics are welcome.
  - g. Report on SLD ATA Certification Exam Prep Group
    - i. Eugenia reported that the group continues to operate, but there are dwindling numbers of people expressing interest in this way of preparing for the certification exam. Maria and Eugenia have begun to think about winding down the group entirely, as attempts to pass on administrative duties have not gone well. That is not imminent, as there has been a recent uptick in interest. Nora suggested that a call for new administrators be put in *SlavFile* before the group is shut down, if it comes to that.
  - h. Report on idioms workshop
    - i. Eugenia reported that the first joint SLD-ATA workshop was held in March 2021, led by Yuliya Speroff. It went well, with decent turnout, but some attendees did not realize it would be a workshop format, leading to low participation. SLD competes with other divisions for spots in the workshop schedule, so there have not been any other workshops this year, but more are in the pipeline to be proposed in the future.
5. New Business for 2021
- i. More volunteers are always welcome. A revised Division Handbook (August 2020) exists to help volunteers.
    - ii. The call for a Twitter curator was reiterated.
  - a. ATA's 63<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference (Los Angeles, CA October 12-15, 2022)
    - i. Ideas were solicited for Distinguished Speaker recommendations and session proposals. The online proposal submission form typically opens February 1. Members expressed an interest in sessions that were specialized, whether in language or topic, and in sessions looking at the future of our profession and remote work. There was a suggestion to ask members local to California for potential speakers.
    - ii. Nora leads the search for the DS and mentioned Robert Chandler as a potential candidate, as well as the fact that former DS Boris Dralyuk lives in LA.
  - b. Division plans for coming year
    - i. SLD would like to hold more events for further professional development, particularly language-specific online workshops, rather than webinars. Anyone wishing to develop a workshop should email Eugenia.
    - ii. Maria and Eugenia are planning a professional development survey akin to what ATA did to get a sense of where the demand is. Help is welcome in compiling the survey and analyzing the results.
6. Call for feedback and suggestions from the members
- a. Steve made an announcement about the division off-site event at ATA62, a dinner at the restaurant Hammer and Sickle, and reminded people to RSVP if they were going to attend in person.
  - b. Veronika Demichelis mentioned that, in addition to the joint offerings with ATA, divisions can also run their own webinars, and that some divisions combine webinars with a networking event that features the webinar speaker.
7. Election results were announced: Eugenia and Steve had been re-elected to their current positions, by acclamation. An email to that effect had been sent to the membership previously.
8. Call for newcomers to introduce themselves
- a. Two new members were present. David Law, who works with a variety of languages, including Russian, introduced himself; Dmitry Beschety, who joined from Russia, was unable to give an introduction due the late hour Moscow time and his sleeping family, but shared his information in the chat.
9. The meeting was adjourned.



## My First In-Person ATA Annual Conference

Dmitry Beschety

I joined ATA a couple of months prior to the ATA62 annual conference. Not long before that, I came across a [colleague's article](#) full of doom and gloom and claims that the majority of literary translators (she was addressing literary translators working into Russian) had no option but to keep translating prodigious amounts of pulp fiction for the kopeks the publishing houses pay them. Even if they were lucky enough to translate a landmark piece, their rates wouldn't increase, as they still would be working for publishing houses—the only difference would be that they'd have to put a lot more effort into their work. This got me wondering why my colleague said nothing about working directly with authors and why anyone caught up in such a system wouldn't try to find a better alternative.

Of course, stepping out of a comfort zone can be somewhat frightening, but I believe language professionals do not have to necessarily step out of it to acquire new skills and habits so that they can eventually find lucrative business opportunities and enjoy their lives doing things they really want to do. I'm also not too sure that translating tons of poor texts only to pay the bills can be regarded as a comfort zone.

At about the same time, I discovered that listening to industry-specific podcasts could be a great way to develop professionally. All the more so as I was suffering from eye strain caused by a large translation workload. Who wasn't? I turned therefore to listening.

Both my favorites—*Slavo*, a podcast of the ATA Slavic Languages Division and *Smart Habits for Translators*, a podcast produced by ATA translators that addresses balancing the challenges that come with building a freelance translation career and maintaining clarity and boundaries between work and personal life—instill a mindset quite different from that endorsed by my colleague. Both encourage their audiences of language professionals to develop their marketing skills, among others. Neither gloom nor doom there! So, from the very beginning of my translation podcast listener's experience, my primary focus has been on professional development with ATA.

These podcasts have given me marketing knowledge that I lacked before, and I keep learning from both the hosts and their guests, many of whom are ATA members. As mentioned in *Smart Habits for*



*Translators' Episode 3: Conference Habits*, "In-person networking events can be a major source of inspiration and energy for translators and a great way to meet new colleagues and clients. Besides, attending the ATA Annual Conference can be a worthwhile investment."

Naturally, the question arose as to how to reap the maximum benefit from it, and the podcast co-hosts had answers.

Interestingly, one point the co-hosts raised was that big conferences can be truly exhausting for introverts or people who prefer not to toot their own horn. I hasten to say here that I didn't always agree with the hosts and guests of these fascinating podcasts, but that is probably something to talk about in another article or interview.

For now, I'd like to take a closer look at the much-discussed concept of the comfort zone we have to step out of from time to time to become better translators. From my perspective, doing things you really like is unlikely to be mentally exhausting, because those things tend to recharge us. I think attending a conference when you are a business owner, which is what the majority of translators and interpreters are, is quite different from attending a conference as an employee. I'd say it's never boring when it's your own decision to get your teeth into something. And yet, I have to agree it can be demanding physically, especially when you've traveled a long way across many time zones. So, I had to think twice before registering for ATA62.

In *Slavo's Episode 15* with Chris Durban, it was suggested that marketing is not the only road to success: following a role model's example can also be very effective. It struck me that the ATA Annual Conference could be a chance for me to finally meet, in real life, Judy Jenner, a U.S.-based translator and federally-certified court interpreter who is a role model of mine.

To enter the U.S. and attend the conference, I needed a letter showing the purpose of my trip, and it was very nice and helpful when Madalena Sánchez Zampaulo, then the ATA President-Elect, replied quickly to my email request, having copied Executive Director Walter Bacak and Professional Development Manager Adrian Aleckna, so I had the document I needed right away. That was how I learned who's

responsible for organizing the ATA Annual Conferences and how open and friendly ATA is. First impressions count, and my first impression of how ATA works was just perfect.

In order to better prepare for the conference, it was nice to have [a website with the schedule](#) and the list of attendees, so I could schedule some meetings ahead of time. And it is particularly important that all the conference-session recordings are available on that site now, as it was impossible to attend all the sessions of interest in real time.

Before heading to Minneapolis, I set up my work email auto-reply to tell my clients I would be in another time zone without a consistent Internet connection. As things turned out, the Wi-Fi connection at the conference hotel was trouble-free, so I could still perform urgent tasks between conference sessions.

At the conference, I took the ATA certification exam (which I was happy to recently learn I passed), and I appreciate very much the efforts that [ATA certification exam practice group](#) administrators Maria Guzenko and Eugenia Tietz-Sokolskaya made to better prepare the candidates. I also appreciate my partner/colleagues' comments during our practice exercises. That was really helpful.

When I joined ATA, I also joined its Slavic Languages Division and Law Division. At the conference, however, one of my discoveries was that language professionals working with other language combinations and in other areas of expertise are also interesting to talk to.

As expected, I met many interesting people at the conference, some of them for the first time in-person and some of them for the first time under any circumstances, and we had meaningful conversations. I especially liked the Buddies Welcome Newbies program and the networking sessions. And believe it or not, I had an opportunity to meet my role model Judy Jenner at a networking session and she was open to talking and to sharing her terrific expertise!

I think that ATA membership and attending ATA conferences is a gateway into the North American translation market and that participation in other ATA professional development events leads to a better understanding of how to succeed in this market. With that in mind, it was good to meet industry-related people from other organizations at the Conference Exhibition Hall, including representatives of NAJIT and other professional associations and ATA chapters, the U.S. Department of State, LSPs and, interestingly, web-designer Amanda Calvin, who specializes in creating websites for translators and interpreters.

For me, this conference was very involving emotionally and full of exciting moments I would never have anticipated and could not have been part of as a virtual attendee. What I certainly didn't expect was to see Madalena Sánchez Zampaulo breaking into tears of joy right there on stage when taking over from Ted Wozniak as ATA President. Unforgettable, very emotional and so touching! That was probably my favorite moment at the conference. Needless to say, the conference organizers did a great job of making this conference a success during a tension-filled pandemic. We are humans, not robots. We laugh and we cry.

The conference week was also full of humor and fun, and I had a great time hanging with my colleagues and new friends in the beautiful city of Minneapolis.

In conclusion, I recall what Veronika Demichelis said in her election speech when vying (successfully!) for the role of president-elect, "Joining ATA was one of the best decisions in my life." The same goes for me.

Dmitry Beschety is an ATA-certified English>Russian translator and interpreter specializing in legal translation and court interpreting. Based in Moscow, he holds a master's degree in law and a master's degree in humanities and social sciences. He also has an academic qualification in translation studies.

Dmitry has extensive experience in criminal investigation and public prosecution. He worked as an in-house lawyer, and a legal counsel with law firms before deciding to use this experience to build a career in the T&I industry. He has been translating and interpreting for academia, law firms and private clients. Dmitry can be reached at [db@legalxlator.com](mailto:db@legalxlator.com).

## ATA62 LIVES ON!

Whether you attended the conference in-person or virtually, you are still able to view recordings of the presentations reviewed in this issue or any others, and non-attendees will soon have the option of purchasing recordings.

If you registered to attend in-person or virtually, until April 30 you'll be able to access session recordings [via this link](#) and selecting "Agenda."

Prior to April 30, attendees will be emailed new instructions on how to access recordings via the ATA website. After April 30, recordings will be available for purchase by non-attendees.



## ATA62 In Person: A First-Timer's View

*Elizabeth Tolley*



I wasn't entirely sure what to expect from ATA62. Still, I decided to take the leap, and my confirmation email sat in my inbox, looking very official. After months of remote work, sending applications, emails, and resumes off into the void, the promise of an in-person event was alluring. And as someone in the very early stages of her career, I wanted

advice and opportunities to pepper more experienced colleagues with questions. I hoped ATA62 could deliver.

I'm sure every person reading this has heard that we're living in "strange times." So many events over the past two years have been called "unprecedented." Those phrases also found their way into welcome speeches at ATA62, as this conference was the first of its kind, with both in-person attendees gathering in Minneapolis and remote ones connecting online to view events via live streams. Having my first ATA conference also be the first one held in this fully hybrid format felt fitting. My MA program spanned Fall 2019 to Spring 2021; it began in person and ended fully remote. Going to ATA62 in person felt like the beginning of something that was finally "real." There was a simple pleasure in seeing smiling faces, sitting in conference rooms and sipping coffee alongside other warm bodies.

So what exactly happened at this unprecedented event? ATA62 was a small but mighty gathering. But to me, it felt massive. I was told several times that the panel offerings this year were far fewer than previous conferences, but I was still starry-eyed at this apparently sparse array of Slavic language-focused panels. I listened eagerly at each session; even these many weeks later, I'm working my way through the recordings of sessions that I had to miss. I was tickled to attend sessions on medical diagnoses and treatment conventions in Eastern Europe, the finer points of capitalization and punctuation, and the process of translating Shakespeare's sonnets. I had been hungry for a return to the physical classroom, so this opportunity to sit in the audience and soak in new information was delicious.

Really though, ATA's main strength (as, I dare say, is the case with most professional associations) is the

people—and I met quite a few! I don't consider myself to be particularly adept at networking, especially after a year of being socially distant, but over and over, the ATA community was willing to meet me more than halfway. I was constantly amazed by the warmth and goodwill of my colleagues, and the members of the Slavic Languages Division were central to that atmosphere. Chats over lunch, dinner, and coffee breaks always yielded new sound advice and fresh connections. And when I needed a moment to myself, I had plenty of new ideas to chew over as I wandered through downtown Minneapolis.

If you are on the fence about registering for a future ATA conference, I can't guarantee that your first experience will echo mine. After all, 2021 has been a peculiar sort of year. But attending was definitely the right choice for me. Before, I had the feeling of spinning my wheels and getting nowhere; I needed a change of scenery, a push in the right direction. Afterward, I had new connections and a stronger sense of purpose. I learned so much at the conference, but the most important things I gained weren't limited to my days in Minneapolis. They have extended into the weeks following the conference, in email exchanges and continuing contacts. The feeling of connection I gained at the conference did not evaporate when I touched back down in New York, but rather it deepened and expanded.

If you're looking for advice on your first conference, I will share the words I heard on arrival: Be outgoing. People generally attend the conference wanting to make new professional contacts, so don't worry about striking up a conversation with a stranger. Then again, don't put too much pressure on yourself to be "on" at all times. If you need to go to bed early one night or step outside for a few minutes, that's okay. You won't get the most out of the experience by running yourself ragged. And make sure you have a handy place to keep all of those business cards you will inevitably collect!

For me, the past two years have been very inward-facing; I spent too much time in my make-shift home office alone with my thoughts. My interpretation practice too often consisted of listening to tinny recordings of my own voice, and editing my final translation portfolios meant visiting and revisiting my old projects. While there's a certain appeal to living a life of the mind, this was not exactly what I had hoped for when I first set off to become an interpreter. As dear to my heart as language is, and as much as I love

the look of the words on the page and the sounds of the syllables, I've always seen language as a way to reach out to people. And recently people have felt very far away. The connection I was chasing when I first enrolled in my degree program began to feel vanishingly faint. What a relief it was to pick up that thread

again, hear new voices, and consider new viewpoints. ATA62 was a breath of fresh air, and it could not have been timelier.

Elizabeth Tolley is a freelance interpreter and translator based in New York City. A recent graduate of the Middlebury Institute of International Studies, she holds an MA in RU<>EN Conference Interpretation and can be reached at [elizabethtolley1@gmail.com](mailto:elizabethtolley1@gmail.com).

## Web Watch

### A Gripe and a Bold Stand for Literary Translators

Nora Seligman Favorov

Let's start with the gripe, which would better fit under the rubric of Media Watch. But since we mostly read our news on the web, I'll take that liberty.

Am I the only one bothered by the use of the word "region" in news reports about Russia when what is really meant is often *oblast*? As readers of this newsletter undoubtedly know, an *oblast* is an actual administrative-territorial unit (to use a somewhat clunky and literal translation of the Russian term for such things—I've never found the perfect English equivalent...jurisdiction? administrative unit?). True, besides referring to a geographic-governmental unit, the word *oblast* can simply mean "area," but I'm always annoyed when I see Московская область translated as "the Moscow region" (slightly less so when the R is capitalized—at least then it's clear that a specific area with clean boundaries and some form of government is being referred to).

To the extent the choice of "region" is made thoughtfully, I'm sympathetic. Using *oblast* is indeed problematic. Although the word is included in, for example, Merriam-Webster's dictionary, it is outdat- edly defined there as "a governmental subdivision of the U.S.S.R. corresponding to an autonomous prov- ince or state." The OED is better: "In Russia: a prov- ince or region." Newspapers generally avoid making their readers reach for a dictionary, but if a publica- tion like *The New York Times* used the term *oblast* regularly (a search of the website shows three usages, from 1930, 1992, and 2010), its readers would quickly become accustomed to it (just as they've become accustomed to the unfamiliar word used for adminis- trative units in Japan and several European countries, "prefecture").

This column is being written the day after President Putin recognized the Donetsk and Lugansk (Luhansk) People's Republics. I can understand *The Times*' choice to refer to the DNR and LNR as "regions" rather than "republics," but it was specifi- cally "the independence and sovereignty" of

"republics" that Putin recognized, not regions. As a lover of language, I just wish news reports would use precise, clear terminology.

Now that I've gotten that off my chest, I can share something published in *The New York Times* of which I highly approve: an [article](#) reporting on a Twitter post that has been generating both buzz and action and should be heartening to literary translators, or any translator who translates books. The article is about Jennifer Croft, translator of the Nobel Prize winning author Olga Tokarczuk. (It is also worth mentioning that she is wife of our 2019 Greiss speaker, Boris Dralyuk.) I highly recommend that you read the article, but I'll go ahead and share my two main takeaways. First, as she proclaimed on Twitter, Croft is refusing to translate any more books if her name will not appear on the cover. "Not only is it disrespect- ful to me, but it is a disservice to the reader, who should know who chose the words they're going to read." She has launched a campaign, which includes an open letter being signed by many prominent authors, that has led some publishers to commit to henceforth print translators' name on the covers of the books they translate. Second, I enjoyed reading how Croft presented her approach to translation to a "naive" audience of non-translators: "Croft focuses on conveying tone, style and meaning more than word- for-word accuracy. She described her process as 'completely dismantling a book and then completely rebuilding it from the ground up.'"

We are pleased to announce that our spring Focus on Polish issue of *SlavFile* will include an interview with Croft.

We welcome contributions to Web Watch from translators and interpreters working in all Slavic languages and all subject matter areas. Please contact me ([norafavorov@gmail.com](mailto:norafavorov@gmail.com)) if you would like to contribute a column.

# “Translating Shakespeare’s Sonnets”

Presented by Anatoly Liberman

Reviewed by Nora Seligman Favorov

As attentive readers of *SlavFile* will know, neither translation nor Shakespeare are primary areas of expertise for Anatoly Liberman—his Candidate’s Degree dissertation dealt with Middle English historical phonology and his Doctor of Philological Sciences dissertation was titled “Icelandic Prosody.” Most of his teaching at the University of Minnesota has centered on Germanic languages and literatures, folklore, mythology, lexicography, European structuralism, and Russian formalism. He has also published prolifically on English etymology, including his blog, “The Oxford Etymologist.” In short, although he has never been a Shakespeare scholar per se, he has spent a great deal of time immersed in “old” English and Germanic words. Add to this his love of Golden Age Russian poetry (see Larry Bogoslaw’s review of his other talk on page 1), and we seem to have the perfect formula: the evidence suggests that this immersion, combined with an agile mind and poetic talents, has made Liberman the ideal person for the job of rendering Shakespeare’s sonnets into Russian.

Anatoly Liberman began translating Shakespeare’s sonnets “almost for fun,” he confessed. He engaged in this, for him, pleasant pursuit for decades until, one fine day, he realized he had translated all 154 of them. Liberman went through the process of editing and revising his work, and in 2015 the fruits of his labor took book form as *Вильям Шекспир «Сонеты»*.

The talk started with a bit of historical background. The sonnets were first published in the early seventeenth century, apparently against Shakespeare’s will. The bard purportedly attempted to buy up the entire edition. Another bit of background Liberman introduced served as a segue into his discussion of one particular challenge involved in translating the sonnets: scholars have spent centuries trying to figure out who the addressees were. This is important because you need to know the addressee’s gender when translating into Russian.

Liberman chose *Boy with a Basket of Fruit* by Shakespeare’s contemporary Caravaggio for the cover of his book. This choice underscores a rather obvious fact

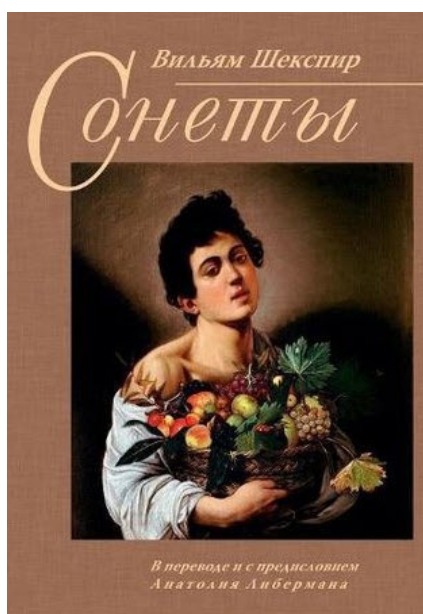
that was missed or ignored by previous translators of the sonnets into Russian: the vast majority are addressed to a man. It is, of course, easier to hide gender in English than in Russian since past-tense verbs will be the same whether their subject is a man or a woman. Since the addressee’s gender is not crystal clear in some sonnets, making an educated guess is a central task for translators into languages in which the issue is hard to grammatically skirt.

Among the interesting historical facts about the sonnets, their reception, and their translation that Liberman shared was the long tradition of gay men taking a strong interest in Shakespeare’s sonnets. For example, one of the better translations of the sonnets into Russian was by Modest Chaikovsky, brother of the famous composer whose name is usually spelled in English with a T at the start and, like him, homosexual. Oscar Wilde also had a passionate interest in the sonnets, which served as the inspiration for one of his best works: “The Portrait of Mr. W. H.” (W. H. or Willie Hughes being a possible addressee).

Another challenge has to do with the English language’s propensity for short words. Take the first two lines of Sonnet 22: “My glass shall not persuade

me I am old, / So long as youth and thou are of one date”—all but one of these nineteen words consists of a single syllable. Just try to pack that many words into two five-foot lines of iambic pentameter in Russian! Liberman’s translation manages to convey the idea in ten words without losing any crucial meaning: “Я не состарюсь зеркалу назло, / Пока ты светлой юности ровесник.” Still, Liberman made clear how pained he was by the frequent need to sacrifice images and ideas because they simply would not fit, given the rarity of single-syllable words in Russian.

During both his talks, Liberman brought up the question of replicating



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archaic language when translating the poetry of past eras. Anyone reading Shakespeare in the original knows that English has greatly evolved over the past 400+ years, and even educated native speakers of English require copious notes to fully appreciate the bard's work. As Liberman pointed out, the sonnets are usually published with two pages of commentary for every fourteen lines of verse.

So should translations of Shakespeare into other languages reflect how different his language was from modern English? Liberman's answer was "no." The degree to which a translator should replicate archaic language is a more troublesome question for translators of, say, Boratynsky than of Shakespeare. Today's educated readers are close enough to nineteenth-century English to have some familiarity with words that have since fallen out of common usage, so a smattering of archaicisms is not disruptive. In translating Shakespeare's sonnets, Liberman's priority was replicating, as closely as possible, the experience of Shakespeare's contemporary readers. For them, of course, the language of the sonnets was perfectly understandable.

Yet another challenge in translating Shakespeare has to do with the set of words he used repeatedly. Ideally, a translator would translate these words consistently. Liberman reminded us of the example he gave in his Golden Age talk of Tyutchev's repeated use of the word *обвеян*, which Liberman was able to more or less consistently translate as "enwrapped." One of Shakespeare's favorite words, however, is "sweet." Even if Shakespeare hadn't used this word in a wide range of contexts and imbued it with a great variety of meanings, it would have been hard to translate consistently since the Russian *сладкий* is rarely used outside the context of taste. For the thirty occurrences of

the word "sweet," Liberman felt unable to use the Russian *сладкий* even once.

The next challenge addressed was the incredible richness of Shakespeare's vocabulary. Liberman lamented that the vocabulary of our contemporaries has "diminished tragically, so much so that native English speakers are unable to read nineteenth-century literature." Today's readers have trouble with Dickens and Thackeray, whose vocabulary reached ten to twelve thousand words. Shakespeare's ranged between fourteen and sixteen thousand (compared, for example, to Agatha Christie, whose vocabulary didn't go beyond around five thousand words). For a translator of Shakespeare's sonnets, this richness is most troublesome when it comes to his frequent use of technical terms—from the world of law, business, and accounting, among others. These words can sound oddly out of place in English poetry—"foreign, so extremely unpoetic when you infuse them into a sonnet," as Liberman put it.

Here, he drew on Sonnet 126 as an example, where nature ("sovereign mistress over wrack"), even if she has favored the "lovely boy" to whom the sonnet is addressed by preserving his youthful looks, ultimately has to let the years take their toll: "Her audit, though delayed, answered must be,/And her quietus is to render thee." Liberman's translation is faithful to Shakespeare's use of a technical financial terminology: "Увидя вексель, не вступая в спор,/Она признает: время—кредитор".

Liberman concluded his talk with a discussion of one final challenge—Shakespeare's penchant for puns, often opprobrious ones. He shared with us his treatment of one of the bard's naughtier sonnets, 135, which plays on the many-times-multiplied meaning of the word (and name) "will," which, in addition to the

**Sonnet 22**  
**William Shakespeare**

My glass shall not persuade me I am old,  
So long as youth and thou are of one date;  
But when in thee time's furrows I behold,  
Then look I death my days should expiate.  
For all that beauty that doth cover thee,  
Is but the seemly raiment of my heart,  
Which in thy breast doth live, as thine in me:  
How can I then be elder than thou art?  
O, therefore love, be of thyself so wary  
As I, not for myself, but for thee will;  
Bearing thy heart, which I will keep so chary  
As tender nurse her babe from faring ill.  
Presume not on thy heart when mine is slain,  
Thou gav'st me thine not to give back again.

**XXII**  
**Translated by Anatoly Liberman**

Я не состарюсь зеркалу назло,  
Пока ты светлой юности ровесник.  
Но борозды, измяв твоё чело,  
И сквозь меня пройдут, как смерти вестник.  
Покровы сердца моего — твой дар.  
Оно из красоты твоей соткалось  
И, в грудь твою войдя, в тебе осталось.  
Конечно, молод я, раз ты не стар.  
Будь бдителен, не рви того, что тонко.  
Смотри: тебя, а не себя храня,  
Я клад лелею, вложенный в меня,  
Как от болезней берегут ребенка.  
Мой дар тебе был без возврата дан;  
Не мучь его, умершего от ран.

**Sonnet 135**  
**William Shakespeare**

Whoever hath her wish, thou hast thy *Will*,  
And *Will* to boot, and *Will* in overplus;  
More than enough am I that vexed thee still,  
To thy sweet will making addition thus.  
Wilt thou, whose will is large and spacious,  
Not once vouchsafe to hide my will in thine?  
Shall will in others seem right gracious,  
And in my will no fair acceptance shine?  
The sea, all water, yet receives rain still,  
And in abundance addeth to his store;  
So thou, being rich in *Will*, add to thy *Will*  
One will of mine, to make thy large *Will* more.  
Let no unkind, no fair beseechers kill;  
Think all but one, and me in that one *Will*.

**CXXXV**

**Translated by Anatoly Liberman**

Кто б где ни вил гнезда, с тобой твой Вилл  
И Вилл второй. Цена того мужчину,  
Выкладываюсь я по мере сил:  
Всего себя вложил я чин по чину.  
Ты все вмещаешь, что в тебя ни вложишь,  
И я прошу: откройся для меня.  
Ты позже нас почленно подытожишь —  
Во мне не меньше, чем в других, огня.  
Смотри: вот ливень море оросил  
(Его бездонность влагу испросила).  
Ты, как развилка: наберешься ль сил  
Для вечно докучающего Вилла?  
Не надо отвергать того, кто мил,  
Но есть один со всеми слитый Вилл.

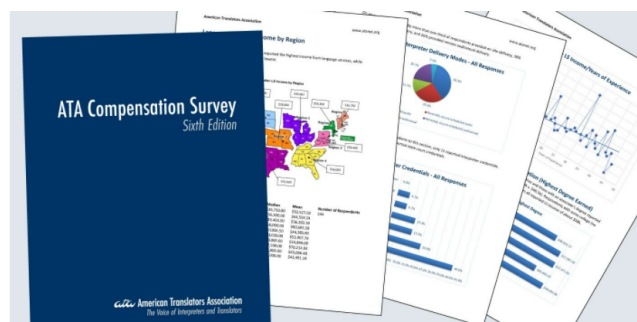
obvious verb, noun(s) and name (multiple Wills seem to be alluded to here), can refer to both the male and female genitalia. Without further comment, I refer you to one of the bawdiest translation examples ever to appear in these pages (see above).

“Everybody’s unfulfilled ambition is to produce a text which will impress the reader of another language as it impresses the native reader, and that is an unattainable goal and an unattainable dream,” Liberman lamented. Perhaps, but in the case of translated

poetry, the appreciative eye can marvel not only at the beauty of the verse, but the brilliance of the translation.

We thank Anatoly Liberman for permission to publish his translations.

Nora Seligman Favorov translates Russian literature and history into English. She serves as translation editor for *Russian Life* magazine and as editor of *SlavFile*. Since 2003 she has had the honor of recruiting the SLD’s annual Greiss lecturer. She can be reached at [norafavorov@gmail.com](mailto:norafavorov@gmail.com).



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## “Vegetative-Vascular What? Navigating Unusual Conditions and Treatments in Eastern European Medical Records”

*Presented by Anna Steingart, Maria Guzenko, and Janja Pavetic-Dickey  
Reviewed by Marisa Irwin*



Marisa Irwin

When it comes to the more technical specializations, it can be easy to focus on the technical writing and content, and forget that culture still plays a vital role in one’s translation. Language professionals working with technical material like legal and medical must contend with the usual translation challenges (terminology, syntax,

etc.). On top of that, though, they deal with concepts (e.g., diagnoses or treatments) that have very little overlap between source and target cultures. When the equivalent diagnosis or treatment does not exist in the target language, what approach should the translator or interpreter take?

Anna Steingart, Maria Guzenko, and Janja Pavetic-Dickey grappled with this very question in their engaging and informative presentation “Vegetative-Vascular What? Navigating Unusual Conditions and Treatments in Eastern European Medical Records.” Their presentation aimed to help translators and interpreters develop strategies when faced with concepts that have no direct English equivalent. Although the examples were taken from Russian, Ukrainian, and Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian, the techniques presented can help any language professional in the medical sphere produce more accurate and culturally sensitive translations.

### Health Systems Overview

Their presentation started with an overview of healthcare systems in the Soviet Union, as well as modern-day Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and the former Yugoslavia. One of the key things to remember when dealing with Soviet-era texts and records is that the entire healthcare system was not evidence-based, as we are accustomed to in the West, but rather based on the medical professional’s expert opinion. The Soviet Union’s healthcare model of a government-funded, centralized, and hierarchically-based system—the

Semashko model—still exerts an influence on former Soviet countries, especially in the continued use of Russian in medical settings.

Lest you think that all countries in the Soviet bloc developed similarly, the former Yugoslavia offers a unique setting in which East and West both influenced the medical system. These countries were more exposed to Western medicine than the rest of the Soviet bloc, and the treatments and diagnoses reflected this.

### Conditions & Diagnoses

After this brief system overview, Steingart and Guzenko began to focus on specific conditions and diagnoses with no easy English-language equivalent. For each term, the literal English translation was offered first, followed by the phrase in Russian, Ukrainian, and Bosnian-Croatian-Serbian. Terms such as “dysbacteriosis” [ru: *дисбактериоз*; ukr: *дисбактеріоз*; bcs: *disbakterioza*] could be used to convey a multitude of gastrointestinal issues including ulcers and IBS. As one contemporary Russian doctor put it, “dysbacteriosis” is a medical diagnosis “toilet bin.” Being equipped with the knowledge that the Soviet healthcare system was not evidence-based is certainly helpful in making sense of this term. If doctors could not rely on evidence, they needed vaguer terms to serve as catchalls for numerous conditions. It can be easy to disparage a term, especially when it appears medically less advanced than the contemporary understanding. Still, it is important to recognize the context in which the term was formed if we hope to be better, more culturally sensitive language professionals.

### Facilities & Treatments

The presentation then turned its focus from specific diagnoses to facilities and treatments. When the word *санаториум* [bcs: *sanatorij*] appears in a text, it can be very tempting to translate it as “sanatorium” and be done with it. This is a classic example of a “false friend.” In my translation experience, if the translation seems obvious, your Spidey senses should start tingling. It is often the concepts that seem the easiest to translate that are actually the most difficult.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ электротерапия</li> <li>▶ лазеротерапия</li> <li>▶ магнитотерапия</li> <li>▶ УФО</li> <li>▶ горный воздух</li> <li>▶ галокамера(соляная пещера)</li> <li>▶ СУФ</li> <li>▶ ингаляции с минеральной водой</li> </ul> <p><b>5. Лечебный массаж:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ массаж грудной клетки</li> <li>▶ вибрационный массаж (ручной и при помощи вибромассажеров)</li> </ul> <p><b>6. Общеукрепляющая терапия:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ солевые ванны</li> <li>▶ ванны с бишофитом</li> <li>▶ жемчужные ванны</li> <li>▶ гидромассаж (ручной или механический)</li> <li>▶ аэроионотерапия и ароматерапия</li> <li>▶ фиточай</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Прийом мінеральних вод (власний бювет)</li> <li>+ Мінеральні ванни (власна свердловина)</li> <li>+ Мінерально-перлинні ванни</li> <li>+ Хвойні та валер'янові ванни</li> <li>+ Вихрові ванни</li> <li>+ Озокеритові аплікації</li> <li>+ Механічний масаж</li> <li>+ Інгаляції</li> <li>+ Гідропатії (душ циркулярний, Шарко, висхідний)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sve usluge koje obuhvata Post-COVID rehabilitaciju-pansion (PCR PA)</li> <li>• Laboratorijske usluge (D-dimer)</li> <li>• Konsultativni specijalistički pregled neurologa</li> <li>Usluge hiperbarične medicine:</li> <li>• Konsultativni pregled specijaliste hiperbarične medicine</li> <li>• 10 usluga hiperbarične komore-osigenacija</li> <li>• 5 refleksnih masaža stopala sa akcentom na zonu respiratornih organa (u okviru Kinezi-terapijskog programa)</li> </ul> <p><b>BENEFITI HIPERBARIČNIH TRETMANA</b></p> <p>U hiperbaričnoj komori ljudi se leče udisanjem čistog kiseonika pod pritiskom većim od atmosferskog, koji ide i do 2,8 bara, čime se do 20 puta povećava količina fizički rastvorenog kiseonika u krvnoj plazmi i omogućava njegovo brže dopremanje do oštećenih tkiva i ćelija:</p>
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Examples of terms difficult to translate into English

In this case, a *санаториум* is more similar to a spa or health resort than it is to a sanatorium.

In addition to incongruous facilities, you must contend with treatments with no easy equivalent. A term like “physiotherapy” [ru: *физиотерапия*; bcs: *fizioterapija*] can easily be mistranslated as “physical therapy.” Once again, the term serves as a catchall; “physiotherapy” could include electrical treatments, ultrasounds, aromatherapy, and physical therapy.

## Strategies

Given the challenges medical interpreters and translators face, what course of action should be taken? Steingart, Guzenko, and Pavetic-Dickey offered four potential approaches for handling these systemic differences:

1. Understand the source
2. Avoid false pairs; double-check yourself before using them
3. Be transparent if you offer any interpretation/suggestions
4. If appropriate, suggest possible equivalents

What proved particularly helpful was the interactive portion at the end of their presentation. It allowed the audience (both in-person and online) a chance to brainstorm and apply the tips presented to us. The examples shown above led to a lively discussion between the presenters and the audience. Even from this brief discussion, it became clear that there is no one right answer.

Words whose entire concepts have no equivalence in the target language require more than a literal translation. Steingart, Guzenko, and Pavetic-Dickey provided invaluable methods to help any interpreter or translator better translate between medical systems. By remembering the cultural component, medical interpreters and translators can better serve patients and providers.

Marisa Irwin is a Russian and German to English translator and editor based in Milwaukee, WI. She specializes in historical texts and advertising for the food & beverage and health & wellness sectors. She holds an M.A. in Translation from the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee and also serves as the SLD’s blog editor. She can be reached at [mirwin@mlitranslate.com](mailto:mirwin@mlitranslate.com)

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## “Beyond Meaning: Contrasting Typeface, Capitalization, and Punctuation Conventions in Russian and English”

*Presented by Maria Guzenko*

*Reviewed by Eugenia Tietz-Sokolskaya*

One of the best things about being a division administrator is getting a sneak peek at sessions ahead of time, and this year I was overjoyed to see Maria Guzenko’s proposal on differing typesetting conventions in Russian and English. Different languages having different conventions is something that should go without saying—but it turns out that we bring it up so little that translators forget! I don’t recall ever seeing a session on punctuation in translation at an ATA conference, let alone in the Slavic track, and yet I often find myself pointing out in translations I edit, whether for work or practice, that punctuation, capitalization, or formatting can’t simply be carried over. Maria explained her title in similar terms, saying that we as translators sometimes get so caught up in making sure we get the meaning right that we lose sight of “technicalities” like punctuation.

The session was obviously not intended as an exhaustive enumeration of the differences between Russian and English (that would be an infinitely long session!). Instead, Maria focused on three types of “pain points”: punctuation; capitalization and formatting in titles; and direct speech. In the first part of the session, she gave us several literary excerpts—a few in Russian, then a few in English—and asked us to think about what stood out to us about them. For those of us used to English, the Russian excerpts were particularly notable for their wide variety of quotation marks and equivalent symbols (dashes and guillemets in addition to the familiar marks). The English excerpts featured several uses for italics, lots of capitalized



Maria Guzenko

words, and ellipses. We were, of course, primed to be thinking about unfamiliar punctuation marks, capitalization, and italics, so a lot of the audience comments brought up direct speech, titles, and formatting, all of which led right into the more explanatory section of the talk.

After the lively discussion around the various texts, Maria walked us through the established rules for the pain points she had chosen. The section on punctuation started with compound sentences, where Maria highlighted a key difference between Russian and English: English does not encourage comma splices (two independent clauses joined only by a comma), and Russian has no problem with them. Other methods of joining sentences—colons, dashes, and semicolons—were also discussed, and we were reminded that the rules for using them and the semantic roles they play differ between Russian and English, meaning that we should resist the temptation to mechanically reuse the same symbol in the translation.

Next came complex sentences. Russian treats subordinate clauses much more simply than English: commas everywhere! English, meanwhile, has more complex rules, based on both mechanics and meaning. For example, if the subordinate clause comes first, it is separated by a comma, but if the main clause is first, it is not. The clause also should not have commas around it if it is restrictive, meaning that it gives information about its antecedent that cannot be removed without fundamentally changing the sentence’s meaning. Since Russian puts commas around every subordinate clause, whether restrictive or non-restrictive, figuring out which kind it is can be difficult and may require additional context. (To be fair, restrictive and non-restrictive clauses are a headache for non-translators as well!)

The next slide was about the ellipsis—but not the punctuation mark by that name! In addition to the three dots, “ellipsis” can also mean the omission of words that can be understood from context clues, and Maria focused on sentences with omitted verbs. Russian handles such cases with a dash, whether the verb omitted is repeated from a previous clause (Я

### Ellipsis (Omitted Verb)

#### Russian

- Dash for omitted verb
  - Я живу в Париже, а они — в Берлине.
- Dash for copula deletion (with some exceptions)
  - Фильм — моё любимое блюдо.

#### English

- Optional comma for omitted verb
  - The first day was exciting, the second boring.
  - The first day was exciting; the second, boring.

## Placement of Introductory Phrase (слова автора)

	Russian	English
Beginning	Кассир спросил: «Картой или наличными?» Кассир сказал: «Спасибо за покупку».	The cashier asked, "Card or cash?" The cashier said, "Thank you for your business."
Middle	«Картой, — спросил кассир, — или наличными?» «Картой или наличными? — спросил кассир. — Спасибо за покупку».	"Thank you," said the cashier, "for your repeat business." "Thank you for your business," the cashier said. "Come back soon."
End	«Спасибо за покупку», — сказал кассир.	"Thank you for your business," said the cashier.

живу в Париже, а они – в Берлине) or is a linking verb (Пельмени – моё любимое блюдо). This is a case where I find myself particularly tempted to recreate what Russian does and leave in the dash, but I know it is not done that way in English. I was surprised to find out that English can also omit repeated verbs, and that it is acceptable to mark them either with a comma or with nothing at all.

The final slide on punctuation covered two more commas that English uses, but Russian does not: the infamous Oxford comma (before the “and” or “or” in a list of three or more items) and the comma after an adverbial phrase of more than a couple of words.

The next major topic Maria covered was titles, another aspect of typography where the differences jumped out at us from the text excerpts she shared at the beginning. In Russian, titles only capitalize the first word and are enclosed in quotation marks; in English, titles use title case (its exact flavor depends on your style guide) and are either italicized, for large works, or put in quotation marks, for smaller pieces of larger works. Maria also pointed out that when translating from English into Russian in a CAT tool, it is worth checking the tags, particularly around titles, because they may contain italics, which would look out of place in the Russian text.

The final topic was direct speech. Both English and Russian have complicated rules about the exact order of commas, periods, opening and closing quotation marks, dashes, and other punctuation around direct speech, and they are, of course, completely different. Maria included a very helpful table highlighting the punctuation marks in both languages, depending on whether the introductory phrase (слова автора) was before the speech, in the middle of a sentence or between sentences, or after the speech.

The remaining time went to questions, most of which dove into even more specific cases of differences in conventions. The discussion was a good reminder that this topic is riddled with rabbit holes and that it is important to have good resources on hand to be able to look up how each language handles a particular usage. At the end of the presentation, an audience member recalled giving a translator a piece of advice about not leaving the text formatted as it was in Russian, and that piece of advice perfectly summed up the takeaway from the entire presenta-

tion. “The American eye,” she said, “is just not going to perceive that.” As we translate, we should be asking ourselves: is our target reader going to perceive this writing convention the same way it was perceived in the source? Or does it need to be adapted?

This review, by the way, would not have existed if not for the virtual option at this year’s conference. For a variety of personal reasons, traveling to Minneapolis to attend in person was out of the question, as was attending any of the online networking events. Of course, that meant I missed out on a lot of what the conference is usually about for me: making connections with unexpected people, starting up all sorts of interesting conversations, and getting energized from bandying about new ideas. However, I was very pleased with what I did get: the same lineup of sessions as an in-person attendee, accessible through a relatively easy-to-use platform with a minimum of technical difficulties. I was even able to ask Maria a question and get it answered, thanks to a chat and Q&A function that was much more functional than last year (and thanks also to this session’s moderator, Marisa Irwin!). At times I was envious of how easily the in-person audience could engage with speakers and jump into a heated discussion, but it was energizing even to watch that from afar. I would definitely take this kind of conference over no conference at all any day!

Eugenia Tietz-Sokolskaya, CT, is a Russian-to-English legal translator and SLD Administrator. She also runs the Russian-to-English direction of the SLD Certification Exam Practice Group.



# SLAVFILE LITE: NOT BY WORD COUNT ALONE

Lydia Razran Stone



During the early nineties I was working for NASA's Space Biology and Medicine program, coordinating and doing translations for a joint book with a counterpart Soviet (subsequently Russian) institute. This involved several trips to Moscow. One of my favorites among the Russian scientists was Dr. Genin, who used to pick me up at my hotel and drive me to the institute where we

worked. He was famed as the person who had designed the life support system for the famous space dog Laika. At one point his old car stopped in the middle of the road and he, seemingly unconcerned, got out what seemed to be a very old-fashioned fire-place bellows, opened the hood, and vigorously squirted air on the engine, enabling us to continue on our way. At that time, I was translating some of the Russian classic poetry I had encountered in my studies, all for adults. I recited to him my version of Gumilyov's "Giraffe," and he reciprocated by reciting Zakhoder's "Giraffe." I begged for more. After that he treated me to a new Zakhoder poem every trip. He knew them all by heart, and after I returned home, he sent me a collection.

Feeling I had found my true *métier*, I started translating those and other Russian children's (?) poems. (The inserted question mark reflects my feeling that, to the people of Dr. Genin's generation, many of these poems were perceived as having true Aesopian messages for Soviet adults.)

One poem that I thought I would never be able to translate was the very famous Мойдодыр (literally: Wash till You Make Holes, in my rendition *Scrubbledub*). Once I attempted it though, the difficulties I had originally perceived melted away like dirt subjected to a vigorous (but not painful) scrubbing. Readers will notice that I did not retain the dactylic meter, which is very difficult in English when lines are so short. I also replaced the rather ominous name of the main character with something lighter and more amusing, and eliminated the preachy last part of the published original, which I do not believe was actually written by Chukovsky, or if so, only under duress. I changed certain minor details of the narrative, for example modernizing some of them to better accord with current English-speaking children's knowledge and vocabulary. Nevertheless, I hope the spirit and even something of the sound of the original is maintained.

If any reader would like to see more of my children's translations, many never published, or to suggest a children's poem for me to translate, please write to me at [lydiastone@verizon.net](mailto:lydiastone@verizon.net).

## МОЙДОДЫР

Корней Чуковский

Одеяло  
Убежало,  
Улетела простыня,  
И подушка,  
Как лягушка,  
Ускакала от меня.

Я за свечку,  
Свечка — в печку!  
Я за книжку,  
Та — бежать  
И вприпрыжку  
Под кровать!

Я хочу напиться чаю,  
К самовару подбегаю,  
Но пузатый от меня  
Убежал, как от огня.

## SCRUBBLEDUB

Translated by Lydia Stone

My blanket fled  
Right off the bed,  
My sheets all took off too.  
My pillow leapt  
Off while I slept.  
Whatever could I do?

The light switch slipped  
Beyond my grip.  
My book would not be read.  
Away it slid,  
Then went and hid  
Far off, beneath the bed.

I went to get some juice to drink.  
My glass fled in alarm,  
And seemed so scared  
That you would think  
I'd meant to do it harm.

Боже, боже,  
Что случилось?  
Отчего же  
Всё кругом  
Завертелось,  
Закружилось  
И помчалось колесом?

Утюги за сапогами,  
Сапоги за пирогами,  
Пироги за утюгами,  
Кочерга за кушаком —  
Всё вертится,  
И кружится,  
И несётся кувырком.

Вдруг из маминой из спальни,  
Кривоногий и хромой,  
Выбегает умывальник  
И качает головой:

«Ах ты, гадкий, ах ты, грязный,  
Неумытый поросёнок!  
Ты чернее трубочиста,  
Полюбуйся на себя:  
У тебя на шее вакса,  
У тебя под носом клякса,  
У тебя такие руки,  
Что сбежали даже брюки,  
Даже брюки, даже брюки  
Убежали от тебя.

Рано утром на рассвете  
Умываются мышата,  
И котята, и утята,  
И жучки, и паучки.

Ты один не умывался  
И грязнулею остался,  
И сбежали от грязнули  
И чулки и башмаки.

Я — Великий Умывальник,  
Знаменитый Мойдодыр,  
Умывальников Начальник  
И мочалок Командир!

Если топну я ногою,  
Позову моих солдат,  
В эту комнату толпою  
Умывальники влетят,  
И залают, и завоют,  
И ногами застучат,  
И тебе головомойку,  
Неумытому, дадут —  
Прямо в Мойку,  
Прямо в Мойку  
С головою окунут!»

“Oh dear, oh dear,  
What’s happened here?  
What can the problem be?  
Things are vaulting,  
Somersaulting,  
To get away from me.”

My table, chair,  
My underwear,  
My ball, and my stuffed bear  
All were swooping,  
Loop-de-looping,  
Flying through the air.

I scratched my head and tried to think,  
But then I heard a roar.  
A monstrous walking bathroom sink  
Came crashing through the door.

“Oh you grimy, oh you gritty  
Unwashed little creature,  
Although your eyes look clean enough  
They are your one clean feature.  
Your neck is gray with dirt and sweat,  
Your face and ears are grayer yet!  
How’d you get your hands so sticky?  
Touching them would feel all icky.  
Why, even patched and wrinkled pants  
Would run away from such soiled hands!  
Yes, even pants, even pants,  
Would run and hide from those soiled hands!

“In the morning, at six thirty,  
Kittens all are washing, scrubbing.  
Even bugs wash when they’re dirty,  
Not to mention mice and ducklings.

“You alone think it’s a bother  
Washing up with soapy lather.  
Such a dirty face is shocking,  
Scaring off your shoes and stockings.

“I’m the mighty Scrubbledub,  
Tsar of sink and soap and tub,  
Chief of washcloth, sponge, and shower.  
No one can resist my power.

“If I stamp my feet and call  
My troops will get here—one and all.  
All well trained in cleaning faces,  
Necks and hands and other places.  
They’ll come running, they’ll come rushing,  
They’ll start scrubbing, they’ll start brushing.  
Then, my dirty little pup,  
You will find that you’re washed up.”

Он ударил в медный таз  
И вскричал: «Кара-барас!»

И сейчас же щетки, щетки  
Затрещали, как трещотки,  
И давай меня тереть,  
Приговаривать:

«Моем, моем трубочиста  
Чисто, чисто, чисто, чисто!  
Будет, будет трубочист  
Чист, чист, чист, чист!»

Тут и мыло подскочило  
И вцепилось в волосы,  
И юлило, и мылило,  
И кусало, как оса.  
А от бешеной мочалки  
Я помчался, как от палки,  
А она за мной, за мной  
По Садовой, по Сенной.

Я к Таврическому саду,  
Перепрыгнул чрез ограду,  
А она за мною мчится  
И кусает, как волчица.

Вдруг навстречу мой хороший,  
Мой любимый Крокодил.  
Он с Тотосей и Кокошей  
По аллее проходил  
И мочалку, словно галку,  
Словно галку, проглотил.

А потом как зарычит  
На меня,  
Как ногами застучит  
На меня:  
«Уходи-ка ты домой,  
Говорит,  
Да лицо своё умой,  
Говорит,  
А не то как налечу,  
Говорит,  
Растопчу и проглочу!»  
Говорит.

Как пустился я по улице бежать,  
Прибежал я к умывальнику опять.

Мылом, мылом  
Мылом, мылом

He struck a basin like a drum  
And called out: "Washers, quickly, come!"

Rubbers, scrubbers, rubbers, scrubbers  
Leapt upon me in a gang,  
Scrubbing, scraping, no escaping,  
While they scrubbed they sang.

"You're dirty as we've ever seen,  
But we'll get you clean, clean, clean!"

Soap and sponge together plunged,  
Tangling, mangling up my hair,  
Bringing troubles, stinging bubbles.  
"Stop it!" said I. "Don't you dare!"  
"Stop shampooing? Nothing doing!"  
Silly boy, what can you mean?  
Hair so greasy, won't clean easy.  
We won't stop until it's clean!"

From this sponging I went lunging  
Out the window to the street.  
Sponge pursued me to shampoo me,  
Squishing on his soapy feet.  
Once I started, I just darted;  
Through the town, escape in mind,  
I went dashing, I went crashing.  
Sponge kept coming, right behind.

I was straining, he was gaining.  
He would catch me in a mile.  
Who'd defend me, who'd befriend me?  
Then I saw the Crocodile,  
Not patrolling, simply strolling  
With his two sons, Drock and Kyle.  
I stopped bravely, he would save me  
(We'd been friends for quite a while).  
The sponge that followed, Croc just swallowed,  
Wiped his lips, began to smile.

Then he took a better look  
At me.  
His scaly fist he shook  
At me.  
He even stamped his foot  
At me.  
"Run off home, you dirty face,"  
He roared.  
"Wash yourself, you're a disgrace,"  
He roared.  
"The way you look has made me sad,"  
He roared.  
"You wouldn't want to make me mad,"  
He roared.

I ran home as fast as fast  
Got myself all clean at last!

Soap and water,  
Soap and water:



Умывался без конца,  
Смыл и ваксу  
И чернила  
С неумытого лица.

И сейчас же брюки, брюки  
Так и прыгнули мне в руки.

А за ними пирожок:  
«Ну-ка, съешь меня, дружок!»  
А за ним и бутерброд:  
Подскочил — и прямо в рот!

Вот и книжка воротилась,  
Воротилась тетрадь,  
И грамматика пустилась  
С арифметикой плясать.

Тут Великий Умывальник,  
Знаменитый Мойдодыр,  
Умывальников Начальник  
И мочалок Командир,  
Подбежал ко мне, танцуя,  
И, целуя, говорил:

«Вот теперь тебя люблю я,  
Вот теперь тебя хвалю я!  
Наконец-то ты, грязнуля,  
Мойдодыру угодил!»

Надо, надо умываться  
По утрам и вечерам,

А нечистым  
Трубочистам —  
Стыд и срам!  
Стыд и срам!

Да здравствует мыло душистое,  
И полотенце пушистое,  
И зубной порошок,  
И густой гребешок!

Давайте же мыться, плескаться,  
Купаться, нырять, кувыркаться  
В ушате, в корыте, в лохани,  
В реке, в ручейке, в океане, —

И в ванне, и в бане,  
Всегда и везде —  
Вечная слава воде!

Now I know that they don't hurt.  
Soap and water,  
Soap and water:  
I looked GOOD without my dirt.

Now my clothes, including pants,  
By themselves jumped in my hands.

Sandwiches of bread and cheese  
Asked if I would eat them, please.  
Then some pastries (very sweet ones)  
Came up begging me to eat some.

All my things were jiggling, wiggling,  
Giggling in their glee.  
All my things were dancing, prancing.  
To greet the new, clean me.  
My books for school broke every rule  
To celebrate my bath.  
My first Reader was the leader  
Boogying with Math.

Then the mighty Scrubbedub  
Came sashaying through the door—  
Tsar of sink and soap and tub,  
Washcloth, shower, sponge, and more.  
Patting me upon my head,  
He proudly smiled at me and said:

“Pinch me, for I think I'm dreaming.  
You are shining, you are gleaming.  
I am very pleased with you,  
For you've learned what you must do.  
When there's dirt upon your face,  
Your hands, your neck, or any place.  
Wash each morning, every night.  
Then the world will treat you right.”

LAST SECTION SKIPPED INTENTIONALLY



# Slavic Poetry In Translation

Feature Editor: Martha Kosir



Photo by Ana Sajovic. Used with permission.

## KATJA GOREČAN

Translation and introduction by Martha Kosir

Katja Gorečan comes from the small Slovenian village of Dramlje. She graduated from the University of Ljubljana with a degree in Comparative Literature and Literary Theory. Additionally, she earned a Master's degree in Dramaturgy and Performing Arts from the University of Ljubljana's Academy for Theater, Directing, Film, and Television.

Gorečan published her first poetry collection, *Angels of the Same Origin* (*Angeli istega porekla*), in 2007, at the tender age of seventeen. Her second collection, *The Suffering of Young Hana* (*Trpljenje mlade Hane*), was published only four years later, in 2012. It was nominated for the Jenko Award (one of the most prestigious literary awards in Slovenia) and selected for the 15th Mediterranean Young Artists Biennale (2011). In 2017, Gorečan published a collection of choreopoems entitled *Some Nights Some Girls Are Dying Somewhere* (*Neke noči neke deklice nekje umirajo*). She currently works in the field of contemporary performing arts, as a producer, playwright, and author.

The selection of poems included here comes from Gorečan's second collection, *The Suffering of Young Hana*. Although they provide only a small glimpse into the universe of young Hana, they are remarkable for their depth and unmistakable feminist focus. Gorečan's pointed language, paired with humor, irony, and sarcasm, depicts young Hana's struggles as she transitions into adulthood. During this often painful and challenging process, she explores her essence as a woman, poet, and simply an individual caught in a world of exceedingly normative and prescriptive behavioral patterns.

Gorečan's poetry is stimulating and thought-provoking, making the *Suffering of Young Hana* a collection that begs to be read from cover to cover in one sitting.

We thank Katja Gorečan for permission to publish her poetry.

Martha Kosir has been contributing to *SlavFile* since 2008 and has served as our poetry editor since 2011. In addition to translating poetry from Slovenian into English, she has done poetry translations from English into Spanish, from Slovenian into Spanish, and from German into Spanish and English. In addition to *SlavFile*, her translations have been published in the literary magazine *Sirena: Poetry, Art and Criticism*, the journal *Contemporary Slovenian Poetry*, *The International Poetry Review*, *The Drunken Boat*, *Solstice*, *Plume*, and *Source*. She has likewise completed translations into English and Spanish of several poetry collections by the Slovenian-Bosnian poet Josip Osti. Her research focuses on translation studies, film, and cultural studies. She works as Professor of Spanish and Program Director for Global Languages and Cultures at Gannon University and can be reached at: [kosir001@gannon.edu](mailto:kosir001@gannon.edu)



## Hana in sanje

je edino, kar hana verjame.  
sanje deli na zlobne in dobre,  
na resnične in manj resnične.

ko je z njim, ali kadar misli nanj, sanja.  
ko prestopi prag njegove garsonjere. ne obstaja.

nikoli ne dobi ničesar, in vse podari.

pred spanjem preveri, če je kdo pod posteljo.  
do petnajstega leta je spala pri prižgani namizni svetilki,  
zdaj pusti odgrnjeno okno, da svetijo ulične luči v sobo.  
čeprav pred spanjem še kakšno uro kuka skozi okno,  
če jo sosednji psihopat opazuje skozi špranje.

hana je imela v otroštvu ogromno sanj.  
hotela je postati  
igralka,  
pevka,  
zdravnica in  
učiteljica.

hana je v otroštvu veliko igrala na šolskih prireditvah,  
pri enajstih letih pa je napisala prvo pesem.  
hana je prenehala z igranjem,  
hana je prenehala s pisanjem,  
hana je prenehala s sanjami.  
hano je učiteljica slovenščine v osnovni šoli pred celim  
razredom nadrla,  
da njene pesmi niso njene, in da jih nima smisla prebirati.  
hana je bila prvič prizadeta in je uvidela,  
da ljudem ne smeš zaupati, ker te prizadenejo,  
predvsem pa, da si nikoli več ne bo upala storiti tisto,  
kar si zares želi,  
saj jo bo vedno strah.

hana *nikoli več ne bom naredila ničesar.*  
ker je to najlažja pot.

## Hana in ljubezen

hana noče govoriti o ljubezni, ker  
hana se je zaljubila v moškega, ki ji je rekel  
*upam,*  
*da se nisi zaljubila vame.*

in jo poljubil.

prebrala je večino priročnikov za samopomoč  
in kako vzdrževati žensko samozavest,  
ampak se je nič od tega ni prijelo.  
razmišlja celo, da bi sama napisala enega,  
saj se da s takšno literaturo dobro zaslužiti.

ampak ljubezen v haninem življenju nima več  
nobenega bistvenega pomena,  
zato raje preskočimo to temo.

## Hana and Dreams

dreams are the only thing hana believes in.  
she separates them into good and evil,  
into real and less real.

when she's with him, or when she thinks of him, she dreams.  
when she steps over the threshold of his studio apartment, she doesn't  
exist.

she receives nothing in return and gives everything away.

before getting into bed, she checks under it to see if anyone is hiding  
there.  
up until age fifteen, she slept with a desk lamp on,  
now she leaves the curtains open to let the glow of the streetlights into  
the room.  
yet she peeks out the window for about an hour before sleep,  
to see if the psychopath next door is spying on her through the cracks.

hana had a lot of dreams as a child.  
she wanted to become  
an actress,  
a singer,  
a doctor, or  
a teacher.

during her childhood, hana performed at many school events,  
and at the age of eleven she wrote her first poem.  
hana stopped performing,  
hana stopped writing,  
hana stopped dreaming.  
when in grade school, hana's language teacher admonished her in front  
of the whole class, screaming  
that her poems were not truly hers, so there was no use in reading  
them.  
this was the first time hana was hurt, and she realized  
that people couldn't be trusted because they hurt you,  
but above all, she would never again dare to do  
what she most desired  
because fear would always stand in her way.

hana *never will I do anything again.*  
it is the safest path to take.

## Hana and Love

hana refuses to talk about love because  
she once fell in love with a man who said to her  
*I hope*  
*you're not falling for me.*

and he kissed her.

hana has read most of the self-help manuals  
on how to maintain confidence as a woman,  
but none of it has impressed her.  
she even thought of writing one herself,  
for it is possible to make good money with such literature.

but love no longer plays  
a significant role in hana's life,  
so let us skip this topic altogether.



## Hana in menstruacija

morda se vam bo zdelo ogabno,  
ampak hana dostikrat rada voha svojo  
menstrualno kri.  
zdi se ji osvežujoča in posebna.  
spomni se dne, ko je dobila prvo menstruacijo.  
še lepše se spomni, da takrat ni bila skoraj nič kosmata po  
vagini, ampak to pride v naslednje poglavje.  
hani menstruacija dela posebne težave.  
ponavadi dobi hude krče, včasih  
se tudi pretvarja, da jih ima,  
včasih pa kar sama od sebe omedli, da prikaže svojo šibkost.  
hana je s svojo prvo menstruacijo ugotovila,  
da je postala ženska!  
takrat sta šli z mamo v trgovino in kupili največje možne  
vložke,  
ki se uporabljajo predvsem ponoči, ker imajo krilca.  
tako je hana ugotovila, da je ženska.  
in da je plodna, ampak da še ni čas,  
da prvič seksa.  
saj če smo čisto realni – tudi ni imela s kom seksati,  
ker se je naivno odločila, da bo izgubila nedolžnost  
s pravim moškim, ki ga bo ljubila  
in z njim živel do konca življenja.  
*takšne misli so me obletavale pri enajstih letih.*  
hana je prvič povohala svojo  
menstrualno kri pri sedemnajstih letih.  
vonj ji je bil všeč, zato dostikrat to še naredi,  
ampak tega ne pove nikomur, saj potem bi ljudje mislili,  
da ni čisto pri sebi.  
kasneje pa bi ji seveda posvetili posebno biografijo o tem,  
kako poseben človek je bila.  
in seveda, kako so jo vsi oboževali. *čeprav me nihče ni  
poznal.*  
torej, kot je jasno.  
hana in njena menstruacija imata poseben odnos.  
hana je ravnokar spet priznala laž.  
za svojo dogodivščino z okušanjem krvi je povedala  
svojemu bivšemu fantu, ki pa jo je seveda imel za

pokvarjeno,

ogabno  
in predvsem

NEŽENSKO.

kar je napisano v tej knjigi,  
so same skrivnosti in to naj tudi ostanejo.  
saj je naša dežela ena redkih dežel, kjer imajo ljudje  
sposobnost  
ohranjanja svojih in sosedovih skrivnosti.  
hana je tukaj označena za nežensko,  
saj poskuša menstrualno kri.  
menstrualna kri je tekočina,  
ki se je ne smemo dotikati,  
saj je strupena in lahko povzroči resno okvaro  
dihal in srca.  
ali razuma.

## Hana and Her Period

you may find it disgusting  
but hana often enjoys smelling her  
menstrual blood.  
she finds it refreshing and unique.  
she remembers the day she got her first period.  
she remembers barely having any pubic  
hair, but that will be discussed in the next chapter.  
hana has a particularly hard time with her periods.  
she usually suffers from severe cramps, sometimes too  
she pretends to have them,  
and sometimes she faints simply to show her frailty.  
getting her period for the first time,  
hana realized she had become a woman!  
then she went to the store with her mom and bought the biggest of  
pads,  
the ones used especially at night because they have wings.  
this is how hana found out she was a woman.  
and that she was fertile, but it was not yet time  
for her to have sex.  
if we're truly realistic – she had no one to have sex with  
because she had naively decided to lose her virginity  
with the right man, a man she loved  
and would live with for the rest of her life.  
*such thoughts raced through my mind at the age of eleven.*  
hana smelled her menstrual blood  
for the first time at the age of seventeen.  
she liked the scent and continues to take sniffs,  
but she doesn't tell anyone, because people would think  
she was out of her mind.  
later, of course, they would dedicate a special biography  
and adore her profusely  
for being such an exceptional woman. *even though no one knew me.*  
it remains obvious.  
hana and her period enjoy a special relationship.  
hana has just admitted to another lie.  
she shared her blood-tasting adventure with  
her ex-boyfriend, who, of course, found her

depraved

disgusting  
and above all

UNFEMININE.

what is written in this book  
is nothing but secrets and they should remain so.  
for our country is one of the few where people have the ability  
to keep their own and the neighbors' secrets.  
hana has been found unfeminine here,  
for she tastes her menstrual blood.  
menstrual blood is a fluid  
that must not be touched,  
it is toxic and can cause serious damage  
to the respiratory and cardiac systems.  
or to reason.

## Hana in poezija (Hani se ne da več)

kar se tiče poezije, bi hana najraje ostala tiho,  
*vendar ne morem*

svoje pesmi je začela skrivati in pokopavati v zemljo,  
da jih bodo nekoč morda odkrili.

kar se tiče naše poezije, bi hana najraje zakričala.  
kar ljubiš, se ti v naši deželi zagnusi.

hana ne bo nikoli povedala, kar si misli,  
ker potem je njena pesniška pot končana.

hana si misli, ampak ne bo priznala.

hana hoče brati svoje pesmi,  
hana hoče izdati kakšno knjigo,  
ampak hani ne bo nikoli uspelo, ker  
hana ni tipičen primer pesnice  
(*kakšen je tipičen primer, hana ne ve, ampak ve, da to ni ona*),  
in najpomembneje – hana nima vez.

hani je tega dovolj.  
ne da se ji več boriti s pesniki.  
zakaj bi se le morala boriti za svojo poezijo?

hana rada opazuje samooklicane pesniške zvezde,  
ki so narejene po istemu kopitu.  
vsako leto izdajo pesniško zbirko,  
vsako leto imajo na tisoče nastopov,  
na katerih modrujejo in hlinijo ljubezen.  
vsako leto dobijo isti nagrado,  
ali morda vmes mine kakšno leto?  
vseposod vidi iste obraze, ki dajejo vedeti  
*kaj pa ti ženski otrok delaš tukaj nisi dobrodošla*  
*to smo samo mi vrh parnasa*  
*ki traja in dokler ne umremo ti nimaš za burek*  
(ali kako je civilizacija izgubila vero)

potem se ga napijejo in postanejo agresivni  
in udari jim moška moč,  
katere hana nikoli ne bo imela,  
zato lahko kar izgine, od koder je prišla.  
razmišljala je, da bi pokleknila prednje  
in jih prosila  
*prosim preberite moje pesmi niso zanič zares ne,*  
ampak je danes še preveč utrujena in premalo močna.  
*nekoč boš imela dobre pesmi, ampak nikoli tako dobre kot so*  
*moje.*

hana ne bo nehala pisati,  
ampak bo preprosto postala apatična za vse izpade in udarce.  
ravno to hočemo.  
*zato vedno najraje udarim tja, kjer najbolj boli.*

in ravno tu hana loči pesnike na dva razreda:  
pesniki, ki ostanejo ljudje  
in pesniki, ki postanejo zveri.

## Hana in konec

v svoji sobi sem.  
pa bi morala biti nekje drugje.

*hana ne bi smela biti.*

## Hana and Poetry (Hana Has Had Enough)

as for poetry, hana would prefer to remain silent,  
*but I can't*

she began to hide her poems and bury them in the ground,  
so that they might be discovered one day.

as for the poetry of our country, hana simply wants to scream.  
our fatherland will make you despise what you love.

hana will never say what she thinks  
because then her poetic journey would be over.

hana thinks, but she won't admit to it.

hana wants to read her poems,  
hana wants to publish a book,  
but hana will never succeed because  
hana is not a typical poet  
(*what typical is, hana doesn't know, but she does know it's not her*),  
and most importantly – hana has no connections.

hana has had enough.  
she no longer feels like fighting with the poets.  
why should she have to fight for her poetry?

hana likes to observe the self-proclaimed poetic stars,  
all fashioned after the same principle.  
they publish a collection of poems every year,  
participate in thousands of performances,  
where they theorize about and feign love.  
they receive the same award each year,  
or maybe every other year?  
she sees the same faces everywhere, with the same attitude  
*what are you doing here, you female child, you are not welcome,*  
*this is for us, the parnassus, the cream of the crop,*  
*and until we die you don't even have enough to buy yourself a burek*  
(or how the faith of the civilization was lost)

then they get drunk and become aggressive  
striking out with their masculine power,  
power that hana will never have,  
so she may as well just get lost and go back to where she came  
from.  
she even thought of throwing herself down on her knees  
and begging them  
*please read my poems, they really don't suck,*  
but today she's still too tired and too weak.  
*someday you'll have good poems, but never as good as mine.*

hana won't stop writing,  
she'll simply become apathetic to all the outbursts and blows.  
that's exactly what we want.  
*that is why I always prefer to strike where it hurts the most.*

and this is where hana splits the poets into two classes:  
those who remain human  
and those who turn into beasts.

## Hana and the End

I'm in my room.  
but I should be somewhere else.

*hana shouldn't be at all.*

# A Brief History of Russian-English Translation in America

*James F. Shipp*

When World War II came to its unforeseen conclusion, with the Soviet Union divorcing itself from its Allies and retaining possession of the nations it had “liberated,” the need for Russian-English translators in the United States increased dramatically. Compounded by the failure of Russian machine translation to materialize as rapidly as anticipated (it still has not come to pass in any workable fashion today), former US military translators, Russian-speaking East European immigrants, and college graduates unable to find positions in academia largely filled this void.

Documents were exchanged in person, through the mail, or via facsimile. Fax machines in those days used a low-quality heat-activated paper that printed out in one continuous sheet, which then had to be manually cut into individual pages. These pages curled incessantly, and the translator was forced to weigh them down in some manner in order to read them before they lost their legibility. It was often easier just to make plain-paper copies of the faxed pages, which was expensive in those days, then discard the faxes altogether.

At first, translation manuscripts were submitted in longhand and were typed up by staff secretaries whenever necessary. As the demand for typescripts rose, translators were compelled to take on this additional skill. The first typewriters were big, heavy Remington or Royal uprights. Typing in Russian required a second typewriter with a Cyrillic typeface and a very different keyboard arrangement. Bilingual typing meant the tedious realignment of pages from one machine to the other.

Graphics were cut from source document copies and pasted into the translation typescripts, with inset



Remington manual typewriter



IBM Selectric typewriter



Selectric printball



Xerox Memorywriter



Early desktop computer

phrases most often being whited out and reproduced by hand. A smaller typewriter in something that resembled a hatbox was used for “away” assignments. Typewriter ink ribbons allowed for typing in either black or red. Typos were corrected with erasers until the advent of whiteout products. The erasers left rubber particles in typewriters that inevitably led to sticky keys and typebar jamming.

This situation improved appreciably when IBM introduced the Selectric typewriter with its replaceable printball during the early 1960s. Electrically operated, with a built-in correction tape, this innovative typing system significantly hastened the translation process, resulting in a higher-quality product that was much less labor-intensive.

The IBM Selectric remained the standard until Xerox came out with its Memorywriter electronic typewriter some 20 years later. The Memorywriter featured a replaceable printwheel and a 30,000-character memory that permitted line-by-line editing before printing. This desktop prequel again reduced translation processing time and vastly improved product quality. As with the Selectric, however, the Memorywriter’s printwheel had to be replaced for different languages and special character sets.

Although they had been around for some time, desktop computers remained cost-prohibitive until the mid-1980s. I recall that my first complete desktop system came to a staggering \$8,000.

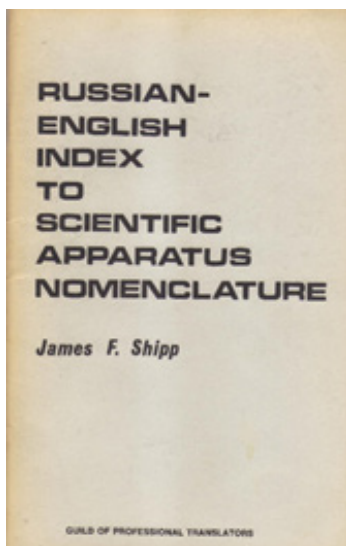
It was the size of a refrigerator, with a memory the size of a thimble. The printer was massive, overly sensitive, and together with the attendant fax and modem equipment, accounted for one-half of the system’s cost. The standard word-processing software at that time was



WordPerfect—much less user-friendly and productive than today's Microsoft Word.

Imagine if you will a world without the Internet. Pretend for a second that you have to prepare a translation using only the meager hard-copy resources at your disposal. The status of bilingual reference aids prior to the birth of the Worldwide Web was dire. Russian translators in Washington, DC, had a leg up in this regard due to the existence of the Victor Kamkin Bookstore in Rockville, Maryland. There, on a Saturday morning for a negligible outlay, translators could find dictionaries spanning numerous scientific and technical disciplines; however, most of them were English-Russian with short Russian-English indices in the back. But they were literally the only game in town. Reliable Russian-English reference aids from the English-language press could be counted on the fingers of one hand, and sadly, this situation remained fundamentally unchanged for several decades.

Translators had to keep copious margin notes in the dictionaries that they were able to acquire and to compile their own lists of frequently encountered terms. The Guild of Professional Translators (later the Translation Research Institute) in Philadelphia heard about my first such list—a *Russian-English Index to Scientific Apparatus Nomenclature*—and published it in 1977. This resulted in the ensuing publication of a *Russian-English Dictionary of Surnames* in 1981 and a *Russian-English Dictionary of Abbreviations & Initialisms* in 1982, as well as the self-publication of a *Concise Russian-English Chemical Glossary* in 1983. Because they continued to be in demand after they



went out of print, the National Technical Information Service of the US Department of Commerce in Springfield, Virginia, repeatedly reprinted all these volumes over the years. In 2005, Dunwoody Press, also in Springfield, Virginia, published a *Dictionary of Contemporary Russian Abbreviations, Acronyms & Initialisms* that I had coauthored with Maks Rozenbaum. The revenues from these publications were extremely meager, but no amount of money could ever have recompensed the thousands upon thousands of hours spent compiling them—they were strictly a labor of love for the purpose of helping

my colleagues generate a better translation product.

Due to the emergence of translation and interpretation as an independent sector, the American Translators Association was founded in Ossining, New York, in 1959. Local affiliates soon sprang up in hub cities across the nation. This organization's stated primary goals consisted of "fostering and supporting the professional development of translators and interpreters and promoting the translation and interpreting professions."

Following almost two years of negotiations with The Newspaper Guild, six fellow translators and I founded The Translators Guild (TTG) in June of 1991. Almost perishing due to lack of community support for fear of industry reprisals, this true AFL/CIO union ultimately became The Translators and Interpreters Guild (TTIG), is now an arm of the Communication Workers of America (CWA), and primarily focuses on interpreters today, since they make up the bulk of its current membership.



Despite the existence of these and similar groups, the cards remain stacked against translators as a whole, who must often work unspeakable hours to meet impossible deadlines, accept rates of pay that are far from commensurate with the complexity and importance of the work they perform, and endure insupportable delays before finally receiving their money. While conditions aren't as bad as they used to be (one of my first freelance jobs was translating the *Shipbuilding Journal* from cover to cover on a monthly basis for 4 cents per source word), they are still in need of great improvement before translators see the light of a new day.



## A Brief Summary of Jim Shipp's Career in Translation

*James F. Shipp*

In the mid-1960s, I transferred from the US Navy Reserve Security Group to the active US Air Force Security Service for the express purpose of becoming a linguist. I subsequently completed my Russian studies at Syracuse University.

Stationed in Trabzon, Turkey, I provided critical information to the National Security Agency (NSA) during the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, which resulted in a unit citation and a presidential letter of commendation. I spent my remaining time in the military working at the NSA headquarters on Fort George G. Meade, Maryland.

After being honorably discharged, I accepted the position of senior language analyst with Informatics, Inc., in Riverdale, Maryland, where I remained for six years under the auspices of a contract with the Air Force's Foreign Technology Division at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio.

Thereafter, I was hired as a senior language specialist by the Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress and held this position until 1979, when I became a full-time freelance translator.

Over the next dozen years, I completed ongoing translation assignments for numerous agencies, firms, and organizations in the nation's capital. Most notably during this period, I translated and analyzed the Korean Airline shoot-down tape for the Washington bureau of NBC News, in addition to which I was a founder and charter member of The Translators Guild (later The Translators and Interpreters Guild), the only translators' union in the United States.

In 1991, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) selected me from a field of thirty candidates for

a one-month posting to Moscow, where I was the sole IMF translator on duty when Gorbachev surrendered power to Yeltsin. This was the first of a half dozen extended missions to various republics of the former Soviet Union that I would undertake on behalf of the IMF, the World Bank, and other clients during the next two years.

In 1993, I assumed the management of EOP Translation Services, Inc., in Washington, DC, and held this position until deciding to return to the freelance arena in 1995.

I worked as a translator and lexicographer for MasterWord Services in Houston, Texas, during 2008-2009, but again found the freelance work was more to my liking.

I am the author of six Russian-English dictionaries, as well as more than eighty newsletter and newspaper articles on various aspects of translation work.

I presently reside in Crestview, Florida, with my wife, Sue, where I continue to prepare Russian-English translations for various clients on a full-time freelance basis as work is available.

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Don't worry: we'll be around to help you get started! Administrators do not need to be certified and are welcome to join in the practice rounds!

If interested, contact Eugenia at [eugenia@sokolskayatranslations.com](mailto:eugenia@sokolskayatranslations.com)