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# Sex, Lies, and Red Tape: Ideological and Political Barriers in Soviet Translation of Cold War American Satire, 1964-1988

Khmelnitsky, Michael

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Sex, Lies, and Red Tape:  
Ideological and Political Barriers in Soviet Translation  
of Cold War American Satire, 1964-1988

by

Michael Khmelnitsky

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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## Abstract

My thesis investigates the various ideological and political forces that placed pressures on cultural producers, specifically translators in the U.S.S.R., during the Era of Stagnation (1964-1988). In Chapter 1, I examine Joseph Heller and Kurt Vonnegut's use of black humour and their reception in the U.S. and the U.S.S.R, describe my personal encounter with Soviet translations of the two authors' texts, outline the current critical debates, and examine Western reactions to the Soviet translations. In Chapter 2, I contrast tsarist and Soviet censorship and U.S. and Soviet censure of undesirable works, describe the creation and operation of Voenizdat, Glavlit, Goskomizdat, and the resulting Kafkaesque culture-producing machine, identify the problem of sex in Russian and Soviet literature, discuss the problems of Soviet book production in relation to Heller and Vonnegut's works, analyze the censorial peritexts of their novels, assess the means of resistance to Soviet state publishing (including *samizdat*, *tamizdat*, Aesopian language, and pseudotranslation), and discuss the death of the original. In Chapter 3, I provide a brief overview of Russian translation theory in the 1800s, outline the development of the schools and movements of Russian and Soviet translation studies, appraise Ivan Kashkin's role in the incorporation of the principles of socialist realism into Soviet translation theory, outline the schools and movements of Western translation studies, appraise Lawrence Venuti's role in the incorporation of the principles of *visibility*, *resistancy*, and *foreignization* into Western translation theory, and provide a set of best practices for reading and evaluating a translation. In Chapter 4, I test various translators' complicity with the Soviet system by comparing the lexical, semantic, and idiomatic equivalence of Vonnegut's *Cat's Cradle*, *Slaughterhouse-Five*, and *Breakfast of Champions* and their translations by Rita Rait, and perform a thought experiment by disregarding the original text of Heller's *Catch-22* and comparing five of its Russian translations (by three different translators) to each other. In Chapter 5, I examine the regression of post-Soviet translation studies to former positions, trace its future developments, provide examples of effective translations and original texts that employ strategies conducive to such translations, and weigh the question of canon in relation to the production of new translated texts.

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*To all those who were deceived*

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\* Figures removed due to copyright restrictions.



## List of Abbreviations

### Kurt Vonnegut Works

<i>BC</i>	<i>Breakfast of Champions</i>
<i>CC</i>	<i>Cat's Cradle</i>
<i>GB</i>	<i>God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater</i>
<i>MN</i>	<i>Mother Night</i>
<i>PP</i>	<i>Player Piano (Utopia 14)</i>
<i>PS</i>	<i>Palm Sunday</i>
<i>SF</i>	<i>Slaughterhouse-Five</i>
<i>SOT</i>	<i>The Sirens of Titan</i>

### Joseph Heller Works

<i>C22</i>	<i>Catch-22</i>
<i>C22K</i>	<i>C22 excerpted in Krokodil (1965)</i>
<i>C22SR</i>	<i>C22 excerpted in SR (1964)</i>
<i>C22U</i>	<i>C22 serialized in Ural (1967)</i>
<i>GG</i>	<i>Good as Gold</i>
<i>C22R</i>	<i>C22 published by Raduga (1988)</i>
<i>C22V</i>	<i>C22 published by Voenizdat (1967)</i>
<i>SH</i>	<i>Something Happened</i>

### Other Literary Works

<i>CO</i>	<i>A Clockwork Orange</i>
<i>CR</i>	<i>The Catcher in the Rye</i>
<i>EO</i>	<i>Evgenii Onegin</i>
<i>HE</i>	<i>From Here to Eternity</i>
<i>OE</i>	<i>Once an Eagle</i>

### Authors

J.D.	J. D. Salinger
JH	Joseph Heller
KV	Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

### Translators

V/T	Mark Vilenskii and V. Titov
-----	-----------------------------

### Russian Periodicals

<i>IL</i>	<i>Inostrannaia literatura</i>
<i>LG</i>	<i>Literaturnaia gazeta</i>
<i>NM</i>	<i>Novyi mir</i>
<i>SR</i>	<i>Sovetskaia Rossiia</i> (also a publisher)

### Russian Publishing Houses

KhL	Khudozhestvennaia literatura
MG	Molodaia gvardiia
Voenizdat	Voennoe izdatel'stvo ministerstva oborony SSSR

**Russian Publishing Industry**

KPPS

kopeks per publisher's sheet

PS

publisher's sheet (uchetno-izdatel'skii list)

**Translation Studies**

PT

Pseudo-Translation

SL

Source Language

ST

Source-language Text

TL

Target Language

TS

Translation Studies

TT

Target-language Text

**Miscellaneous**

e

English text (for example, *BCe*)

r

Russian text (for example, *BCr*)

*Auctoritas non veritas facit legem*

## Foreword

To understand why Soviet Russia is at the centre of my research, it is important to understand what sort of cultural crucible the country had become by the second part of the twentieth century and what serious stakes and consequences it had created for such seemingly innocuous tasks as literary translation. My father taught me how to read Russian in 1986, when words like *uskorenie*, *glasnost*, and *prozhektor perestroiki* were spoken every day on radio and television. At the time, I did not understand what those words meant, but I still remember those six bold black letters in a modernist style that spelled out one word on the newspaper masthead: P-R-A-V-D-A. Truth. The portrait of grandfather Lenin hung on the wall of my Moscow elementary school classroom where I spent every moment of my free time with a book. I read the adventure stories of Robert Louis Stevenson, Jules Verne, and H. G. Wells. I read the horror stories of Edgar Allan Poe and Ambrose Bierce. I read the science fiction stories of Henry Kuttner, Ray Bradbury, Harry Harrison, and Robert Sheckley. To quote Nabokov's *Pale Fire*, "I never bounced a ball or swung a bat," but I read voraciously and listened to the line closely. I will never forget how devastated I was by the beauty of Bradbury's "There Will Come Soft Rains" that my father read to me one night when I was ill. Perhaps I never cried so earnestly until I had to reread, reread, and again reread *Slaughterhouse-Five* over these past few years. The emotion was real, but a large part of everything I read was mediated by translation. By the time my family moved to Israel in 1991, I added Hebrew to my arsenal of languages and continued to read translations. One of the brightest memories of my teenage years was getting my hands on my father's tattered collection of Vonnegut's novels translated into Russian that irreverently informed me of women's private parts, sexual perversions, and other things I had never heard of before. Like every other Soviet reader, I took what I read at face value and moved on, and this book has survived many re-readings. By 1996, I knew English and some French, and, upon my



family's arrival in Canada, I had (then, unconsciously) begun to reread every book in the English-language canon of popular adventure, satire, and science fiction one more time, this time in the original. This thick stack of sheets would never have taken its shape were it not for that fateful evening in Waterloo, Ontario when I realized the tremendous discrepancies between the English and Russian versions of *Breakfast of Champions* that I had so cherished previously. I felt affronted and betrayed. The rest, as they say, is history.

The work in front of you is the culmination of five years of research and writing and a lifetime of soul-searching. It began in 2010 with my surprising encounter with the problems in Rita Rait-Kovaleva's canonical translation of Kurt Vonnegut's *Breakfast of Champions* that led me to an early exploration of the issues of translation in Russia throughout the Soviet period. It soon turned out that, although the authors I was interested in and the questions I wanted to explore had already been discussed in dissertations and monographs about the Thaw Era (1953-1964), Perestroika (1987-1991), and the post-Soviet period (1991-present), very little work has been done on canonical translation from the Era of Stagnation (1964-1987). In this way, my task came to encompass not only the critique of Soviet translations but the exploration of the way in which they reflected and helped construct Soviet perceptions of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., Cold War, and the world at large. The first challenge I faced was formulating a working definition of a "good" translation. During my initial struggles with Soviet translation theory and practice, I became an adherent of *dynamic equivalence* (the reproduction of the *spirit* of the original text) that seemed lacking in Rait's work. However, the deeper I dug, the more issues came out of the woodwork. Wishing to broaden the scope of my future findings, I expanded my research to translations of three of Vonnegut's novels, as well as five translations of Joseph Heller's *Catch-* 22. I also moved beyond the investigation of publications in book form to translations serialized

in Soviet newspapers, magazines, and literary journals which led me to an in-depth exploration of the reception of the two authors' writing in the genre of *black humour*, both in Soviet and U.S. literary criticism. This, in turn, also led me to an inquiry into the workings of Soviet censorship and print apparatuses and the various attempts to resist them. As time went on, dynamic equivalence disappointed my expectations because its tacit goal turned out to be the production of an ideal text which stood in opposition to everything I learned over a decade of literary studies. I became an adherent of the work of Lawrence Venuti whose visit to the University of Calgary inspired me to suspect categories such as "good" and "bad" and whose work showed me the limitations of both dynamic equivalence and *formal equivalence* (the reproduction of the *letter* of the original text).

For a time, Venuti made me an adherent of *foreignization*, a means to infuse a translation with a sense of Otherness that includes the identity of the *visible* translator as well as *resistancy* towards the literary and ideological limitations of a text's milieu. In the course of writing this work I had to produce numerous translations for my readers who do not know Russian: bits and pieces of literary and translation criticism, political documents, and prose and poetry passages. Although I maintained my visibility from the very beginning by always including the original non-English quotations in footnotes whenever I provided a translation, I decided to go back and rewrite my translations to reflect my newfound philosophy. However, after I studied the history and genealogy of Russian and Soviet translation studies and then contrasted it with parallel developments in the West, it became apparent that the binary categories that developed during the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first (including Venuti's) were untenable as one-size-fits-all approaches to translational problems of various shapes and sizes that required different solutions. As a result, I had to go back and ensure that my translations became infused

with a flexible *hybridity*, as the situation required. In addition, I left behind not only the categories of “good” and “bad” but also the construct of the “original” text, replacing the numerous translation methods invented by Soviet scholars who worked with the precepts of equivalence predicated on socialist realism with the single category of *effective* translation that exists on the same level as the “original” text and operates according to the principles of intertextuality, visibility, and resistancy. When I applied this category to a variety of canonical and new, post-Soviet translations into and from Russian, I made a number of interesting discoveries. The core scholarship of Russian translation studies has, over the past two decades and a half, regressed to former Soviet positions and the canon of Soviet translation continued its life after the dissolution of the U.S.S.R., suggesting that the “dethroning” of translators the republication of whose work prevents the release of competing translations is an ongoing process that will take a long time. However, I also found not only that many actual translations that have been produced during this period show an inclination precisely towards the methodology that I came to advocate, but that this methodology also gives rise to a new breed of literary text, one that not only requires its readers and translators to check the ongoing enhancement of their own ethical responsibility to the Other but also offers a diversity of rich, inherently resistant compositional and translational strategies that assure that there is always something to appropriate and resist.

I hope that I have shown an evolution in my work, a straightening of the spine, as I moved from a rigid understanding of what a translation ought to be towards a series of flexibilities and allowances for translation as art in its own right. I hope that I have also shown the growing sense of entropy, the movement from order to disorder, the movement from a settled, comfortable worldview that I had once held long ago, and the twisted and intertwined

morass of ideologies, principles and practices that I have discovered in the process. I do not expect you, my reader, to be swayed by my findings and my conclusions, because these are hard conclusions, difficult to swallow, and I realize that what I am asking for is nothing less than your help with turning the world on its head. In service of this seemingly impossible task, I ask you to follow me down a path that few rarely take, too often becoming entrenched in the safety of the mother tongue or in the comfort of knowing that in some Platonic space there is a wonderfully-indexed reference large enough to contain the multitudes of all experience, capable of tabulating all languages and cultures, capable of reconciling them with their counterparts from “over there,” and balancing the accounts—but, of course, this is not quite how things work. Instead, as my thesis supervisor put it once, we now have a “translation of defenestration” that allows us to discard such “safe” terms as *original text* and *ideal translation*, that requires us to reconsider the dogma of dynamic and formal equivalence and the benefits of strangeness, hybridity, and resistance to regimes of cultural comfort and control. In a 2005 keynote speech at the Art Association of Australia and New Zealand Conference, the art scholar and critic Nicolas Bourriaud stated that

Artists are looking for a new modernity that would be based on *translation*: What matters today is to translate the cultural values of cultural groups and to connect them to the world network. This “reloading process” of modernism according to the twenty-first-century issues could be called altermodernism, a movement connected to the creolisation of cultures and the fight for autonomy, but also the possibility of producing singularities in a more and more standardized world.

In the critical work of Lawrence Venuti, Douglas Robinson, Kaisa Koskinen, Jeremy Munday, Esa Penttilä, Hannu Kemppanen, Natal’ia Galeeva, Alexandra Borisenko, and Andrei



Azov, we now find the instruments to build a lever long enough to produce such singularities in a space located between cultures without ever again becoming unfaithful or feeling betrayed; and, in the fiction of the cultural descendants of Joseph Heller and Kurt Vonnegut, the films of P. T. Anderson, Lars von Trier, Michel Gondry, and Pedro Almodóvar, in literature (not in the self-indulgent stasis of performing four minutes, thirty-three seconds of silence, transcribing the content of a day's newspaper, or engineering a poetry-copying bacterium), but in the exuberant and honest ethical vigilance that rejects the familiar and automatic, that recuperates the mystery of language, that reconciles the hopelessness of Post-Structuralism with the necessity of moral strenuousness of New Sincerity in works that unapologetically engage in intertextual intercourse and demonstrate forceful and visible reactions, in the works of Haruki Murakami, Roberto Bolaño, Zadie Smith, Dmitrii Prigov, Chuck Palahniuk, David Foster Wallace, Vladimir Sorokin, Dave Eggers, and Viktor Pelevin—here at long last we find a fulcrum on which to place the lever of translation to once again move the world.

**Chapter 1**  
**The Polite Bear on the Typewriter:**  
**Reception of American Authors in the U.S.S.R.**

El original es infiel a la traducción.<sup>1</sup>

—Jorge Luis Borges

“On William Beckford’s *Vathek*”

Гор Видал заметил: – Романы Курта  
страшно проигрывают в оригинале. . .<sup>2</sup>

—Sergei Dovlatov  
*Not Only Brodsky*

– O Gott! O Gott! – warum will man mich  
übersetzen! Hab ich ja den Leuten nichts  
getan!<sup>3</sup>

—Ivan Turgenev  
Letter to Ludwig Pietsch (15 Jan. 1869)

This is a story of grand aspiration and failure, which it has to be, since it was written by a group of people living their lives backwards. It begins like this:

*Listen:*

*Russia has come unstuck in time.*

It ends like this:

*So it goes.*

**In the Beginning was the Empire**

Listen:

Russia has come unstuck in time. The nineteenth century was moving along at its own pace. The empire had occupied a great tract of land, from Alaska (and later the Bering Sea) in the East to the Black Sea in the West, separated by only a few much smaller nations from Germany, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the rest of Europe. Here and there, dissenting voices arose, but in 1825 Tsar Nikolai I put down the Decembrist Revolt, creating the Third Section “political

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<sup>1</sup> “The original is unfaithful to the translation” Hereinafter, all translations are my own unless specified otherwise. For Russian, I use Library of Congress Romanization without ligatures or diacritics.

<sup>2</sup> “Gore Vidal noted: Kurt’s novels lose frightfully in the original. . .” The source of the quotation is disputed: “There was an anecdote, widely spread by Sergei Dovlatov – allegedly, Gore Vidal proclaimed that Kurt Vonnegut lost a lot in the original compared to translations by Rita [Rait]” (Borisenko, “Fear” 186).

<sup>3</sup> “— Oh god! god! —Why do they want to translate me?! For I to these people have done no ill!”

police” the very next year (Burke 122; Coetzee 120), and in the 1860s and 1870s, under Aleksandr II, student revolts sparked up as fast as they were extinguished under the watchful eye of the Okhranka, the investigative unit created in 1866 that transitioned into the role of a tripartite secret police from the 1880s until turn of the century (Burke 122). Still, disregarding the occasional strike or royal assassination attempt, life seemed to move in a vaguely positive direction. By the second half of the century, the war with Napoleon and the French invasion of 1812 was but a distant memory, fodder for fiction. The motto of the Russian Empire was “God is with us!”<sup>4</sup> (Sulashkin 36) and, although international skirmishes with nations such as Turkey, Persia, and the Ottoman Empire continued, Russia expanded and steadily grew stronger. From the 1840s, the Slavophile movement urged the rejection of Western values and called for Romantic (and often utopian) traditional and communal existence (Walicki n. pag.) while radical figures like Mikhail Bakunin and Aleksandr Gertsen advocated anarchism and proto-socialism. In the 1850s, while the Crimean War pitted Russia against the imperial powers of France and the United Kingdom, Russification, the attempt to make Russian the dominant language of the empire’s dependencies, intensified in Finland (Thaden 11), Estonia (353), Latvia (249-250), Lithuania (4), Poland (4, 27-28), Belarus (459), Bessarabia<sup>5</sup> (119), and Ukraine (459). In 1861, Aleksandr II freed the serfs, but in 1876 he banned the importation, printing, and performance of plays in the “Little Russian<sup>6</sup> dialect,”<sup>7</sup> and instituted the surveillance of schools and cleansing of libraries of “Ukrainophile propaganda”<sup>8</sup> by a secret decree (“Ėmskii ukaz” n. pag.; Cohen 54); similarly, between 1864 and the 1880s, Polish became banned in public spaces, offices, and

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<sup>4</sup> «С нами Бог!»

<sup>5</sup> Present-day Ukraine and Moldova

<sup>6</sup> *Little Russian* («малорусский») is a term for the area roughly corresponding to Ukraine, currently considered pejorative.

<sup>7</sup> «малорусском наречии» (n. pag.)

<sup>8</sup> «украинофильской пропаганды» (n. pag.)

schools (54). Still, for some Great Russians<sup>9</sup> in the 1870s and 1880s life was good and getting only better: the upper classes were fluent in French, German, English and Italian (Baer, “Decembrists” 217); they read voraciously and corresponded vigorously; they wrote and translated, groaned about the “caviar” of the censor’s ink that covered their books’ pages (Choldin, “Political Writing” 48), and tried to continuously reinvent private codes in which to communicate (Baer, “Decembrists” 236). In 1894, Nikolai II came to power, resolving to strengthen the monarchy as the empire began to industrialize, and, in a small village called Petrushevo in the Elisavetgradskii Raion of the Kherson Oblast,<sup>10</sup> a girl named Raisa Iakovlevna Chernomordik was born to a Jewish family on April 19, 1898 (Mints 257).

Before I fast-forward the tape to the period between 1964 and 1988 known as *Zastoi* or the Era of Stagnation, I would like to give a brief glimpse into the closeness and distance of the world in the years leading up to and during the Cold War. For instance, it is worth mentioning that in the same year, 1922, while the future mummy Vladimir Il’ich Ul’ianov was busy dying and preventing his poorly-chosen protégé with a catchy nickname from taking over the newly created Land of the Soviets, while the amateur Austrian painter Adolf Hitler was busy haunting Munich beer halls and getting arrested for treason, while the American cannon fodder Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. and Joseph Heller were busy being born a year apart in Indianapolis and Coney Island, Rita Rait (now using a pseudonym [Leighton, “Kovaleva’s Vonnegut” 413] for her literary work) received her medical degree and, after an unfortunate laboratory accident that prevented her from completing her dissertation, left for the world of Vladimir Mayakovsky,<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> «Великорусские», a term for citizens of “Russia proper.” In 1985, Maurice Friedberg noted that “[i]n the USSR, the Great Russians may already constitute less than half of the population. Thus, an effort is underway to co-opt . . . the two other Slavic nationalities—the Ukrainians and the Belorussians—as Russians in the broader sense” (*Culture* 39).

<sup>10</sup> Present-day Ukraine

<sup>11</sup> One of Rait’s earliest efforts was translation of Mayakovsky into German (Mints 257).

Osip Brik, Velimir Khlebnikov, and Boris Pasternak, for the career of a literary translator (257-258). Rait will, towards the end of her life, become acclaimed in the Soviet Union for “having acquainted our reader with the diary of Anne Frank, the novels of J. Salinger, W. Faulkner, F. Kafka . . . Vercors,<sup>12</sup> J. Galsworthy, G. Greene, H[einrich] Böll, E[lsa] Triolet, J[ohn] B[oynton] Priestley, M. Twain, and many other writers.”<sup>13</sup> Still, the world was becoming smaller—and crazier. In 1938, Osip Mandel’shtam will be sent into exile for his “Stalin Epigram” and in 1939 Vonnegut will enlist in the U.S. Army. In 1944, Heller will fly combat missions over Italy while Vonnegut will be captured in Dresden; in 1945 Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn will be sentenced to hard labour. In 1948, Heller will publish his first short story and in 1950 Vonnegut will publish his. In 1963, Vonnegut will release *Cat’s Cradle*; in 1964 Iosif Brodskii will be declared to not be a poet and indicted publicly for being a “social parasite” (Coetzee 131). While Heller will never meet his Russian translators, one year before copies of *Slaughterhouse-Five* will be incinerated in a coal burner of a high school in North Dakota in 1973, Vonnegut will finally meet his translator Rita Rait. These and other facts, and their juxtapositions, recombinations, and amalgams against the backdrop of interdependent histories and ideologies may at first blush seem to be nothing more than unrelated trivia; however, only by entering (if only temporarily) the kaleidoscopic insanity of these superimpositions does it become possible to understand the problem of the pungent, fertile soil of the Cold War that not only provoked American authors to reinvent a longstanding literary genre, but also prompted their Soviet counterparts to receive, translate, and canonize these works in a very particular way.

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<sup>12</sup> The pseudonym of Jean Bruller

<sup>13</sup> «познакомивших нашего читателя с дневником Анны Франк, с романами Дж. Сэлинджера, У. Фолкнера, Фр. Кафки. . . . Веркора, Дж. Голсуорси, Г. Грина, Г. Бёл[л]я, Э. Триоле, Дж. Б. Пристли, М. Твена и многих других писателей» (Mints 257).

## Enemy of my Friend

When Heller's *Catch-22* first came out in 1961, it was generally well-received in the U.S., although there were some negative reviews<sup>14</sup> that characterised the novel as "offensive, unpatriotic, vulgar, and incoherent . . . [and] thought it excessive, in length and redundancy,<sup>15</sup> in comic effects, [and] in the graphic depiction of sex and gore" (Potts, *Antinovel* 10). Vonnegut's reputation (especially during his dry spell between 1969 and 1973) was also not undisputed. In "Comic Persona," Charles Berryman explains that "[i]n the middle of the 1960s Vonnegut's first four novels [*Player Piano*, *The Sirens of Titan*, *Mother Night*, and *CC*] and his first collection of stories [*Canary in a Cathouse*] were all out of print"; it was Vonnegut's move out of the realm of science fiction<sup>16</sup> in 1965 and his acceptance of a two-year residency at the University of Iowa Writers' Workshop that radically influenced both the shift in his literary practice and his work's recognition (163). Vonnegut scholar Jerome Klinkowitz explains that "Vonnegut's 1966 re-publication . . . led to his solid collegiate popularity. The writer who for years had written notes from [the] underground was now being read by an 'underground' itself about to be exploited and fanfared as the new generation, 'Youth'" ("Canary" 12). Finally, "by the late 1960s . . . graduate schools across America were accepting dissertations on his work. . . . Vonnegut had arrived" (Klinkowitz and Somer, "Vonnegut Statement" 1-2). By the 1970s, the author had "found himself front and center everywhere" (Klinkowitz, *America* 63). However, while both Vonnegut

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<sup>14</sup> There is reason to be somewhat skeptical about Heller's own take on his book's reception: "I'm really delighted because it [*C22*] seems to have offended nobody on the grounds of morality or ideology. Those people it has offended, it has offended on the basis of literary value. But I'm almost surprised to find that the acceptance of the book covers such a broad political spectrum and sociological spectrum as well" ("Impolite Interview" 6).

<sup>15</sup> Heller notes the contradiction that many reviews contained in this regard: "if they *don't* like the book, it's repetitious; if they *like* it, it has a recurring cyclical structure, like the theme in a Beethoven symphony" ("Impolite Interview" 17).

<sup>16</sup> Vonnegut's use of genre is a notable bone of contention. In *Imagining Being an American*, Donald E. Morse notes that "Vonnegut's six early novels from *Player Piano* to *Slaughterhouse-Five* have been labeled alternately science fiction, black humor, satire, schizophrenic fiction, fabulation, fantasy, and so forth. While there is some truth behind each of these labels, . . . Vonnegut's work escapes easy classification" (24).

and Heller began their writing careers with short fiction, Vonnegut managed to release four novels between 1952 and 1963, while, until 1974, Heller had published only one. Thus, on the one hand, as Klinkowitz argues in “Crimes of Our Time,” unlike Heller, “Vonnegut is prolific, tracing his vision through many different human contexts” (82-83); however, by the same token, Vonnegut also had to face a fourfold amount of criticism. In order to demonstrate the difficult acceptance of his early works and the concerns they shared with Heller’s writing, it is necessary to discuss Vonnegut’s two most vicious critics, a literary scholar, and a journalist, whose two articles are now almost entirely forgotten: Leslie A. Fiedler’s “The Divine Stupidity of Kurt Vonnegut,” published in *Esquire* in 1970, and Charles Thomas Samuels’s “Age of Vonnegut,” published in *The New Republic* in 1971. The fact that, “except for a piece by his friend Robert Scholes, no scholarly articles on Vonnegut appeared in American academic journals until 1971” (Klinkowitz, “Canary” 12) gives some special weight to these salvos. It is curious that Fiedler unintentionally imitates not only the form of Kilgore Trout’s stories (which in Vonnegut’s novels<sup>17</sup> are described as published in pornographic paperbacks with illustrations completely unrelated to text) but also Vonnegut’s own early publications<sup>18</sup> because Fiedler’s article competes for space with advertisements for a pair of moccasins, manly leather jackets (195, 197), a “KENWOOD stereo receiver” fondled by an attractive young woman, *Esquire’s Guide to Modern Etiquette*, the “Aqua Velva Spray Fragrance” (196), commodity trading (199), “Paladin Blackcherry pipe tobacco” (200) and the “Oxford Shaver” (“PETER LAWFORD picked!”) (203), for

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<sup>17</sup> Trout makes his first appearance is in *GB* (1965).

<sup>18</sup> The publication of Vonnegut’s early stories and novels demonstrates that Vonnegut appeared to not mind biting the commercial hand that fed him. As Klinkowitz explains in “Why They Read Vonnegut,” despite writing about the vagaries of capitalism, Vonnegut’s paperbacks managed to “reach[ ] a large if uncritical public: the greater majority of Americans buy less than one hardbound book a year, but drugstores remain crowded with racks of paperbacks. Popular magazines accepted Vonnegut’s work, and he favored middle-class America with dozens of stories appearing . . . [on] both sides of the competition, including *Redbook* and *Cosmopolitan*, *Esquire* and *Playboy*, *The Ladies’ Home Journal* and *McCall*, and at one time in the same weekly issues of *Collier’s* and *The Saturday Evening Post*” (19).

the entire length of its eight pages. Fiedler awkwardly attempted to meet Vonnegut on his own level; however, one wonders whether the critic realized the ironic juxtaposition of the form and content of his diatribe. Fiedler's ethos appears rather strange when he condemns Vonnegut's writing by facetiously pronouncing "the death of the Art Novel"<sup>19</sup> . . . read by an elite audience to whom high literature represents chiefly the opportunity of verifying their own special status in a world of slobs committed to the consumption of 'mass culture'" (195) on the pages of a men's magazine. Setting aside this bizarre arena, it is not difficult to observe a generational fear that becomes readily apparent when Fiedler levels John Barth, William Burroughs, Ken Kesey, Truman Capote, and Norman Mailer as one (195-196), concluding that "[i]t was all there in James Fenimore Cooper to begin with, has remained there in the Pop underground ever since, and rises to the surface whenever an American writer wants to indulge not his own exclusive fantasies of alienation and chosenness, but the dreams he shares with everyone else" (196). It would have to take some hindsight to realize that the concerns of the American frontier of the mid-nineteenth century (though certainly *significant* to later writing in a number of ways) do not in any way obviate the need for Vietnam War Era American literature of the mid-twentieth century, hence Fiedler's exasperated comment about *SF*, "Perhaps Vonnegut does not know at all what he is really doing" (204).

Before I respond to Fiedler's invective, I would like to briefly turn to Samuels's article, which mercifully not only limits itself to advertising only a book on draft-dodgers in Canada and a deck of cards specially designed to teach one how to play bridge (31), but also spares the

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<sup>19</sup> A decade later, Fiedler will write in "The Death and Rebirths of the Novel" that "[m]ore than twenty years ago I announced boldly . . . that the novel was dead" (143). Fiedler continues to insist on the end of the "traditional novel" and derides the "experimentation with terminal fiction" and "infatuation with Pop culture" of Barth, Coover, Pynchon, Barthelme, and Gass (144). He draws a distinction between "the Media" and "High Art" (146), the former defined by "mythic resonance . . . archetypal appeal" and "secular scripture" and the latter by "elegance of structure or style . . . precision of . . . language . . . subtlety of thought" and "canonical art" (147).



reader the embarrassing misunderstanding of Vonnegut's disgust with capitalism for its own sake. Unlike Fiedler, who targets Vonnegut's *content*, Samuels concerns himself with Vonnegut's *form*: he begrudgingly acknowledges the writer's popularity, but questions "what he has done for literature" (30). Making intertextuality a literary crime, Samuels charges Vonnegut with "absorb[ing] what preceded him"; however, the accusation that *PP* is "a sort of *Man in the Gray Flannel Suit* as it might have been revised by George Orwell"<sup>20</sup> (30) is both perplexing and fatuous: not only does Vonnegut's novel actually *precede* Sloan Wilson's by three years, but also, whereas Vonnegut is concerned with a *Gedankenexperiment* involving a post-industrial dystopia, Wilson writes about the struggles and moral vacuousness of the post-WWII prosperity refracted through the business world, if anything, more in the vein of Heller's *Something Happened* (1974); unlike Orwell,<sup>21</sup> neither novelist is concerned with socialist totalitarianism, because capitalist tyranny is (at least by their own protagonists) is, more often than otherwise, chosen and self-imposed. In a similar vein, for Samuels *SOT* is as unimaginative, "earnest and ineloquent" as "the contemporaneous plays of Tennessee Williams"; *GB* is "out of Dostoyevsky by Terry Southern"; Vonnegut offers "the stale fruits of received wisdom"; his talent is "bogus" (30), and finally he is "uninventive to the point of repetition" (31). These sweeping generalizations betray Samuels's ignorance: on the one hand, "the debased formulas of science fiction and comic books" (30) hardly apply to *MN* or *GB*, which are anything but flippant or formulaic; on the other hand, "random structure [which] facilitates digressions, which also

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<sup>20</sup> There are far better comparisons to be made in this regard. As the Russian literature scholar Donald M. Fiene notes, *PP* (which Vonnegut readily admits "ripping off from" *We* by way of *Brave New World*) "echoes [Dostoevsky's] *Notes from the Underground*" by way of *Zamiatin* (Fiene, "Dostoevsky" 137), for instance by virtue of the Grand Inquisitor/Benefactor/World Controller archetype (137-138) which recurs in novels such as *SOT* and *CC* and, if anything, brings Vonnegut closer to Russian authors rather than Western counterparts such as Orwell.

<sup>21</sup> Klinkowitz points out that "[p]erhaps a reason for the long critical neglect of Kurt Vonnegut is that his vision is superficially akin to that of Orwell, Huxley, and others who have written dolefully of the mechanical millennium to come. [However,] Vonnegut's material moves beyond the bounds of science fiction, the label used so long to restrain his recognition" ("Crimes" 83).

preclude the emotional satisfactions of climax, denouement, and uniformity of tone” (30) is nothing more than a statement of *taste* and, while its latter part could possibly apply to *SF* (which is still fairly coherent, even if it does play with and conflate Billy Pilgrim’s adventures in the future and past), the statement does not in any way fit with *PP* (which has only superficially intersecting plotlines), *CC* (whose clearly-organized chapter headings signal different plotlines in advance), or *GB* (whose chapters are strongly centered on individuals characters and locations). Ultimately, when Samuels reduces Vonnegut’s allusion and allegory to childish axioms, “the world is incoherent . . . machines are bad, but farming is good; rich people don’t deserve their wealth, which the poor could have if they know the right tricks; . . . war is bad for people, who’d do better to love each other” (30),<sup>22</sup> he demonstrates not only a profound lack of understanding of Vonnegut’s works, but also a profound *refusal* to understand them.

### **Paint it Black**

Although Samuels’s background as a novelist and biographer explains some of his professional rivalry with Vonnegut in the popular fiction arena, the two authors produced works that were nothing alike in form and content. It is, however, even more surprising to witness such an exacting (but inexact) polemic from Fiedler, an occasionally-controversial but experienced, widely-published, and respected critic of American literature, best known for his revolutionary critique of race and sexuality in “Come Back to the Raft Ag’in, Huck Honey!” (1948) which he later expanded into *Love and Death in the American Novel* (1960). It would be too easy to cite a

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<sup>22</sup> Festa provides quite an incisive rebuff for this complaint: “Judged solely on his early fiction, Vonnegut emerges as a somewhat traditional satirist. . . . The early satire is primarily concerned with the evils of technology and the follies of the American way of life, but, beginning with the second novel [*SOT*], Vonnegut broadens his field of attention to . . . the question of the meaning of life. Also, the satire in his work becomes less apparent” (134). More importantly, Vonnegut is not “an inferior writer because he gives the appearance of unconcern through the carelessness of his writing”; on the contrary, “Vonnegut, who once worked in public relations [for General Electric], is keenly aware of the need for good packaging” (140).

dozen critics who provide much better-formulated evidence for unmistakable coherence in Vonnegut's literary ideology and technique (and I will do so soon enough). It is, however, much more difficult and important to illuminate the blind spots in the two critics' reviews. The explanation I would like to propose is simple enough: both Fiedler and Samuels read Vonnegut's satire *literally*<sup>23</sup> because the tools necessary to operate his particular brand of *black humour* had not, at the time, yet been consistently formulated in the critical canon. As Conrad Festa had put so succinctly, "Vonnegut is a satirist, and . . . the satire in his work is dominant, central, and sustained. . . . However, reviewers and critics alike continue to treat the satire as if it were incidental to the work. Consequently, the satire is largely forgotten and certainly not allowed its full play" (133). Part of the issue was the difficulty of nailing down the taxonomy of the mode itself. As Patrick O'Neill writes in his excellent study, "The Comedy of Entropy," although "'black humour' is a phrase which nowadays crops up fairly frequently . . . there is no general agreement as to what exactly black humour is" (80). Nonetheless, O'Neill soon reveals that the term, even if difficult to pin down, does apply to certain categories: the "variously grotesque, gallows, macabre, sick, pornographic, scatological, cosmic, ironic, satirical, absurd, or any combination of these" (80). Moreover a single literary group (with few moving parts) dominates the genre employing these categories, beginning with Bruce Jay Friedman's 1965

mass-market paperback entitled, simply, *Black Humor*. The volume comprised a collection of thirteen heterogeneous pieces of fiction from writers as different as J. P. Donleavy, Edward Albee, Joseph Heller, Thomas Pynchon, John Barth,

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<sup>23</sup> Morse convincingly argues that Vonnegut's allegorical writing has such "dangerous" potential, that some critics insist on interpreting novels like *SF* literally (for instance, by arguing that Billy Pilgrim does not actually travel to Tralfamadore but has brain damage) to avoid the universal moral lessons of Vonnegut's works; such readings are often based not only on incorrect textual evidence but on wishful thinking on the part of critics (88-89).

Vladimir Nabokov, Bruce Jay Friedman, who was also the editor, and — a final odd bedfellow — Céline. (82)

Curiously, cause is momentarily conflated with effect when O'Neill notes that a catalogue of names very similar to Friedman's (and to the ones that our two critics rail against) already *exemplifies* the term's definition in the 1975 *New Columbia Encyclopedia*: Kubrick, Vonnegut, Pynchon, Barth, Heller, and Roth (80).

Here it is necessary to pause in order to clarify Friedman's reasons for including Louis-Ferdinand Céline<sup>24</sup> that O'Neill had missed: the controversial French writer who, like Ezra Pound and his involvement with Italian fascists or Vonnegut's character Howard W. Campbell Jr. and his interactions with the Nazis in *MN* and *SF*, had paradoxically not only aligned himself with fascists and anti-Semites in the late 1930s, but also laid the foundation for a style that would inspire a "lost generation" of writers, among them the German-American Vonnegut and the Jewish-American Heller, both modeling their writing on the archetype. In *Antiheroic Antinovel*, Stephen W. Potts notes that critics often compare *Catch-22* to Jaroslav Hašek's *The Good Soldier Švejk*<sup>25</sup> (1921-1923) because, in a formal sense, it is "a social-surrealist novel . . . a war novel . . . [a] satire in classical modes . . . Menippean<sup>26</sup> . . . and Juvenalian<sup>27</sup>" (11). However, Michael Korda helps qualify the comparison:

It had upset many people when Mailer wrote the first war novel [*The Naked and the Dead* (1948)] in which the troops swore the way they have always sworn in all

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<sup>24</sup> The pseudonym of Dr. Louis Ferdinand Auguste Destouches

<sup>25</sup> *Osudy dobrého vojáka Švejka za světové války*

<sup>26</sup> Festa clarifies this point: "[Northrop] Frye uses the term 'Menippean satire' generally; it should be, however, reserved for a particular kind of satire . . . a loosely plotted narrative in a mixture of forms . . . which does not strive for coherence and consistency in a conventional sense" (135); thus, "[i]t is possible now to see that even *Slaughterhouse-Five*, once considered the least satirical of Vonnegut's fiction, fits very comfortably within the category" (144).

<sup>27</sup> Morse argues that, particularly in *CC*, "Vonnegut . . . like Juvenal, satirizes the vanity of human wishes, but instead of Juvenal's laceration of human thick-wittedness, he quietly mourns its ubiquitous presence" (17).

armies since the beginning of warfare, but nobody in American publishing was prepared for a novel like *Catch-22* that made savage fun of war . . . It was all very well for that kind of thing to have been done in a Czech book like *The Good Soldier Schweik*, but it was unthinkable in this country. (qtd. in Daugherty 211-212)

Vonnegut was in a similar situation: “America was not ready for a novel such as *Slaughterhouse-Five* any earlier than when it finally did appear. Not in the 1940s, the 1950s, or even most of the 1960s” (Klinkowitz, *America* 41). Although it has become a critical convention to read Vonnegut (especially after 1973) as operating in the framework of the “comforting lie . . . [of] postmodern humanism” (Davis 33-34)<sup>28</sup> and Heller as primarily “work[ing] in the modernist mode of realism” (Potts 2),<sup>29</sup> both authors proceeded from the same origin. Heller was influenced by Dickens, Dostoevsky,<sup>30</sup> Faulkner, Nathanael West, Nabokov, and Céline, whose WWI-era hero “meets irony with irony, and the wartime world with obscenity, cowardice, and indifference to any issues but his own survival, and finally with madness” (3). In *Just One Catch*, Heller’s biographer Tracy Daugherty clarifies:

Joe had developed his narrative method—displacement, interruption—by reading Céline. The *subject* of his narrative he carried in his bones. What eventually made

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<sup>28</sup> For example, in *CC Bokononism* “is a religion that frankly admits its basis in lies” (Harris 132). In *Kurt Vonnegut’s Crusade*, Todd F. Davis explains that “[t]he modern subject defines the rest of the world as Other and posits meaning in this Other only in its relation to the self. . . . Therefore, while postmodern humanism denies an essential individuality to the subject, it does not disregard the value of human life. Rather, postmodern humanism exalts all life” (31).

<sup>29</sup> Klinkowitz argues that “[m]odern man, romantically placed at the center of the universe and responsible for his own salvation, cannot flee from evil, even into himself; for in himself he will find only evil’s deepest source” (“Crimes” 91).

<sup>30</sup> Heller himself admits that “there’s a very heavy sense of the tragic—particularly toward the end, where I almost consciously sought to re-create the feeling of Dostoevsky’s dark passages, and I have one or two allusions to chapters in Dostoevsky” (“Impolite Interview” 12). Similarly, Fiene demonstrates that, for both Dostoevsky and Vonnegut, “humor and satire are important elements in almost all of the latter’s writings” (“Dostoevsky” 132).

*Catch-22* a cult favorite among young readers in the 1960s and 1970s was Joe's demonstration that all of language was a Jewish joke. . . . The anachronisms—the McCarthyesque loyalty oaths, the computer glitches—felt absolutely right, though they were historically inaccurate.<sup>31</sup> (222)

As Heller himself reveals in “An Impolite Interview,” his “direct inspiration for the form and tone of *Catch-22*,” is *Journey to the End of the Night* (1932)<sup>32</sup> (11), the exact same modernist novel that Vonnegut admires and struggles with in *Palm Sunday*, despite the fact that his own work increasingly tends towards postmodernity:<sup>33</sup>

[Céline] discovered a higher and more awful order of literary truth by ignoring the crippled vocabularies of ladies and gentlemen and by using, instead, the more comprehensive language of shrewd and tormented guttersnipes. . . . By being so impolite, he demonstrated that perhaps half of all experience, the animal half, had been concealed by good manners. No honest writer or speaker will ever want to be polite again. (266-267)

Still, Vonnegut adds, Céline “would not like me” (265). Returning to Friedman's coterie, it becomes exceedingly clear that the recurrence of certain core members, namely Heller and

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<sup>31</sup> Although it is set during WWII, *C22* responds to the Vietnam War Era. According to Heller, “[i]n writing the book I was more concerned with producing a *novel* that would be as contemporary as possible. I don't mean contemporaneous with World War II it is contemporary with the period I was writing in” (“Impolite Interview” 8).

<sup>32</sup> *Voyage au bout de la nuit*

<sup>33</sup> In “Vonnegut's Formal and Moral Otherworldliness,” Glenn Meeter explains that, whereas “[i]n *Catch-22* the world of the Second War is captured in one microcosm, the United States Air Force. . . . in books like Vonnegut's . . . there is a different alignment of fantasy and reality. The two are portrayed side by side, as if both are equally fantastic and equally real—Christianity and Bokonomism, Tralfamadore and Dresden, [Tralfamadoreans and Germans (Dano 276; Merrill and Scholl 138), and] the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Beatrice Rumfoord Galactic Cookbook*” (Meeter 205-206). In “Illusion and Absurdity,” Charles B. Harris claims that Vonnegut goes against the grain of writing about reality of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century “modern novel” and “rejects all formulations of reality, whether they be religious, philosophical, scientific, or literary” (140). Perhaps not coincidentally, as Klinkowitz points out, “according to rumour,” *SF* did not earn the National Book Award it was nominated for primarily because “the award committee was looking for realism” (“Canary” 14).

Vonnegut, adumbrates a consistent literary presence, notwithstanding the fact that a madness ruled its method. In 1977, when Heller named Donleavy, Kerouac, Kesey, Pynchon and Vonnegut as influences on his own work, he claimed that “[w]hatever forces were at work shaping a trend in art were affecting not just me, but all of us” (qtd. in Daugherty 240). While Friedman too struggles to define these forces precisely, he identifies “a feeling of insecurity . . . a ‘fading line between fantasy and reality,’ a sense of ‘isolation and loneliness’ and above all the element of social satire in a world gone mad” (82); thus O’Neill concludes, it is satire that makes black humour a paradoxically “coherent literary form” (92), because it is disorder that grows steadily despite attempts to organize meaning.

### **Against the Dying of the Light**

The disorder in Heller’s and Vonnegut’s writing is not directed at random injustices of the universe. As Sidney Offit, Vonnegut’s longtime editor notes, “Walter James Miller, a teacher, poet, and friend, as well as an admirer of Kurt’s . . . once told me there were two transcendent novels of the twentieth century: *Catch-22* by Joseph Heller and Kurt’s *Slaughterhouse-Five*. Both authors use humor to dramatize how ludicrous war is” (“On Vonnegut” 4) and they shared not only a coherent approach to writing,<sup>34</sup> but also a common ideology, especially after the two writers became friends in 1968 (Heller and Vonnegut n. pag.). In *From Here to Absurdity*, Stephen W. Potts argues that *Catch-22*

owed much of its success to its discovery by a generation angry about the escalating war in Vietnam and disillusioned in general with the military, government bureaucracy, capitalism, and the dissonance between the preachment

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<sup>34</sup> Festa notes that “Vonnegut recognizes the ineffectiveness of the satirist who is not also a skillful artist; in fact, Kilgore Trout is precisely the ineffective satirist. Trout is a voice crying in the wilderness . . . [simply because] ‘he’s a lousy writer’” (140).

and the practice of American ideals. *Catch-22* and the Sixties needed each other.

It was a book whose time had come. (4)

In *Kurt Vonnegut's America*, Klinkowitz expresses a similar sentiment: "The 1960s, of course, were anything but stable. 'Family values' would become a politically loaded term, while patriotism, for some, would lose its civic quality and take on prowar shadings" (40). In "The Canary in a Cathouse," he writes that, in keeping with Vonnegut's notion of artist-as-early-warning-system (Rait, "Kanareika" n. pag.), "'Poo-tee-weet,' the cry of a canary in a cathouse, or in a coal mine, or in a slaughterhouse, [paradoxically] becomes clear to the public only on the last page of his . . . novel [*SF*]" (10), because war, from which both authors begin their major works, is only *one* recognizable symptom of an intolerable state of affairs compounded by stupidity, meanness, and self-interest; injustice (Potts, *Absurdity* 8-9) and its circularity (16-17); and "the frustration of the individual up against powerful and faceless" organizations, a condition to which Heller gave its very own term (*Antinovel* 8) and for which both authors want their readers to become responsible. The reviews, interviews, critical articles, and books that began to pour in after a spike of popular and critical interest following the publication of Vonnegut's *BC* in 1973 (and, to a lesser extent, after the release of the film version of *C22* in 1970 and Heller's *SH* in 1974) are attuned to this: In "The Later Vonnegut," Peter J. Reed points out diplomatically that he is "not certain that Vonnegut ever fit quite so comfortably into the box—or drawer—that Fiedler put him in" (152); however, Reed unmistakably identifies Vonnegut's method as the use of "a 'modest proposal' to expose the nature of the malady which needs cure" (179). Festa argues that the mode is not of a Jeremiad but rather a criticism of "human interaction, human relationships: the differences between how we say we should act toward each other and the way we do act, the difference between our ideals and our performance. . . . It is . . . we who give each



other meaning” (142-143). Festa draws a parallel between the tenth-century Old English poem *Deor’s Lament* and its refrain “And this, too, shall pass” and Vonnegut’s

repetition [of “So it goes”] and its use to explain every death . . . [that] finally creates in us a rising fury at its utter banality and meaninglessness. . . . it explains nothing, and in fact obscures the difference between the death of a bottle of champagne and the death of Martin Luther King[, Jr.]. . . . The effect is what [Robert] Scholes describes as “exercising our consciences.” (144-145)

In “Illusion and Absurdity,” Charles B. Harris explains that *SF* “is a book about death, an extension of the statement Vonnegut quotes from Celine: ‘The truth is death’ . . . Every[ ]time someone dies in *Slaughterhouse-Five* Vonnegut writes, ‘So it goes.’ The phrase occurs over one-hundred times in a one-hundred-eighty-six page novel” (137). In *The Anti-Hero in the American Novel: From Joseph Heller to Kurt Vonnegut*, David Simmons states that “the 1960s novel is often a strongly humanist and politically engaged form” (1), echoing Vonnegut’s own assertion that writers “should be—and biologically have to be—agents of change” (“Playboy Interview” 237). Finally, as Patricia Waugh points out in *Metafiction*, “if novels cannot *prevent* disasters like Dresden, they can at least change people’s attitudes to them . . . [else] the function of the novel will, indeed, become one of providing ‘touches of colour in rooms with all-white walls’ or of describing ‘blow-jobs artistically’” (129-130). The tide had turned, and something had to give.

At long last, the Black Humorists came into their own, were being talked and written about in the late 1980s and early 1990s. It became necessary to abandon “the notion . . . of comic futility” (Merrill and Scholl 142) previously seen in their writing; it became possible to refute the “depressingly popular” view of cynicism, nihilism, or “resigned acceptance” of injustice by contrasting the authors’ works, their statements, and reactions to them (142); “sympathy” was no

longer being confused or conflated with “sentimentality” (Harris 135). There was just one catch: most of Vonnegut’s novels prior to 1969 could be conceptualized in a single phrase: *PP*—the dystopia of automated life; *SOT*—the illusion of free will; *MN*—“We are who we pretend to be” (Vonnegut 535); *CC*—the illusion of self-deception. However, with *SF* it became much more difficult to say what the novel is *about*: ostensibly, the subject is war (specifically, the fire-bombing of Dresden) and the theme is memory, which Vonnegut uses to speak for his contemporaries (Scholes, “Fabulation” 37; *Fabulation* 203); however, the novel also deals with everything from time and space, to irrationality and greed, and (often folding back into itself) to irony and fate. When it comes to *BC*, the question of meaning becomes *impossible* to answer. Conceived as a reaction to being criticized and praised “for the wrong reasons” (Berryman 164), the novel allowed Vonnegut “to counter . . . false impressions by increasing . . . self-parody” of himself as a mock-guru figure (165). Although the book is the novelist’s “fiftieth-birthday present to myself” (*BCe* 503) and an attempt “to clear my head of all the junk in there” (504), it soon becomes more than a mere compendium of observation, a superimposition, a funhouse mirror image that *is* America, the America together with which Vonnegut suffers a cultural and moral loss (Vonnegut, “Playboy Interview” 284; Waugh 8) that he is desperate to redeem and restore. In the good reviews of the book (and bad<sup>35</sup>), the critics agree on one thing: the theme that consistently runs through most of Vonnegut’s works is fate. However, in “Vonnegut’s *Breakfast of Champions*,” Robert Merrill essentially responds to Fiedler’s grievances by asserting that “to speak of *Breakfast of Champions* as ‘play’ suggests an almost absolute misunderstanding of

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<sup>35</sup> Solely for the sake of completeness, it is worth mentioning Peter S. Prescott’s 1973 review of *BC* in *Newsweek*. However, because it says nothing that Fiedler had not already said in 1971, and because Prescott’s summary of the novel amounts to a brief, disjointed diatribe (which concludes that the novel is “[p]retentious, hypocritical manure. From time to time, it’s nice to have a book you can hate” [40]), I will not dignify it with a reaction.

Vonnegut's intentions"; the novel "can only be understood as . . . [being] *about* 'facile fatalism'" (153); in fact, Merrill reminds us that, by the end of *BC*, the reformed, hopeful Vonnegut-character gives us the "message . . . that to become . . . [better] we must resist the seductions of fatalism" (161). Reed notes that in *BC* "the statements are terse, the rhythms brusque, the sentences short and staccato in the manner of the later abrupt style" ("Later" 155). The purpose of this, Waugh explains, is that

[a]ttempts at precise linguistic description continually break down. Crude diagrams replace language in order to express the poverty of the 'culture' which is available through representations of 'assholes', 'underpants' and 'beefburgers.' The strategy of this novel is to invert the science-fiction convention . . . Here, contemporary American society *is* the 'alien world'. Vonnegut defamiliarizes the world that his readers take for granted . . . reveal[ing his] . . . own despairing recognition of the sheer impossibility of providing a critique of commonly accepted cultural forms of representation, from *within* those very modes of representation.<sup>36</sup> (8)

Thus, in a world where "roadside attractions and toxic chemical spills are more vibrant than any meaningful work" (Tally 174), the reader must not merely struggle to stay alive (Potts, *Absurdity* 16) but also remain moral (18), must not only recuperate the possibility of "community in that fragmented world" (Morse 16) but also regain "a sense of purpose and belonging" (Tally 175), must not only resist "the trap of a bureaucra[t]ized society" but also reform it (Harris 134). Above all, the care that both Vonnegut and Heller put into assigning this responsibility to their

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<sup>36</sup> This assertion is similar to Tally's argument that "in the postmodern there is an even more alarming realisation: there may not be any underlying referent. That is, not only can you not go home again, but there was never a home to begin with" (167).

readers “flies in the face of those who argue that postmodernity is at best vacuous and amoral and at worst immoral” (Davis 34); their methods are methodical and pointed, their morality distinct.

At this juncture, it is necessary to pre-emptively counter the obvious objection: What makes *this* type of satire any different from, say, that of the nineteenth century (or earlier)? Indeed, already in *Following the Equator* (1897), Mark Twain<sup>37</sup> reminds us that “[E]verything human is pathetic. The secret source of Humor itself is not joy but sorrow. There is no humor in heaven” (71). We find similar sentiments in Samuel Johnson<sup>38</sup> and Jonathan Swift.<sup>39</sup> I cut the Gordian Knot thus: if formal evaluation can retroactively assign labels such as *modernist* or *postmodern* depending on criteria of structure and technique to *Don Quixote* (1605/1615), *Tristram Shandy* (1759), *Naked Lunch* (1959) and *Pale Fire* (1962) alike, then it follows that black humour too is not necessarily a unique literary form tethered to a distinct historical period, but rather a common one that recurs naturally in reaction to periodic social and political phenomena. Commenting on Friedman’s 1965 collection, Vonnegut reminds us of this fact:

Freud had already written about gallows humor, which is middle-European humor. It’s people laughing in the middle of political helplessness. Gallows

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<sup>37</sup> Offit points out in an interview that “Mark Twain was his [Vonnegut’s] literary idol” (5), and Morse argues that “[i]n American literature, the satirical Mark Twain comes closest to being Vonnegut’s literary foster father. . . . Extensive echoes and references to Twain and especially to Huckleberry Finn . . . occur within many of Vonnegut’s novels” (19).

<sup>38</sup> Scholes locates a fascinating parallel between “*Rasselas* . . . a rather solemn ancestor of *Cat’s Cradle*, [that] picked up on just this aspect of the vanity of human wishes in one of his finest works—an *Idler* paper so black and humorous that Johnson later suppressed it. In this essay Johnson presented a dialogue between a mother vulture and her children, in which the wise old bird, looking down at a scene of human carnage from a recent European battle, tells her young that men do this at regular intervals as part of a divine plan which has shaped the best of all possible worlds—for vultures” (“Black Humor” 77).

<sup>39</sup> In *Fabulation*, Scholes argues that “it is surely better to think of Voltaire and Swift when reading Vonnegut and Barth than to think of Hemingway and Fitzgerald” (144); the times have changed, but the subject matter has not: “[p]rogress, that favorite prey of satirists from Swift and Voltaire onward, means that some people get free furniture and some get the plague. Some get Biarritz and some get Auschwitz. Some get cured of cancer by radiation; others get radiation sickness” (146).

humor had to do with people in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. There were Jews, Serbs, Croats – all these small groups jammed together into a very unlikely sort of empire. And dreadful things happened to them. They were powerless, helpless people and so they made jokes. It was all they could do in the face of frustration. The gallows humor that Freud identifies is what we regard as Jewish humor here: It's humor about weak, intelligent people in hopeless situations. And I have customarily written about powerless people who felt there wasn't much they could do about their situations. ("Playboy" 258-259)

Vonnegut's explanation is more convincing than O'Neill's overly complex metaphor which contrasts garden-variety humour with its darker counterpart, "the humour of lost norms, lost confidence . . . of disorientation. Physicists express the tendency of closed systems to move from a state of order into one of total disorder in terms of the system's entropy: black humour, to coin a phrase, is the comedy of entropy" (89). One way or another, the literary form is now universal, particularly in its five basic modes: satire, irony, grotesquery, absurdity, and parody (91), the genre no longer "restricted to a particular body of fiction produced in North America in the 1960s" (147). O'Neill proceeds to add the names of Márquez, Cortázar, Grass, Bernhard, Calvino, Queneau, and Beckett to the list,<sup>40</sup> so that not only the authors of *Catch-22*, *A Clockwork Orange*, or *CC* (99) but also authors from Ireland, France, Italy, Germany, Austria, Colombia, and Argentina demonstrate the ability to create a struggle through "existential labyrinth[s] . . . circularity and stasis . . . entropy . . . waste land[s] . . . comic dystopia[s] . . . [and] linguistic 'baffle[s]' deliberately obstructing the reader" (99). Notably absent from O'Neill's list are Eastern European authors (Nabokov notwithstanding) such as Stanisław

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<sup>40</sup> André Breton (who claims to have invented the term in 1939) provides an even broader selection of forty-five authors (O'Neill 149).

Witkiewicz, Daniil Kharms, Nikolai Erdman, Eugène Ionesco, Václav Havel, and Sławomir Mrożek who appear quite capable of crafting “derisive humour” (92) wielded by “the wily underdog” (93), or of examining “the perceived autonomy of the individual” (93) using “self-aware[ ] . . . entropic humour” (94-95) that first actualizes itself as parodic “metahumour” (96)<sup>41</sup> and finally reorganizes and reorients “[t]he dissonance and schizophrenia” of the former (96) to, simply put, allow one “to laugh rather than despair” (100). Nonetheless, this classification did not prevent the seventy-year-old Rita Rait-Kovaleva from proceeding to translate “[m]ost of Vonnegut’s works . . . in Soviet editions,” making the writer “the most popular and respected contemporary American author in the Soviet Union” (Fiene, “Dostoevsky” 129). According to Lauren G. Leighton, “Rita Ra[i]t’s translations of Salinger’s *Catcher in the Rye* and four novels by Vonnegut [*SF*, *CC*, *BC*, and *GB*] were literary sensations of the 1960s and 1970s” (*Two Worlds* 10); “[i]ndeed,” Leighton adds, “his appeal to Russians is not unlike the cult of Vonnegut in America” (“Kovaleva’s Vonnegut” 412). However, while Donald Fiene (rather optimistically) maintains that “Soviet criticism of . . . [Vonnegut’s] work . . . has been uniformly positive” (131) (after all, *official* and *popular* acceptance are not quite the same thing), this hardly explains what *precisely* happened to the outlines of the American authors’ handling of black humour, or why Heller’s and Vonnegut’s novels fared so differently on the other side of the Iron Curtain, in another tongue.

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<sup>41</sup> From a scholarly standpoint, the formal definition of the term continues to be debated: Robert Scholes categorizes this phenomenon as satire by way of metafiction proper (O’Neill 97). Simmons positions “the anti-heroic as an evolving form” in the 1960s, that stands opposite to “‘Metafiction’ . . . ‘Surfiction’ . . . and ‘black humor’ (a new mode of writing typified by formal innovation and a fusion of comedy and heavy irony)” (1). Festa argues that Vonnegut not only transcends but also creates the framework for a totally-new, hybrid genre (136).

## Enemy of My Enemy

The common Soviet practice of publishing translations from languages from outside of the Eastern Bloc often involved a test serialization in a periodical, which (if the text did not arouse strong objections or criticism<sup>42</sup>) then led to publication of the work in book form (Choldin, “Censorship” 338). At first glance, the 1961 source text (ST) of *C22* contains 42 chapters, and so does the 1967 translation by Mark Vilenskii and V. Titov (V/T), but here the general similarities between the two works end. However, before I tackle the Soviet reactions to the novel and the issues of the translation itself, it is worth

**Figure 1** Cover of *Ulovka-22* by G. A. Sotskov. Photograph. (Moscow: Voenizdat, 1967.)

mentioning a number of essential facts which until now

have remained overlooked or ignored in the current scholarship.<sup>43</sup> The 1967 “condensed”<sup>44</sup>

translation (see Figure 1) is, very unusually, the basis for a *later* periodical version serialized in

five issues of *Ural*<sup>45</sup> in the same year, containing only 34 chapters (though no mention is made of

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<sup>42</sup> Periodical publication could also be an outlet for “one-off” daring publication that *expected* repercussions. As Mikhail Agursky argues, “what is permissible for the Soviet daily press, even the central press, is not permissible for books” (qtd. in Friedberg et al., “Censorship” 57).

<sup>43</sup> For instance (aside from a host of issues of research and scholarship), Timko’s research takes the 1967 translation to be the single, definitive version before the novel’s retranslation in 1988.

<sup>44</sup> Maurice Friedberg incorrectly describes “the notation on the title page that this was an abridged version of the novel” (*Euphoria* 41), whereas in actuality the note had been placed much more inconspicuously, on the copyright page.

<sup>45</sup> The novel was signed into print on March 3; the issue of *Ural* with the first part of the serialized version was signed into print on April 4. The location of *Ural*’s offices in Sverdlovsk (now Yekaterinburg), 1,750 km away from Moscow, is not a coincidence. The boundaries of the permissible could usually be tested more easily on the Soviet peripheries. As Konstantin Bogomolov explains, “[b]eing a new provincial journal with a rather modest print run for that time, *Ural* was not at all a primeval corner of Soviet journal literature” («Будучи молодым провинциальным журналом с довольно скромным на ту пору тиражом, «Урал» вовсе не был дремучим углом советской журнальной литературы») (Bogomolov n. pag.).

any abridgment). In turn, the 1967 novel version follows the January 9, 1965 publication of a single chapter from the novel in the humour magazine *Krokodil*, chapter 35, titled “Milo the Militant” in the ST (406) and “Milo Tears into Battle”<sup>46</sup> in the target text (TT); notably, Vilenskii’s name is absent from the credit for the “condensed translation,”<sup>47</sup> but it appears on the magazine’s editorial board, on the copyright page. Finally, this version follows the November 15, 1964 publication of yet another single chapter from the novel in the newspaper *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, this time chapter 24, simply titled “Milo” in the ST (278) but renamed to “President of the Firm ‘M and M’”<sup>48</sup> in the TT; Vilenskii’s name is still nowhere to be found. This, in fact, is the first time Heller had ever appeared in print in the U.S.S.R. The reason for publishing two chapters about a secondary character in the novel are patently transparent: in *C22*, Milo Minderbinder, the “businessman in uniform”<sup>49</sup> becomes the antithesis to John Yossarian, the protagonist, and Milo’s heartless (albeit humorous) commercial ventures and machinations were all too obviously exploited as run-of-the-mill anti-American fodder with the secondary goal of promoting the upcoming release of the full version of the book from Voenizdat, the Military Publishing House of the Ministry of Defense of the U.S.S.R.<sup>50</sup> (this fact was advertised near the end of the brief introductions to both excerpted chapters). We can draw some additional interesting preliminary conclusions by comparing the periodical versions: for one thing, Titov seems to have procured a copy of the ST soon after its release in the U.S. and had already begun working on his translation sometime between 1961 and 1964; we can also deduce that Vilenskii joined him only between 1965 and 1967, when the translation of the bulk of the novel must have

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<sup>46</sup> «Милоу рвётся в бой» (10)

<sup>47</sup> «Сокращённый перевод»

<sup>48</sup> «Президент фирмы „М и М”» (3)

<sup>49</sup> «бизнесмен в мундире» (*C22SR* 3)

<sup>50</sup> Военное издательство Министерства обороны СССР



already been complete (not only is chapter 35 near the end of the novel, but the *Ural* version is also generously supplied by detailed black-and-white illustrations directly related to the plot, which means that the text was most likely available for censorial and editorial review between 1965 and 1966, if not earlier). However, the most striking fact, that (to my knowledge) has never been addressed anywhere to date, is that *the content of the periodical versions of the novel* (especially of the one printed in Ural) *are significantly different from the officially-sanctioned novel version*.

While I will tackle the specific problems and questions that arise from these textual discrepancies in later chapters, it now becomes possible to place in context and examine the peritexts and epitexts<sup>51</sup> that accompanied the publication of the translations. Of particular interest is a pair of articles: the foreword<sup>52</sup> to the novel version of the translation of *C22* written by the acclaimed Soviet literary critic and children's literature author and translator Sergei Mikhalkov and a 1968 essay on the novel titled "The Little Man and the Insane World"<sup>53</sup> published in the "thick journal"<sup>54</sup> *Inostrannaia literatura* by the prolific literary critic, twentieth-century Americanist, and translator Aleksei Zverev (Chuprinin n. pag.) whom Fiene calls "[t]he only Russian critic who seems to me to be truly sensitive to Vonnegut's real point of view" (174). The reason for the involvement of pre-eminent men of letters first needs to be clarified: much like the preliminary test serialization of a work in translation, the inclusion of a critical apparatus by a

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<sup>51</sup> Over the past two decades, Gérard Genette's terminology has come to be used incorrectly with *paratext* employed as an umbrella term for *everything outside the text proper*. However, in keeping with Genette's original definition of "*paratext* = *peritext* + *epitext*" (264), I distinguish between *peritexts*, the matter that surrounds the given text (prefaces, footnotes, and so on); *epitexts*, the documents that respond to the text (reviews, commentaries, and so on); and *paratexts*, the combination of the two.

<sup>52</sup> The essay is an expanded version of the foreword to the first part of the serialized version in *Ural* (92-94).

<sup>53</sup> «Маленький человек и безумный мир»

<sup>54</sup> «Толстый журнал» This is a popular Russian term for *literary journal* (Lottman 104).

professional authority (informally nicknamed the *parovoz*<sup>55</sup> [steam locomotive] in the Soviet translation and publishing industries, for its ability to “pull” the text through various censorial and editorial apparatuses) ensured an additional safeguard for the work’s publication because of the expectation of alignment of the foreign author with the communist project in general and the ideology *du jour* in specific which was often done by embellishing actual literary criticism with everything from polemics on current affairs to formulaic references to the writings of Lenin, Marx, Engels, or the general secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (especially if an opportune quotation or two on the subject of discussion could be found) (Voslensky 28-29; Baer et al. 97; Markish n. pag.). In tandem, all of these requirements lent an aura of social and political legitimacy to the work in question. Unfortunately for the post-Soviet scholar, this *status quo* requires one to sort the wheat from the chaff with the utmost care. Thus, on the one hand, Mikhalkov demonstrates his professional familiarity with Western criticism when he opens the essay by stating that “[t]he novel is interesting, furiously angry and unusual in construction and tonality. In America this tonality is called ‘black humour’”;<sup>56</sup> however, on the very same page he pays lip service to the regime by contrasting the reception of the book in the “English communist newspaper *Daily Worker*”<sup>57</sup> and the “egregiously reactionary press”<sup>58</sup> represented by the *American National Observer*.<sup>59</sup> (One might also wonder what level of *dopusk* [access] to Soviet libraries Mikhalkov received in order to write the foreword, because the average Soviet citizen would be barred from reading such publications, or *any* foreign publications, communist or not.)

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<sup>55</sup> I am grateful to Alexandra Borisenko for introducing this obscure jargon term to me (Skype interview. 18 Jul. 2014.)

<sup>56</sup> «Роман интересный, яростно злой и необычный по построению и тональности. В Америке эту тональность называют „черным юмором”» (5).

<sup>57</sup> «английской коммунистической газете „Дейли уоркер”» (5) The newspaper operated under that name from 1930 until 1966 when it was renamed to *Morning Star*.

<sup>58</sup> «махрово реакционная печать» (5)

<sup>59</sup> The newspaper, as Zverev correctly notes (5), was a subsidiary of the *Wall Street Journal* and operated from 1962 until 1972.

Here, a sense of cognitive dissonance comes into play: Mikhalkov clearly knows what “black humour” *actually* means, but he chooses to play the fool and presents its “blackness” at face value by painting Heller as the enemy of his enemy:

this is a work of a great revelatory power; it deeply exposes the entire falsity, rot, and depravity of the so-called “free world,” the notorious “American democracy.” . . . behind the figures of the pilots and the silhouettes of the bombardiers clearly visible are the contours of the capitalist system itself, of a society obsessed with profit.<sup>60</sup>

The thesis of the chapters about Milo published in *SR* and *Krok* becomes even more obvious when Mikhalkov harps on the character (who would rather do business with the Nazis because they pay better), while the dark joke of Milo paying the Germans to bomb his own camp evaporates when the article turns to a deadpan discussion of the “shameful collaboration of the American monopolies with the enemy”<sup>61</sup>: General-Electric-owned Opel making Nazi tanks, Du Pont getting in bed with IG Farben, and Allen Dulles serving as the head of the Rockefeller-Schroeder bank (6). The problem, of course, is not that the critic is wrong (on the contrary, Mikhalkov’s facts are well researched); it is that Heller, who served in WWII,<sup>62</sup> “fought the war with enthusiasm” (qtd. in Potts, *Antinovel* 13), was honourably discharged (Daugherty 100-101) after flying sixty<sup>63</sup> combat missions (93; Heller, “*I Am*” 318) and wrote that “[v]irtually none of

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<sup>60</sup> «Это произведение большой разоблачительной силы, глубоко вскрывающее всю фальшь, гниль, и порочность так называемого „свободного мира”, пресловутой „американской демократии”. . . . за фигурами лётчиков и силуэтами бомбардировщиков ясно просматриваются уродливые контуры самой капиталистической системы, общества, помешанного на наживе» (5).

<sup>61</sup> «позорного сотрудничества американских монополий с противником» (6)

<sup>62</sup> In “The U.S. in the U.S.S.R.,” Friedberg notes that “[i]nterestingly, most of the Soviet critics’ allegations of America’s aggressiveness and militarism appear in commentaries on books by American authors with World War II settings, that is, books which describe America’s armed forces, fighting—as allies of the Soviet Union—a common Fascist enemy, a fact nowhere acknowledged yet one that many a Soviet reader must notice” (533).

<sup>63</sup> Short of the required seventy missions (Daugherty 100-101)

the attitudes in the book . . . coincided with my experiences as a bombardier in World War II” (Heller, “Reeling In” 314). Heller was not attempting to impeach *merely* American character flaws but *human* character flaws of which the former are a subset. It is precisely *because* of this experience that “Heller’s satire condemns conspicuous patriotism as empty rhetoric, a stance which destabilizes the validity of both its practitioners and its message” (Maus 261). Leighton is justified for calling Mikhalkov “a Writer’s Union apparatchik well known for his insistence on straightforward reproductions of a heroic, positive reality” (*Two Worlds* 31), because for Mikhalkov psychological shock and combat fatigue are mere aspects of weak character, as are the limits on combat missions before discharge: “Such luxury,” he writes, “could be allowed to itself only by a country that had not been tried by the horrors of Hitler’s occupation . . . For Soviet pilots there was a different mandatory norm—to fly until a total liberation of one’s native land from the fascist locusts.”<sup>64</sup> The conflation of truth and rhetoric in the article flattens Heller’s satire and gives his novel a partisan, polemic flavour. Mikhalkov is astute enough to detect that the novel, despite its WWII setting, is really concerned with current events; however, even here he spins his rhetoric to Soviet benefit, so that the novel becomes not only a “bright parody on McCarthyism . . . [and] ‘witch hunts,’”<sup>65</sup> but also an indictment of “American aggressors . . . in the criminal and dirty war against the Vietnamese people.”<sup>66</sup> Mikhalkov is at his most disingenuous when he writes that, “[f]ollowing the contemporary American fashion, Heller has richly supplied the novel with eroticism—without this mandatory ‘dooty’<sup>67</sup> bourgeois publishers,

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<sup>64</sup> «Такую роскошь могла позволить себе страна, не испытывавшая ужасов гитлеровской оккупации . . . Для советских пилотов существовала другая обязательная норма — летать до полного освобождения родной земли от фашисткой саранчи» (10).

<sup>65</sup> «яркую пародию на маккартизм . . . „охотой за ведьмами”» (7)

<sup>66</sup> «американских агрессоров . . . в преступной и грязной войне против вьетнамского народа» (8)

<sup>67</sup> Here, Mikhalkov plays on the consonance between *poshlina* and *poshlost*, the Russian words for *duty* (tariff) and *vulgarity*.

apparently, do not accept manuscripts.”<sup>68</sup> Needless to say, because he cannot keep talking out of the side of his mouth forever, Mikhalkov eventually paints himself into a corner when, on the one hand, “Heller makes Yossarian the mouthpiece of his ideas, in many ways correct and honest. Excellent is the inner monologue of Yossarian in the 39th chapter,”<sup>69</sup> but, on the other hand, “despite these spots of light, Yossarian remains for us, on the whole, an undoubtedly negative character”<sup>70</sup>; ultimately, because *someone* has to be an ideologically-admirable protagonist (a lack of one may throw into question the entire enterprise of carefully preparing the novel for publication), the positive hero turns out to be “the scathing, merciless *laughter* of Joseph Heller”<sup>71</sup> (emphasis added).

Because Zverev is not compelled to cater to the ideological program of Voenizdat, his reaction to the novel in *IL* is very different, and the article, much better informed (and significantly better written) touches on a very broad spectrum of writers and canons; however, Zverev’s analysis is carefully concealed behind a thicket of cautious doublespeak. For instance, he opens with an admirable acknowledgement of the value of intertextuality, where Jan Otčenášek recreates *Romeo and Juliet* in Nazi-occupied Prague<sup>72</sup> (180). However, Zverev’s praise of Camus’s *The Flies*<sup>73</sup> as a reworking of *Electra* or of Tennessee Williams appropriating classical myth for *Orpheus Descending* become nothing more than rhetorical “hooks” that subsequently allow Zverev to berate intolerance, repression and, finally, fascism (180). Only after name-checking cultural figures such as Schiller, Twain, Chaplin, and Lewis, Zverev at long

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<sup>68</sup> «Следуя современной американской моде, Хеллер обильно уснастил роман эротикой — без этой обязательной „пошлости“ буржуазные издательства, очевидно, рукописей не принимают» (9).

<sup>69</sup> «Хеллер делает Йоссариана рупором своих идей, во многом правильных и честных. Превосходен внутренний монолог Йоссариана в 39-й главе» (11).

<sup>70</sup> «несмотря на эти просветы, Йоссариан остаётся для нас в целом персонажем, бесспорно, отрицательным» (11)

<sup>71</sup> «уничтожающий, беспощадный смех Джозефа Хеллера» (12)

<sup>72</sup> In *Romeo, Julie a tma* (*Romeo, Juliet and Darkness*) (1958)

<sup>73</sup> *Les mouches* (1943)

last arrives at the subject of his discussion, the canonical figure of the “little man” (180).

Although, like Mikhalkov, he mentions the Cold War, McCarthyite witch hunts, race riots, and the Vietnam War, Zverev does so *en passant* and proceeds to identify a coherent canon in the works of American authors such as O’Connor, Barthelme, and Donleavy (181). Zverev shows a tremendous familiarity with specific episodes from these authors’ texts, and soon adds Heller (182), Günter Grass, and Camilo José Cela into the mix in order to demonstrate that these authors’ ideologies are a manifestation of Western thought in the U.S., F.R.G., and Spain (183). The list that Zverev produces is curiously reminiscent of those provided by Fiedler and Samuels and clarified by O’Neill, but Zverev refines his strategy further by linking the literary figure of the “indifferent ‘little man’”<sup>74</sup> with the “special literature of the hopeless, ‘black’ humour, sometimes appearing to verge on nihilism.”<sup>75</sup> Zverev is obviously much less polemical than Mikhalkov; however his evaluative position is clear when, on the one hand he praises these “few gifted writers,”<sup>76</sup> but, on the other hand, describes their output as “[c]osmic pessimism and universal humour negating any manifestation of official life.”<sup>77</sup> O’Connor, in Zverev’s view, is the least nihilist of the group (183), and, while Donleavy is described as a literary instigator in the article (185), Zverev begins to mince words and accuses the latter of an isolation (or solipsism) he calls *chamberness*<sup>78</sup> as well as self-censorship betrayed by a lack of “artistic validity of his main idea”<sup>79</sup>; if this turn seems deliberately confusing (if not odd), it is because here Zverev attempts a complex waltz around his editor’s pencil while explicating the notion that

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<sup>74</sup> «индифферентному маленькому человеку» (182)

<sup>75</sup> «особая литература безнадёжного, подчас оказывающегося на грани нигилизма „чёрного” юмора» (182)

<sup>76</sup> «несколько одарённых писателей» (182)

<sup>77</sup> «Космический пессимизм и универсальный, отрицающий любое проявление официальной жизни юмор» (182)

<sup>78</sup> «камерность» (186)

<sup>79</sup> «художественная обоснованность основной его мысли» (186)

Donleavy does not think the way he (according to socialist doctrine) *ought to think*—after all, his heroes’ fate would have a very different end in real life (187). Zverev leaves Heller and C22 for last, and what is immediately striking is not that that he links Heller to Twain (187) but that, unlike Mikhalkov, *Zverev had read the novel in English*. We know this because instead of *Ulovka-22 (Trick-22)*, he calls the novel *Punkt-22*<sup>80</sup> (187 et passim); instead of *Iossarian* he calls the protagonist *Esar’ian*<sup>81</sup>; most tellingly, when Zverev refers to the same famous “What a lousy earth!” soliloquy (Heller 452) performed by Yossarian in chapter 39 that Mikhalkov so admires, *Zverev produces his own translation* (188). Although we do know that in 1972 Zverev (together with Nikolai Anastas’ev) will publish an article in *Novyi mir* that will criticize V/T’s translation, the fact that Zverev labours to produce his own reinterpretation of the ST<sup>82</sup> reveals that the critic is responding to the ST as an *unmediated* work in a heavily-mediated Soviet context. Here, on the last two pages of his article, after fulfilling his lip service quota, it is as if Zverev suddenly forgets whom he is supposed to level criticism at and the substance made of formulaic anti-American claptrap and reasoned literary analysis suddenly defeats entropy and unmixes itself for a brief, beautiful moment. Here, Zverev repeats his earlier refrain, but in a different key: although “Heller’s humour is truly limitless: [and] his world . . . is this kingdom of ‘universal stupidity’ and cosmic clutter of nonsense,”<sup>83</sup> Zverev identifies the fine method in the author’s madness by acknowledging that “the tragicomedy of every situation of *Punkt-22* is really justified and artistically necessary.”<sup>84</sup> True enough, Yossarian is still a coward and “little man” (188) (and he is indeed so in the ST), but Zverev dares to avoid attaching evaluative, negative

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<sup>80</sup> The word, borrowed from German, can signify *paragraph, clause, or article*.

<sup>81</sup> «Есарьян» (188 et passim) The spelling is attuned to the protagonist’s Armenian roots.

<sup>82</sup> Timko disregards the fact that Zverev provides an alternative translation (165).

<sup>83</sup> «Юмор у Хеллера поистине безграничен: его мир — это царство “всеобщей глупости” и космические нагромождения бессмыслицы» (187).

<sup>84</sup> «трагикомизм каждой ситуации „Пункта 22” действительно обоснован и художественно необходим» (187)

comments to this notion. Instead, in a circuitously roundabout way, he masterfully plays Devil's advocate when he asks rhetorically whether Heller's approach is acceptable when the subject matter is war, by comparing Heller to John Hersey, Norman Mailer, and James Jones, by perceptively pinpointing the absence of "antifascist declarations"<sup>85</sup> (although, needless to say, for the benefit of the *apparatchik* reading the article fascism is no less hateful to Heller than to the former authors), and by finally concluding that "[s]till, Heller's method is artistically justified."<sup>86</sup> Almost paraphrasing Vonnegut, Zverev points out the "horrifying farce that grows out of . . . grandiosely ridiculous social claims to 'rationality'"<sup>87</sup>; thus (and here Zverev hopes that the article is long enough for his readers to forget that the following sentence, buried at its very end, directly contradicts the article's earlier parts), the novel is "not a satire on *individual* phenomena, but a sarcastic, furious protest against everything written out in paragraphs and sections of a 'rational' and bankrupt world"<sup>88</sup> (emphasis added). By momentarily "forgetting" his rhetoric, Zverev unmistakably demonstrates his profound understanding of the novel and suggests that humour is the only means with which to overcome madness (188).

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<sup>85</sup> «антифашистских деклараций» (187)

<sup>86</sup> «И все-таки метод Хеллера художественно оправдан» (187)

<sup>87</sup> «ужасающий фарс, который вырастает из . . . грандиозно нелепой общественной претензии на „разумность“» (188)

<sup>88</sup> «не сатира на отдельные явления, а саркастический, яростный протест против всего расписанного по параграфам и клеточкам, „рационального“ и обанкротившегося мира» (188)



## The Star and Death of Titov and Vilenskii

Already by the mid-1960s, Rait's reputation was generally beyond any criticism or reproach. Thus, it is quite significant that the two hapless translators of Heller, Vilenskii and Titov, had been severely censured shortly after the release of their translation in novel form and that, moreover, the criticism of their translation practices had entered the Soviet canon of translation studies (TS). A few pieces of biographical information that amounts to a paragraph

**Figure 2** "Vilenskii Mark Ėzrovich" (n. pag.)

of text and a pair of photographs of Vilenskii exist on the Internet:

Mark Ėzrovich Vilenskii (1926-1996), "journalist, feuilletonist, translator"<sup>89</sup> (see Figure 2), was the son of the (much better known) Soviet journalist Ėzra Samoilovich Vilenskii. Using his father's connections, Mark entered the Moscow State Institute of International Relations in 1946, but did not receive a diplomatic assignment because of the quintessentially Soviet *piatyi punkt*<sup>90</sup> (fifth paragraph, a euphemism for being of an undesirable nationality<sup>91</sup>). In the 1960s, Vilenskii worked in the humour magazine *Krokodil*, specializing in political pamphlets about American imperialists and Israeli aggressors. It was at that time that, "[h]aving connections in Voenizdat, M. Vilenskii proposed to the publisher a condensed translation of *Catch-22*, completed by him in a co-authorship with another journalist, V. Titov."<sup>92</sup> The only other source that reliably corroborates most of this information is an article by the dissident translator and literary critic

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<sup>89</sup> «журналист, фельетонист, переводчик» (n. pag.)

<sup>90</sup> пятый пункт

<sup>91</sup> In the Soviet Union, items such as "Russian" or "Jewish" were printed under Nationality in one's passport which was typically one's sole means of identification. My father (born in Moscow) had "Jewish" in his passport; my mother (born in Izium, Ukraine) had "Russian" in hers.

<sup>92</sup> «Имея знакомства в „Воениздате“, М. Виленский предложил издательству сокращённый перевод „Catch-22“, выполненный им в соавторстве с другим журналистом, В. Титовым» ("Vilenskii" n. pag.).

Shimon Markish, in his 2004 article<sup>93</sup> titled “On Translation” published in *Ierusalimskii zhurnal*. Markish discusses a variety of examples of good and bad translators, including “[t]he translation [of C22 that] was made by two journalists”; curiously, while discussing Vilenskii, Markish notes “*I remember and know only one of them*, and will discuss specifically him, because precisely he played, most likely, the main role in organizing the publication” (n. pag.; emphasis added). In catalogues of printed works, Vilenskii is credited with nine of his own books (humorous novels and collections of short stories) published from 1961 to 1982 by the publishers Pravda, Politizdat, Mysl’, and SR<sup>94</sup> (Grabel’nikov and Minaeva n. pag.). Vilenskii’s 1967 translation of the highly-political C22 stands out like a sore thumb against the background of the other texts he translated or co-translated: pulp romance and detective fiction such as Graham Greene’s *The Confidential Agent* (1939; trans. 1992), David Osborn’s *Murder in the Napa Valley* (1993; trans. 1994), Kasey Mars’s<sup>95</sup> *The Silent Rose* (1995; trans. 1995), and Erle Stanley Gardner’s *Fish or Cut Bait* (1963; trans. 1997). Vilenskii appears to not have published any translations at all between 1967 and 1992 (a period that roughly corresponds to the Era of Stagnation and Perestroika), and it is presumably this fact that motivates Markish to categorically argue that Vilenskii “[w]as never a translator, and never harboured any Kulturträger<sup>96</sup> ambitions, but, like any other normal person, wanted to earn more money.”<sup>97</sup> Vilenskii brought his translation to Voenizdat where he had “friends” and the rest was history. Here, Markish’s insistence on the fact that the impending publication of the novel was a secret (because Voenizdat was not subject to

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<sup>93</sup> Markish composed his article from a series of notes from the early 1990s; however, it was not published until 2004.

<sup>94</sup> The publishing house associated with the eponymous daily newspaper. N.B. Not coincidentally, Titov’s excerpt from C22 appeared in SR in 1965.

<sup>95</sup> The pseudonym of Kathleen Kelly Martin (also known as Kat Martin, Kathy Lawrence, and Kasey Marx)

<sup>96</sup> “an upholder or defender of civilization” (“kulturtrager n.”)

<sup>97</sup> «Переводчиком он никогда не был, никаких переводческих, ни тем более культуртрегерских амбиций не питал, но, как и всякий нормальный человек, хотел заработать побольше денег» (n. pag.).

the regulations of the Committee on Printing) is incongruent with the fact of the pre-publication of the two excerpted chapters in 1964 and 1965 that *advertised* the upcoming book; moreover, Markish's charge that "Vilenskii, undoubtedly, had lopped up Heller in advance, before showing him to the vigilant and superpuritanically bashful editors of Voenizdat"<sup>98</sup> is not based in reality because (as I will show), the *Ural* version (though shorter than the Voenizdat version) includes passages that have obviously been revised *after* the release of the book version.

The strange story of the authorship of the 1967 translation does not end here. Whenever anyone (usually a Russian TS scholar) makes reference to the translation, the V/T co-authorship is taken for granted. However, the fascinating thing about it is that no information about "V. Titov" exists anywhere, in print, online, in translation databases, in library records: no biographical notes, no samples of "journalistic" work, no lists of publications, no dates of birth and death, not even a full first name. The only two clues that remain are V. Titov's translations of Truman Capote's "Master Misery" (1949) and "Jug of Silver" (1949) published in the July 1963 and January 1964 issues of *Nedelia*, and a translation of Somerset Maugham's "Giulia Lazzari" (1928) published in the September 1970 issue of *Znamia*. The mystery is compounded by the fact that the first two publications of chapters excerpted from *C22* in *SR* and *Krok* (where Vilenskii worked) are credited only to Titov, not to Vilenskii (who, although he had worked for *SR*, is first credited alongside Titov only in the 1967 *Ural* publication). Pending discoveries resulting from future research, Occam's Razor suggests three possibilities: 1. Titov stopped translating altogether (or just under his own name) sometime after the merciless review of *C22V* and the *Ural* affair, 2. "V. Titov" was a pseudonym for a third translator, or 3. the man had never existed, being a cover for Vilenskii himself who, as a Jewish writer in a fiercely anti-Semitic

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<sup>98</sup> «Виленский, бесспорно, обкорнал Хеллера заранее, прежде чем показать его бдительным и сверхпуритански стыдливым редакторам из Воениздата» (n. pag.).

country, used the name to “test the waters” with the publication of his early excerpts but, after having already placed Titov’s name in print, was, for whatever reason, obliged to keep it alongside his own. As Markish explains,

[e]ven the most modest defence of one’s professional convictions and interests turned us, translators from languages of the West, into seditious ideological saboteurs . . . And with no assurances of our personal devotion to the Soviet authorities and the communist project, with no references to the denunciatory power of a truthful depiction of American reality in some Mailer or Capote can the translator acquit himself. . . . To this we add one more, rather important issue: anti-Semitism. Among the translators the number of people of Jewish descent was especially large, and truly Soviet writers predominantly were and are healthy anti-Semites. . . . Just as in 1949-53 “kosmopolit” was a euphemism for “Yid,” now [in the early 1990s] in the Union of writers—it is “translator.”<sup>99</sup>

Whichever possibility is true, Vilenskii continued to translate pulp fiction until the end of his life and Titov’s name died with the negative reception of the V/T co-translation.

The condemnation of the 1967 novel version of *C22* came from two quarters: an exhaustive 1970 article by the acclaimed translator Maria Lorie<sup>100</sup> titled “The Tricks of

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<sup>99</sup> «Даже самая скромная защита своих профессиональных убеждений и интересов превращала нас, переводчиков с западных языков, в крамольников и идеологических диверсантов . . . И никакими уверениями в нашей личной преданности советской власти и делу строительства коммунизма, никакими ссылками на разоблачительную силу правдивого изображения американской действительности у какого-нибудь М[э]йлера или Капоте переводчик не может оправдать себя. . . . К этому прибавляется ещё один, достаточно важный момент: антисемитизм. Среди переводчиков людей еврейского происхождения было особенно много, а истинно советские писатели — по преимуществу здоровые антисемиты и были и есть. . . . Как в 1949-53 годах “космополит” было эвфемизмом для „жида”, так теперь в Союзе Писателей — „переводчик”» (n. pag.).

<sup>100</sup> Lorie (1904-1992) was Rait’s contemporary and, whereas the latter specialized in American literature, the former, who was “not a fighter of the ideological front” («не была бойцом идеологического фронта») translated English authors (Bernshtein n. pag.).

Translators,”<sup>101</sup> published in the annual anthology *Masterstvo perevoda*,<sup>102</sup> as well as a 1972 article by Zverev co-authored with the literary critic and twentieth-century Americanist Nikolai Anastas’ev titled “Notes on the Margins of Translated Prose,”<sup>103</sup> published in *NM* (the latter comments and supplements Lorie’s analysis). It is not a coincidence that the first pages of the issue of *MP* where Lorie’s article appears include a photograph and a series of quotations dedicated to the 1969 passing of Kornei Chukovskii,<sup>104</sup> and while I will ultimately make clear Chukovskii’s central influence on the Soviet theory of translation, it is important to reproduce one of the quotations here because it succinctly summarizes Lorie’s central thesis: “A letter must not be reproduced with a letter in translation, but (I am ready to repeat this a thousand times!) a smile—with a smile, music—with music, soulful tonality—with soulful tonality.”<sup>105</sup> It is precisely because of such desire for equivalence between the ST and TT that Lorie concludes her essay by arguing that “[g]radually, almost imperceptibly, from page to page one novel is in effect replaced by another—with other characters, different intonations, different meaning.”<sup>106</sup> Actual comparison<sup>107</sup> between the ST and TT is obviously important to Lorie (334, 357); thus, it is surprising that she not only ignores the 1967 *Ural* version of the novel (it seems unlikely that she would have been unaware of it), but that she also, uncharacteristically for her detail-oriented methodology, entirely sidesteps the dangerous question of textual lacunae in the Voenizdat version (which the *Ural* version makes very obvious); instead, Lorie concludes that it would

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<sup>101</sup> «Уловки переводчиков»

<sup>102</sup> Lorie also served on the editorial board of *MP*.

<sup>103</sup> «Заметки на полях переводной прозы»

<sup>104</sup> Chukovskii was the chief editor of the *MP* series.

<sup>105</sup> «Не букву буквой нужно воспроизводить в переводе, а (я готов повторять это тысячу раз!) улыбку — улыбкой, музыку — музыкой, душевную тональность — душевной тональностью» (3).

<sup>106</sup> «Исподволь, почти незаметно, от страницы к странице один роман фактически подменяется другим — с другими персонажами, другой интонацией, другим смыслом» (Lorie 355).

<sup>107</sup> Lorie alleges that the editor of the book “clearly does not know English and clearly does not know how to read Russian text as a writer” («явно не знает английского языка и явно не умеет читать русский текст как литератор») (357).

have been better if the translators had translated “everything” and left it to the editors (!) to make reductions (352n4). So much for perfect equivalence. It is interesting to observe that, similarly to the way in which Mikhalkov<sup>108</sup> purposefully confuses ideology and literary criticism in his foreword, Lorie persistently conflates ideology and translation theory. Her explanation for the unacceptability of the translation is self-contradictory: on the one hand, she identifies a significant lack of equivalence between the ST and TT when she claims that the novel “‘reads well’ in Russian, if one reads it without pondering, without delaying one’s attention on inconsistencies and outright absurdities”<sup>109</sup> of the prose (a strange statement for a work that is absurd *by design*); on the other hand, she argues that the “vicious, often cruel humour of the author on the whole turned out well in Russian,” effectively approving of the equivalence between the ST and TT; still, Lorie finds that the translation is “bad, very bad”<sup>110</sup> (334). What accounts for this “badness”? The bulk of the blame is reserved for semantic errors: Lorie blames V/T on the hurried production of the translation (337); Leighton provides a good summary of such examples:

“to train soldiers” means “to instruct them,” not “to transport” them; a “lunatic” is not a *lunatic*, meaning sleepwalker; a “pineapple” is not a kind of “apple”; the English word “satin” is not equivalent to the Russian word *satın*, which means silk; a “supermarket” is not an “outdoor” market in America; and “a crooked trader in the Levant” is not a Lebanese. When Heller writes simply, “Yossarian thought he was dead,” the translators embellish, “Hadn’t he given his soul up to God?” (*Two Worlds* 30; Lorie 334, 337, 343, 345-346)

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<sup>108</sup> Lorie not only repeats some of Mikhalkov’s anti-American rhetoric, but insists that, if he is unhappy about Heller’s positive attitude towards Yossarian in the translation, he would be even more appalled by it if he had read the ST of the novel. (335-336).

<sup>109</sup> «Эта книга „хорошо читается“ по-русски, если читать её, не вдумываясь, не задерживая внимания на неувязках и прямых абсурдах» (334).

<sup>110</sup> «плох, очень плох» (334)

Lorie even finds fault with the translation's title (which, should be noted, while literally meaning *trick* also plays on the cognate word *lovit'* [to catch]) and prefers Zverev's *Punkt-22* (351).<sup>111</sup> Second, Lorie discusses distorted characters, settings, and relationships<sup>112</sup> that result from the semantic errors (338):

Where Heller says several times that Yossarian has "lost his nerve," the translators write that he "completely lost his courage," and whenever Heller says simply that he "was unnerved," the translators say that he "begged for mercy" and "his heart fell [in]to his boots." Where Heller says that Yossarian was "in incipient panic," the translators say that he "saved his own skin." (Leighton, *Two Worlds* 32)

Ultimately, "[a] huge number of such errors falls on the character of Yossarian, as a result of which he becomes indistinguishable from the rest of the egotists and cowards flooding Heller's novel, while, according to the author's intentions, he undoubtedly stands out from the rest of the menagerie."<sup>113</sup> The third problem is that of intertextual allusions: Lorie discusses missed references to Tennyson, Edwin Arlington Robinson, and Shakespeare (Leighton, *Two Worlds* 31) and uses biblical quotations in order to (rather admirably) insist that the translation of Anglo-American literature requires familiarity with religious texts, regardless of the personal convictions of the translator (340). Lorie provides a large number of examples that demonstrate

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<sup>111</sup> History has proven Lorie wrong because the V/T title had successfully entered the Russian idiom to an extent comparable to its English counterpart (Heller himself met people who thought he named his novel *after* the phrase ["Reeling In" 314]). Although the expression *Catch-22* does not have the same canonical status in Russian that it has gained in English by virtue of its inclusion in the *OED* (sense 7.c), a Google search for *catch-22* (excluding *Heller, novel, or film*) yields more than 79 million hits on Google and a comparable search for *уловка-22* (excluding *Хеллер, роман, or фильм*) yields 838,800 hits on Google.

<sup>112</sup> Interesting, when American realia is concerned, Lorie does not hesitate to suggest using Russian alternatives (342).

<sup>113</sup> «Огромное количество таких ошибок падает на характеристику Йоссариана, отчего он становится неотличим от остальных эгоистов и трусов, наводящих роман Хеллера, в то время как, по замыслу автора, он, безусловно, выделяется на фоне остального зверинца» (344).

V/T's ineptitude; however, her criticism as a whole boils down to the question of insufficient equivalence between the ST and TT in terms of idiom and usage at the sentence (338-341) and word level (343-355), while "striving, at all cost, to 'enliven' the text (already quite sufficiently alive), so to say, to spit farther than the author"<sup>114</sup> remains Lorie's biggest antipathy towards V/T's treatment of the ST.

While Lorie's article builds on Chukovskii's maxim, Anastasiev and Zverev begin by contrasting the various TS movements: "*bukvalisty* [literalists], supporters of impressionistic-free adaptation . . . finally realists . . . in the creative work of which the principles of the Soviet school of literary translation have been affirmed."<sup>115</sup> Appearing to side with the latter, they build on another maxim by the translation theorist Ivan Kashkin: "translation . . . may be winged"<sup>116</sup> (but, of course, the permissible extent of this "wingedness" is the crux of the problem). When Anastasiev and Zverev list the examples of the best translators, it is unsurprising that they include Rait, in addition to Evgeniia Kalashnikova, Solomon Apt, and Viktor Khinkis (243); however, the fact that the two critics mention Lorie's article and her "very sharp criticism,"<sup>117</sup> admit the thoroughness of her work, but proceed to take apart the V/T translation anyway (244) is significant. In *A Decade of Euphoria*, Maurice Friedberg wonders "why it was decided to revive the issue again" (41), and it is hard to blame him for not noticing with what subtle, painstaking effort Anastasiev and Zverev rebut Lorie's essay and redeem the V/T translation of Heller's novel. First, they quite elegantly resolve the issue of the "absurd" form and content of C22 by stating that, "[i]n this successively sustained nonsense, in this deliberate chaos there is,

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<sup>114</sup> «стремление во что бы то ни стало „оживить” текст (и без того достаточно живой), так сказать переплюнуть автора» (345) It is not a coincidence that Lorie uses the term *ozhivit'*; we will encounter it again.

<sup>115</sup> «буквалистов, сторонников импрессионистски-вольного переложения . . . наконец реалистов . . . в творчестве которых утвердились принципы советской школы художественного перевода» (242).

<sup>116</sup> «перевод . . . может быть крылатым» (242)

<sup>117</sup> «весьма резкой критике» (244)



however, its own . . . system. . . . In Heller . . . harmony is born out of chaos, the idea finding the form appropriate to it.”<sup>118</sup> Second, they quite diplomatically (and bravely) allude to the problem of the textual lacunae that Lorie either ignores or misses, when they note that “those same reductions that were produced by the translators with the blessing of the publisher or, conversely, by the publisher with the connivance of the translators, also testifies to the fact that the novel remains largely misunderstood by them.”<sup>119</sup> Third, doing something unheard of in Soviet criticism, Anastasiev and Zverev directly indict the excision of “naturalistic scenes” (code for anything sexual) from the novel which, they then must argue, results in the distortion of the *ideological* essence of the work (245). With regard to this passage, Friedberg’s assertion that the critics’ “objections were grounded in more pragmatic considerations, specifically in the belief that the crude censoring of Heller’s text actually *detracted* from its value as anti-American propaganda” (*Euphoria* 42) is patent nonsense: this is the exact *opposite* point (held by Lorie) that Anastasiev and Zverev attempt to contest. They even refer to the work of the sexologist Igor’ Kon in order to justify the relationship between sex, society, and culture (after all, shouldn’t “realistic” art reflect life?), cleverly arguing that a “[r]eader brought up on the chastity of the classics, is shocked by the ‘coarseness’ of Hemingway or Faulkner, and some scenes from the novels of Updike, Barstow, and Salinger seem to . . . [him] downright pornographic.”<sup>120</sup> It is only under such thick rhetorical cover—quite different from the arguments provided by Mikhalkov—that Anastasiev and Zverev can begin to translate and parse the first line of C22 that

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<sup>118</sup> «В этой последовательно выдерживаемой бессмыслице, в этом нарочитом хаосе есть, однако же, своя . . . система. . . . У Хеллера . . . гармония рождается из хаоса, идея находит соответствующую ей форму» (244-245).

<sup>119</sup> «те же сокращения, что произведены переводчиками с благословения издательства либо, наоборот, издательством при попустительстве переводчиков, также свидетельствуют о том, что роман ими остался во многом не понят» (245).

<sup>120</sup> «Читателя, воспитанного на целомудрии классиков, шокирует “грубость” Хемингуэя или Фолкнера, а некоторые сцены романов Апдайка, Барстоу, Сэлинджера кажутся им прямо-таки порнографическими» (245).

does not exist in the 1967 translation: “It was love at first sight. The first time Yossarian saw the chaplain he fell madly in love with him” (21). Sure enough, they cannot afford to spend any time explicating the homosexual or homosocial overtones in the passage and must change gears to show that the narration that immediately follows is “normal” (246), nothing to worry about, but the point has been made: whatever Heller put in his book is significant to the novel’s heroes (well, *socially* significant, they must quickly add); Heller does not want *épatage* for its own sake, and he does not test his readers; rather, the author creates *antiheroes*, whose “perverted essence”<sup>121</sup> (that especially shows itself in the sexual sphere) is not pornographic, but rather “bears an ideo-aesthetic payload”<sup>122</sup> that makes textual excisions unacceptable. As the article continues, it becomes readily apparent not only that Anastas’ev and Zverev expertly manipulate the notions of “realistic” translation to their rhetorical benefit, but that they also (under the cover of critiquing the translation) are *indicting the censorship* of the novel. The responsibility now must be borne by those who (albeit unnamed) must still answer for hobbling a work “of a special literary genre allowing both grotesque exaggerations and distortions of reality.”<sup>123</sup> The critics,<sup>124</sup> having gained momentum, now jump on the opportunity to discuss the translation of James Jones and the “devastating”<sup>125</sup> reductions (by more than one-third) in the Russian translation of *From Here to Eternity*.<sup>126</sup> Here, Anastasiev and Zverev express a view diametrically opposite to Lorie’s: “The novel’s action unfolds on the Hawaiian Islands, and its heroes are American

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<sup>121</sup> «извращённая сущность» (246)

<sup>122</sup> «несёт . . . идейно-эстетическую нагрузку» (246)

<sup>123</sup> «особого литературного жанра, допускающего и гротескные преувеличения и искажения действительности» (246)

<sup>124</sup> One must wonder at Friedberg’s research ethos because, while Zverev managed to obtain the STs in English in the Soviet Union, Friedberg, his professional counterpart and one of the leading experts *par excellence* on Soviet translation in the West, proceeded to write *A Decade of Euphoria* in 1977 while relying on secondary sources by virtue of *not being able to obtain copies* of the translations of *C22* and *From Here to Eternity*. Friedberg simply blames the lack of availability on the denunciations of the novels in the Soviet press and moves on (40).

<sup>125</sup> «опустошительные» (248)

<sup>126</sup> Translated by four (!) translators and published by Voenizdat in 1969

soldiers. But, reading the translation, one could think that the setting is the Central Russian Upland, and the characters are drivers from Pskov or fishermen from Valdai”;<sup>127</sup> the Russian translation is *banal*, one that “adds little to our understanding of the American army, of life in America, and of the people of that country.”<sup>128</sup> Invoking Goethe’s two principles of translation, the critics end their essay on a high note, reaching the optimistic conclusion that Soviet TS has managed to successfully combine the preservation of the foreign *and* local in the best of possible translations; however, the evidence they provide so eloquently speaks to the contrary. It is more disheartening than curious to observe the gulf between Anastasiev and Zverev’s 1972 article and Zverev’s article titled “Literary Results of the Twentieth century: The Laughing Century”<sup>129</sup> published in *Voprosy literatury* in 2000, three years before the critic’s death. Here, free at last from the obligatory recourse to official rhetoric, Zverev insists on an effect that many other critics have missed: Bakhtin’s<sup>130</sup> “‘carnavalesque laughter,’ that ‘both denies and asserts, both buries and resurrects.’”<sup>131</sup> Calling the text by the name of its 1988 retranslation, Zverev now argues that even to take the novel as “a satire on an omnipotent bureaucracy that has fallen into madness”<sup>132</sup> is too literal an approach; rather, it is a “metaphor characterizing the state of the world,”<sup>133</sup> on a par with a work like *Nineteen Eighty-Four*<sup>134</sup> that expresses a *reality* of diametric

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<sup>127</sup> «Действие романа развёртывается на Гавайских островах, а его герои — американские солдаты. Но, читая перевод, можно подумать, что место действия — Среднерусская возвышенность, а действующие лица — псковские шофёры или валдайские рыбаки» (250-251).

<sup>128</sup> «мало что прибавляющим к нашим представлениям об американской армии, о жизни в Америке, и о людях этой страны» (251)

<sup>129</sup> «Литературные итоги XX века. Смеющийся век»

<sup>130</sup> Bakhtin himself was a *persona non grata* in the Soviet letters, after “[i]n 1946 and 1949 his defense of . . . his dissertation [on Rabelais] split the Moscow scholarly world into two camps” causing him to be eventually “denied his doctorate” (Holquist xxv).

<sup>131</sup> «„карнавального смеха”, что „и отрицает и утверждает, и хоронит и возрождает”» (24-25)

<sup>132</sup> «на всемогущую бюрократию, которая впала в безумие» (25)

<sup>133</sup> «метафорой, характеризующей состояние мира» (25)

<sup>134</sup> Although Orwell’s novel was translated to Russian by V. Andreev and N. Vitov, it was published in Frankfurt, first serialized in *Grani* in 1955-1956, and then printed in book form by Posev in 1957. Only in 1988 will LG publish V. P. Golyshev’s translation of an excerpt from the novel (Kalmyk n. pag.).

oppositions such as “War is peace”; thus, “a person who refuses to fight *is absolutely normal* and must thereby be recognized as suitable for death under fire”<sup>135</sup> (emphasis added). The black humour that Zverev can now unabashedly call by name is now, suddenly, a valid but too narrow a category with which we must also reconcile Eco, Márquez, and Kundera (27), Fuentes, Rushdie, and Grass (29) . . . but we have already seen this epiphany in O’Neill’s 1983 essay. It is time to rewind the tape.

### **A Friend at Any Cost**

Although an afterword is a peritext in its own right, it does not serve the function of the *parovoz*: the text has already been “passed”; it just need some additional “framing” for the periodical in which it is published. Thus, there is nothing particularly exceptional in the afterword to the second instalment of *SF* in *NM* (1970), “About Kurt Vonnegut’s Novel,”<sup>136</sup> by Raisa Orlova,<sup>137</sup> an Americanist, writer, and editor whose Soviet citizenship will be taken away by January 1981 by a decree signed by Brezhnev (Zotikov n. pag.). However, although she dovetails the novel into easy-to-swallow talking points already familiar to us from Mikhalkov’s blustering polemic and Zverev’s careful rhetoric, they are more haphazard and betray an exasperation with Soviet critical formulas, in tandem presenting a brief catalogue of truisms: “[the Cold] War—even if not total, like WWII,—continues”;<sup>138</sup> “Vonnegut could be called a pacifist”<sup>139</sup>; the author’s goal is “to make the impossible believable for today’s young, skeptical

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<sup>135</sup> «человек, отказывающийся воевать, абсолютно нормален и как раз в силу этого должен быть признан пригодным к гибели под огнём» (25)

<sup>136</sup> «О романе Курта Воннегута»

<sup>137</sup> In the 1960s, Friedberg asked Orlova about the censorship of Hemingway, she replied that “they had to censor Hemingway because there was no other way to publish him”; when Friedberg persists to ask why Hemingway (when he was still alive) had not been consulted on whether he wanted to be published at all, he received no answer (Friedberg, “Outside” 26). Friedberg considers Orlova a “moderate” (“In the U.S.S.R.” 524-525).

<sup>138</sup> «Война – пусть и не тотальная, как вторая мировая,— продолжается» (179).

<sup>139</sup> «Воннегута можно было бы назвать пацифистом» (179)

Americans, who declare that they don't trust anyone over thirty"<sup>140</sup>; "Vonnegut's hero [Billy Pilgrim] rushes across years and months, like hundreds if not thousands of young people rush across the United States today"<sup>141</sup>; "[t]he soldier has tucked into his pants a Bible with a bulletproof cover. But both the hero and author resolutely oppose the biblical principle 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth'"<sup>142</sup>; the novel's main thrust is in acknowledging the "responsibility—for his [Vonnegut's] countrymen, for those who gave an order about Dresden and Hiroshima in his mother tongue."<sup>143</sup> In contrast, the afterword to the MG issue of *CC* (1970) by the critic and translator Vladimir Skorodenko affords a much more nuanced approach when he frames Bokononism as an indictment of the Old and New Testaments (214) or makes thinly-veiled references to the links between the Third Reich (217-218) and the American inventors of the atomic and hydrogen bombs (219). Skorodenko also demonstrates not only a strong literary competence, when he quotes from Eliot's "The Hollow Men" (212), compares Vonnegut's<sup>144</sup> and William Golding's WWII experiences (212), and draws parallels with Swift's *The Tale of the Tub* (214) and *Gulliver's Travels* (214, 223), Huxley's *Brave New World* (215), Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* (215), Günter Grass's *Dog Years* and *Tin Drum* (215), Wilde and Chesterton (217), Voltaire's *Candide* (222), as well as Vonnegut's own works (*SOT*, *PP*, *MH*, *SF*, *GB*, and *MN*),<sup>145</sup> but also a fairly high level of *dopusk* (access) when he quotes from the U.S. magazine

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<sup>140</sup> «сделать невероятное достоверным для сегодняшних юных скептических американцев, которые заявляют, что не верят ни одному человеку старше тридцати лет» (179)

<sup>141</sup> «герой Воннегута мечется по годам и месяцам, как мечутся сегодня по Соединённым Штатам сотни, если не тысячи молодых людей» (180)

<sup>142</sup> «У солдата за пазухой Библия в пуленепробиваемой обложке. Но и герой и автор решительно противостоят библейскому принципу „око за око, зуб за зуб“» (180)

<sup>143</sup> «ответственности — за своих соотечественников, за тех, кто отдал приказ и о Дрездене и о Хиросиме на его родном языке» (180)

<sup>144</sup> Throughout the book, Vonnegut's name is misspelled as Воннегат (Vonnegat).

<sup>145</sup> *SOT* had not been translated into Russian until 1982; *MH* and *MN*—until 1990. This means that Skorodenko must have read these books in English. Further proof is the fact that he uses Russian titles different from those of the later publications (Kalmyk n. pag.)

*Ramparts* (212), Ella Fitzgerald songs (212), and Tony Mizen's obscure *Generation X* (1964).<sup>146</sup> Skorodenko touches on the defamiliarizing effect in *CC* when he points out the laboratory of the inventor of deadly substances is littered with children's toys (221) and when he links "Papa" Monzano in the novel to his real-life counterpart "Papa Doc" Duvalier<sup>147</sup> (however, the connection fizzles to a critique of individual irresponsibility and American involvement in Latin America [221]).

In stark contrast with both Orlova's and Skorodenko's pieces stands S. Vishnevskii's afterword to the second instalment of *BC* in *IL* (1975), titled "When Reality is Absurd. . ." <sup>148</sup> Updating Mikhalkov for his own generation of *apparatchiks* in the making, Vishnevskii provides an astonishing juxtaposition of Soviet rhetoric with fashionable Western *panache* when he begins with "in the beginning of the seventies, at the corner of Broadway and 90th Street in the 'student' bookshop 'New Yorker'" <sup>149</sup> and ends with the admission that "around six years I lived on the bank of the Potomac river."<sup>150</sup> These statements are quietly scandalous for 1975 U.S.S.R. (much more so than the coveted access to foreign periodicals and books held in special library collections), because, compared to the mythical image of the U.S., a visit to which was undreamed of, the reviewer (much like Zverev demonstrates his firsthand acquaintance with *C22*'s English text) identifies himself as belonging to a special class of "connected" people who could have firsthand acquaintance with U.S. *culture* by attaining the impossible: being allowed beyond the limits of the Iron Curtain, in this case, by dint of having been a special correspondent

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<sup>146</sup> The book is not to be confused with Douglas Coupland's eponymous novel which it precedes by twenty-seven years. ("The Original Generation X" n. pag.).

<sup>147</sup> President and ruthless dictator of Haiti from 1957 to 1971

<sup>148</sup> «Когда реальность абсурдна. . .»

<sup>149</sup> «в начале семидесятых годов на углу Бродвея и 90-й улицы в „студенческой“ книжной лавке „Нью-Йоркер“» (209)

<sup>150</sup> «Около шести лет я прожил на берегах реки Потомак» (212)

for *Pravda* in Washington, D.C.<sup>151</sup> Curiously, Vishnevskii uses the explicitly-foreign, pretentious language of capitalism when he offhandedly talks of “20 percent discounts,”<sup>152</sup> hotel stays (210), and transliterates terms such as *topsy-turvy* (210). He cites reviews of and publications by Vonnegut in *The New York Times* (210), *Current Biography* (211), *Life* (211), the *Washington Post*<sup>153</sup> (211), and *Playboy*<sup>154</sup> (212) ”and other bourgeois publications”<sup>155</sup> by making the occasional (but unmistakably disingenuous) requisite dips into terminology such as *antifascist*, *antimilitarist* (210), and *industrial proletariat* (212) or by mentioning the rise of the “sinister star of Joseph McCarthy.”<sup>156</sup> Moreover, Vishnevskii discusses issues such as gun control and automobile “addiction” in the United States as if they were a part of a daily experience glimpsed from local media (212). Curiously, unlike Orlova and her careful, euphemistic suggestions and innuendo, Vishnevskii directly acknowledges the Cold War and even argues (somewhat convincingly) that Vonnegut’s use of the science fiction genre is only a cover for social satire and that Vonnegut makes unfamiliar the common objects that he draws and describes<sup>157</sup> (211). Vishnevskii positions Vonnegut as a post-McCarthy outcast who only got a voice with the publication of *CC* and paradoxically ties the notion of dissidence to Vonnegut’s Russian translations while admitting *en passant* the presence of the “small cuts”<sup>158</sup> in the very copy of *BC* that he comments on.

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<sup>151</sup> Vishnevskii spent six years in the U.S. (Friedberg, *Euphoria* 28). In his 1971 *IL* article “The Polarization of Norman Mailer” («Поляризация Нормана Мейлера»), Vishnevskii explicitly states “I am not a literary critic” («я не литературовед»; 244) and that he is “a political reporter” («политический репортёр»; 246). Friedberg corroborates this (*Euphoria* 28).

<sup>152</sup> «скидка 20 процентов» (209)

<sup>153</sup> That he has been reading “every day [for] many years”—«каждый день уже много лет» (211).

<sup>154</sup> Vishnevskii explicitly ties the «норки нараспашку» (“wide-open beavers”) in *BC* to the magazine (212).

<sup>155</sup> «и других буржуазных изданий» (211)

<sup>156</sup> «зловещая звезда Джозефа Маккарти» (211)

<sup>157</sup> Fiene ties this assessment directly to *ostranenie* (176).

<sup>158</sup> «с небольшими сокращениями» (211)

Although I have by now provided plenty of epitextual examples, it bears to briefly mention the much stronger argumentative presence in the standalone article on Vonnegut by Zverev published in *Voprosy literatury* in 1975 and two of its counterparts: an interview with Chingiz Aimatov and an article by D. Zatonskii published in the same issue of the journal the following year. Although the content of Zverev's article, "Fairytale of a Technological Century,"<sup>159</sup> is quite similar to a number of articles I have already examined, it is worth noting that Zverev's argumentation becomes more agile, moving more quickly beyond the still-requisite indictments of the West and instead focusing on global concerns. His subject of discussion becomes *BC* and its links to Vonnegut's earlier work. Performing a careful, close reading, Zverev draws an implicit line between Vonnegut's earliest novel (*PP*) and his latest, arguing that

Vonnegut was terrified by the machine-likeness of the participants of the Dresden tragedy. . . . Neither did Vonnegut in *Breakfast of Champions* step away from his theme. . . . for Vonnegut the obsession of the average American with erotica is just one manifestation of a much more significant and burdensome social process . . . the frightening similarity with automatons designed to perform only one, strictly defined function.<sup>160</sup>

It is interesting that in "Where is the twentieth century going?"<sup>161</sup> the Ukrainian literary scholar and critic Dmitrii Zatonskii also chooses *BC* as his focus; however, although he claims that the novel is cardinally different from *SF* ("into the centre is not placed an event flagrant in own

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<sup>159</sup> «Сказки технического века»

<sup>160</sup> «Воннегута ужасало машиноподобие участников дрезденской трагедии. . . . Воннегут и в „Завтраке для чемпионов” не отступал от своей темы. . . . для Воннегута одержимость среднего американца эротикой — лишь одно из проявлений гораздо более значительного и тягостного общественного процесса . . . пугающее сходство с автоматами, предназначенными выполнять лишь одну, строго определённую функцию» (63-64).

<sup>161</sup> «Куда идёт XX век?»



meaninglessness, similar to the bombing of Dresden”<sup>162</sup>) the conclusion he reaches is strikingly similar: *BC* makes its main goal the *ostranenie* (defamiliarization) of evil, requiring the ability to “imagine the everyday, mundane as absurd,”<sup>163</sup> requiring a suspension of disbelief for a revolver to become “a tool whose only purpose was to make holes in human beings” (*BCe* 539), or for Vietnam to become “a country where America was trying to make people stop being Communists by dropping things on them from airplanes” (568). *Ostranenie*, in turn leads to Brechtian *ochuzhdenie* (estrangement), and *ochuzhdenie* leads to truth, because those who know what *revolver* and *Vietnam War* represent are obliged to observe these entities from an unfamiliar perspective which is, in turn, discussed in the Kyrgyz, Russian-language author Chingiz Aimatov’s “The Point of Attachment.”<sup>164</sup> First, Aimatov succinctly summarizes the paradox *du jour*: “On the one hand, we even now speak against abstract, ahistorical, and asocial understanding of humanism, but, on the other, we have an understanding of humanism much broader than before.”<sup>165</sup> The implication here is so thin that it can be missed even on a second reading. The point, of course, is the contradiction between *knowing* how to be good (“understanding of humanism”) but choosing not to *act* upon this knowledge. This is precisely why Aimatov calls for finding “common points of contact,”<sup>166</sup> by following the examples of authors such as Vonnegut and Márquez, in order to “[t]ake the first step: overcoming all governmental, social, and national difference, . . . [to] attempt to find a common approach to

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<sup>162</sup> «в центр не поставлено вопиющее по преступной своей бессмысленности событие, вроде бомбардировки Дрездена» (87)

<sup>163</sup> «представить каждодневное, обыденное в качестве абсурдного» (87)

<sup>164</sup> «Точка присоединения»

<sup>165</sup> «С одной стороны, мы и сейчас выступаем против абстрактного, внеисторического и внесоциального понимания гуманизма, но с другой — у нас более широкое, чем прежде, представление о гуманизме» (161).

<sup>166</sup> «общие точки соприкосновения» (161)

common human problems.”<sup>167</sup> In other words, the humanism at stake is one that requires constant re-evaluation of the self by means of an encounter with the Other, lest one fall into the rut of self-deception about one’s progressiveness or righteousness.

At long last, we finally return to the traditional *parovoz*, in “A Warning Sign,”<sup>168</sup> the introduction to the 1978 collection of Vonnegut’s four novels that allows Zverev to take a more systematic approach to Vonnegut’s writing, first by setting the stage by recapping the plot of *PP*, emphasizing the social criticism inherent in the class divisions in the fictional city of Ilium using the dialectical term “dynamic tension”<sup>169</sup> between good and evil and then proceeding to the now-familiar critique of the “primitive demagoguery of technocrats, increasingly asserting itself in the West,”<sup>170</sup> eventually defining the boogeyman as J. D. Bernal’s controversial notion of “STR”<sup>171</sup> (the Scientific-Technical Revolution) developing in “bourgeois conditions.”<sup>172</sup> In a now-familiar sleight of hand, Zverev includes the requisite criticism of American ideology, momentarily transforming W. W. Rostow and his *The Stages of Economic Growth* (1960) into a convenient straw man and his own introduction into a soapbox. (Whereas in actuality Rostow argues in various ways that “the Second World War was a *deus ex machina* which brought the United States back up to full employment” [79], Zverev claims that “[h]ere it is already clearly stated: the feeling of guilt and responsibility for the horrors of the Second World War that have for so long haunted the intelligentsia . . . only paralyzes any kind of activity . . . Intellectual ‘doubt’

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<sup>167</sup> «Первый шаг сделай: преодолевая все государственные, социальные, национальные различия . . . пытаемся найти общий подход к общечеловеческим проблемам» (161).

<sup>168</sup> «Сигнал предостережения»

<sup>169</sup> «динамическое напряжение» (8)

<sup>170</sup> «примитивная демагогия технократов, все активнее заявлявшая о себе на Западе» (4)

<sup>171</sup> «НТР»—Научно-техническая революция (Scientific-Technical Revolution or STR). See Bernal’s *The Social Function of Science* and Bestuzhev-Lada’s foreword to *PP*.

<sup>172</sup> «в буржуазных условиях» (5)

must be rooted out in the name of ‘initiative.’”<sup>173</sup>) Zverev’s critique inevitably returns to WWII and Vonnegut’s capture near the end of the war (9) and the American bombing of Dresden (16), providing exact dates for both. The contradiction of the war’s horrors and the prosperity it had brought to the United States remains irreconcilable in a socialist monologue, so Zverev is obliged to make his argument against “the painful background of American society in the postwar period.”<sup>174</sup> Having paid his lip service, Zverev finally returns to Vonnegut in earnest, characterizing the author as an exception among Western writers (6) with a special insight, despite the fact that “some of his opinions are, probably, also debatable.”<sup>175</sup> Zverev’s criticism becomes most meaningful when, for instance, he theorizes that

Vonnegut’s artistic world is unusual. . . . There are now grounds for comparisons of Vonnegut’s prose with some of the newest tendencies in Western artistic culture and cultural studies. For example, with the French “nouveau roman,” that freed itself from plot and logical connections between fragments. Or with the ideas of Marshall McLuhan.<sup>176</sup>

Recognizing this theoretical and intertextual linkage between the texts at hand and with other Vonnegut novels not included in the collection, such as *SOT* (15),<sup>177</sup> Zverev addresses the paradoxical patterns in Vonnegut’s writing (7) and finally not only makes a serious effort to

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<sup>173</sup> «Здесь уже прямо утверждается: чувство вины и ответственности за ужасы второй мировой войны, так долго преследовавшее интеллигенцию, . . . лишь парализует всякую деятельность . . . Интеллектуальное „сомнение” должно быть изжито во имя „инициативы”» (5)

<sup>174</sup> «на тягостном фоне американского общества послевоенной поры» (9)

<sup>175</sup> «иные его суждения, наверное, тоже спорны» (6)

<sup>176</sup> «Художественный мир Воннегута непривычен. . . . Явился повод для сопоставлений прозы Воннегута с некоторыми новейшими тенденциями в западной художественной культуре и культурологии. Например, с французским „новым романом”, освободившимся от сюжетности, и от логичной связности фрагментов. Или с идеями Маршалла Маклюэна» (7).

<sup>177</sup> *SOT* was not translated into Russian until 1982 (Kalmyk n. pag.) which means that Zverev probably read it in English. This also applies to Zverev’s references to *Slapstick or Lonesome no More!* (1976) where the Russian title Zverev gives does not match the titles of any of the translations of the novel published in 1976 (Kalmyk, n. pag.).

place Vonnegut in a Western canon, but also acknowledges tensions within it, for instance in relation to a particularly ironic passage in *BCe*,<sup>178</sup> where Vonnegut satirizes the Canadian theorist:

[Kilgore Trout] was supposed to take part in symposium . . . entitled “The Future of the American Novel in the Age of McLuhan.” He wished to say at that symposium, “I don’t know who McLuhan is, but I know what it’s like to spend the night with a lot of other dirty men in a movie theater in New York City. Could we talk about that?” He wished to say, too, “Does this McLuhan, whoever he is, have anything to say about the relationship between wide-open beavers and the sales of books?” (544)

As in his other essays and reviews, Zverev has to keep up the game by alternating actual literary insights with pot-shots at the Information Revolution (8 et passim), technocracy (10 et passim), scientism (14), “mania of rationalism,”<sup>179</sup> and the pursuit of quality of life at any cost (10). At one point, he even makes a Trotskyist flourish when he compares contemporary American current affairs (“May of 1968, . . . [and] the roar of barricade battles”<sup>180</sup>) to Russian revolutionary struggles or when he positions Vonnegut himself in contrast to the complacent hippie movement (13), as a revolutionary whom “passive humanism can no longer satisfy.”<sup>181</sup> At its root, Zverev’s commentary (although predicated on pointed us/them distinctions) is quite appropriate to Vonnegut’s own disgust with the post-industrial world and the notion “Everyone—a robot. Everyone—an automaton”<sup>182</sup> expressed so colourfully in *BC*. Nonetheless,

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<sup>178</sup> The passage survives in the TT (395).

<sup>179</sup> «мании рационализма» (17)

<sup>180</sup> «ма[й] 1968 года, . . . [и] грохот[ ] баррикадных боев» (10)

<sup>181</sup> «которого уже не может удовлетворить пассивный гуманизм» (14)

<sup>182</sup> «Все – роботы. Все – автоматы» (18).

Zverev must perform a number of *pro forma* insertions in order to downplay the universality of Vonnegut's claims. Thus, even when "the material of the *Western* writer is a deformed, disharmonious, world torn by contradictions" one must attempt "high artistic harmony, the necessary requirements of which remain truth and humaneness"<sup>183</sup> (emphasis added); likewise, "the process having taken on grotesque, hideous forms *in the West* today [is] the process of the growing standardization and life and people in a *consumer* society constructed according to *technocratic* recipes"<sup>184</sup> (emphasis added). Zverev ultimately negates his stated thesis when he ends his assessment of Vonnegut's writing with the phrase "an expression of faith in the human mind and the human heart."<sup>185</sup> Vonnegut's ideas continued to be understood and expressed by those to whom they truly mattered.

### **Manure for Flowers or Putrid Bullshit?**

"Time stood still in the Soviet Union of the 1970s and early 1980s," writes journalist Masha Gessen in *Dead Again* (23). Although a word (or a few choice ones) for the period was most likely floating about in the mid-1970s, like most retroactive rewriting and relabeling of history that has become especially emblematic of Soviet historiography, the Era of Stagnation (now most often defined as 1964-1987) was not a formal time period until Mikhail Gorbachev officially gave it a name during a plenum of the Central Committee (CC) of the CPSU (Central Party of the Soviet Union) on January 27, 1987—*Zastoi* (Shulezhkova 254). The underlying reasons for the social and cultural standstill were primarily fiscal: from 1964 to 1982, the Soviet

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<sup>183</sup> «материал западного писателя – обезображенный, дисгармоничный, раздираемый противоречиями мир . . . высокой художественной гармонии, необходимыми условиями которой остаются правда и гуманность» (8)

<sup>184</sup> «процесс принявший сегодня на Западе гротескные, уродливые формы, – процесс растущей стандартизации и жизни и людей в построенном по технократическим рецептам потребительском обществе» (18)

<sup>185</sup> «выражение веры в человеческий разум и человеческое сердце» (19)

*per capita* income had grown by a factor of one and a half and the oil boom of the mid-1970s had made the U.S.S.R. flush with foreign currency;<sup>186</sup> however, instead of developing the economy, the Soviet leadership fell into utter complacency (Tul'ev 180); as bureaucratic despotism and political corruption grew in the already inefficiently-centralized nation, dissenting voices arose to contest the "complete blockade on information, combined with a sophisticated system of misinformation and total censorship" (Stelmakh 144), so it was only a matter of time until a *chistka* (clean-sweep) took place (Barghoorn 95). It is not a coincidence that the era was marked by a parallel period of "re-Stalinization," 1965-1985 (Thompson 27). All cultural products suddenly came into the close purview and scrutiny of the Party, after all, "the leaders of the CPSU have always reserved the right—like the tsars before them—to determine which kinds of speech acts may or may not be tolerated or punished" (Barghoorn 46). In September of 1965, the lengthy court proceedings against Andrei Siniavskii and Iulii Daniel' (and the subsequent sentence of seven years of hard labour for the former and five years for the latter) returned Russia to the tradition of Stalin's show trials by sending a clear message about the practice of publishing works critical of the Soviet Union (Achminov, et al. 44; Barghoorn 42, 71; Garrard and Garrard 140; Parthé 47, 54, 61, 68), let alone self-publishing (*samizdat*) or publishing abroad (*tamizdat*). In August of 1968, the U.S.S.R. rolled tanks into Czechoslovakia in order to suppress Alexander Dubček's Prague Spring. At home, the KGB virtually finished tightening the screws on any incipient civil rights movements by 1972 (Barghoorn 93): "[t]he majority of those who read poetry in the squares during the Thaw retreated from the public sphere, going into a sort of hibernation. They chose contemplative careers as researchers or translators" (Gessen 13).

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<sup>186</sup> The subsequent collapse of oil prices in the mid-1980s caught the leadership off guard (Tul'ev 181).

Those who could leave on their own accord, did. Despite a sharp turn towards the positive treatment of the “Jewish question” by authors such as Evtushenko, Voznesenskii, Kuznetsov, and Rybakov between 1969 and 1975 (Thompson 28), enough was enough and more than 250,000 Jewish representatives of the creative class (writers, critics, actors, and musicians) took the chance to leave for Israel after lengthy petitions and tremendous economic pressures placed on the U.S.S.R. by the West (Aleksieva n. pag.). Others, especially those perceived to be more dangerous ideological enemies, were treated more severely: In 1973, Lidiia Chukovskaia<sup>187</sup> was the subject of a “meeting [at the Writers’ Club<sup>188</sup>], which amounted to a trial *in camera*” (155), for writing a letter of protest “to the establishment novelist Mikhail Sholokhov” in 1966 (144). According to Hingley, such a meeting, called *prorabotka*, is incurred as punishment “for infringing some taboo or simulating insufficient civic zeal” (217).<sup>189</sup> Chukovskaia was eventually expelled from the Writers’ Union in 1974 (145), an action which she described as being “sentenced to oblivion” (156), because “[a]ll copies of the expelled writer’s works are removed from libraries and bookstores<sup>190</sup> throughout the Soviet Union, no public mention of his

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<sup>187</sup> The daughter of Kornei Chukovskii

<sup>188</sup> “Officially recognized writers – those accepted into the Writers’ Union – were granted special living quarters, luxurious resorts, better-quality medical care and even had their own excellent restaurants in the major cities” (Gessen 9). For a full description of the “large array of inducements and deterrents designed to facilitate the manipulation of its members,” see Hingley (196-197).

<sup>189</sup> In *Notes of a Non-Conspirator*, Efim Etkind explains that the meetings “all followed the same stereotype, the established ritual: first there was a speech from the secretary of the Party Bureau, then came a few speeches from apparent volunteers who had in fact been recruited in advance and who divided up the subject between them, trying not to repeat one another. What was prized above all was the surprise attack which stunned or paralysed the victim; this might be some devastating quotation from a private letter . . . or perhaps there would be an unexpected witness . . . or again some close friend or disciple—or best of all his former wife—would suddenly appear on the platform and the victim would go pale, crushed and speechless”; “The crushing of a notable victim,” adds Etkind, “is a particularly voluptuous experience” (130).

<sup>190</sup> Although Etkind admits that he himself was not a particularly significant target, he provides a detailed account of his own *prorabotka* on November 28, 1968 (134), following which he was dismissed from his position and expelled from the Writers’ Union in 1974 (230). After “25 April [1974], the day I was thrown out of the Institute, a decision was taken to destroy the whole printing [of *Stylistic Problems of French Literature*]. To burn all four thousand volumes! And then to publish the book on a new footing—without mentioning the wicked name which was henceforward to be banned from print and consigned to oblivion. And that indeed is how the book was published. My book without my name. Quotations from my works, without any reference to me”; in addition, the second volume of Etkind’s *French Poetry Translated by Russian Poets* “had not yet been printed, but . . . had gone through the proof stage. This book too was suppressed and the type broken up” (227).

name is permitted, and of course there is a categorical ban on publication of his existing or future manuscripts” (164). In 1974, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, author of *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* (1962) and *The Gulag Archipelago* (1973) was “seized in the middle of the night and put on a plane to Frankfurt, West Germany” (Garrard and Garrard 160). In 1976

Konstantin Petrovich Bogatyryov, a well-known expert on Russian and German poetry, and a respected translator . . . , was bludgeoned and his skull fractured just outside his apartment door in Moscow. . . . As a rule, harassment . . . [took] such forms as slashing the tires and smashing the windows of the target’s car . . . abusive telephone calls in the middle of the night, and the interruption of mail service. (160)

The two most serious punishments for a writer were to make him unable to earn a living (163) or, in the ultimate move (so familiar to fans of Bulgakov’s *Master and Margarita* [1967]), to send him “to a psychiatric prison as a ‘schizophrenic personality’—a tactic used with many dissidents, although not with Union members” (164). However, the dissent did not end and “[t]he intelligentsia . . . protested, issuing words of pain, shame, and hope against hope” (Gessen 7). In 1979, Andrei Sakharov, the nuclear physicist and human rights activist, was sent into internal exile after protesting the Soviet involvement in Afghanistan (Rubenstein and Gribanov 241). The Soviet republics continued to experience civil unrest and terrorist acts (there was even a hushed-up assassination attempt on Brezhnev in 1969 [Rubenstein and Gribanov 241; Izyumov 167]). The number of suicides grew from 17.1 per 100,000 in 1965 to 29.7 in 1984 (Gilinskii and Rumiantseva n. pag.), and, the more that very last refuge, “the Word[,] was pushed underground, the more it became imbued with mythical, possibly lethal power” (Gessen 9). Clearly, an outlet of *some* kind, both timely and new, became desperately necessary.



## God Bless You, Mr. Vonnegut

Heller was a slow writer. He began *C22* in 1953 (Daugherty 176) and finished it eight years later. Then, there was the significant interval of thirteen years between *C22* and *SH*. Although he was often perceived to be extremely wealthy because of his book and various film rights and royalties, Heller was often hard-pressed to support his family and soon returned to teaching in 1971, rubbing elbows with Barthelme and Vonnegut at New York City College (Daugherty 318-319). However, Heller also spent much of his time writing screenplays, giving speeches for George McGovern, and fundraising for the Democratic Party (319). Another eight years elapsed until *Good as Gold* in 1979. Such gaps created a parallel interval of seventeen years between the V/T translation of *C22* and Raisa Oblonskaia's translation of *SH* in 1978; another two decades passed before Grigorii Krylov translated *GG* after the fall of the Soviet Union. Thus, although *C22* itself (notwithstanding official criticism) continued to be extremely popular ("after all, military satire in Russia is beloved by many, and Švejk's coarse pants for some will become a little cramped"<sup>191</sup>) Andrei Kistiakovskii's retranslation of the novel, now titled *Popravka-22 (Amendment-22)* was not released until 1988. Whereas *C22* was designed to contain purposeful anachronisms, *SH* is set closer to the present; however, its sense of Dostoevskian malaise (by way of *Notes from the Underground*) does give the novel the impression of timelessness; on the other hand, the parody on mid-1970s Kissingerian hijinks in *GG* was very dated by the late 1990s. This problem of "cultural delay" was very different for translations of Vonnegut. True enough, the first Vonnegut short story to appear in the U.S.S.R. was "The Euphio Question" (1951) translated by Kirill Senin<sup>192</sup> and published in 1967 in *Praktichnoe izobretenie*, and the first novel was *PP* (1952), translated by Marat Brukhnov and

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<sup>191</sup> «ведь военную сатиру в России любят многие, а грубоватые штаны Швейка некоторым станут тесноваты» (Bogomolov n. pag.)

<sup>192</sup> The pseudonym of Oleg Bitov

released as *Utopiia-14* in a “condensed”<sup>193</sup> format by Molodaia gvardiia<sup>194</sup> in the same year (Kalmyk n. pag.);<sup>195</sup> however, Brukhnov’s translation largely went unnoticed (Rait, “Kanareika” n. pag.) and neither author (or the myriad others who began to translate Vonnegut’s short fiction) had become as consistently involved or as thoroughly acquainted with Vonnegut’s work as Rait; soon all contenders seemed to have been eclipsed by the work of the revered translator. Rait’s translations proved, first and foremost, to be a gradually accelerating temporal link to the present: Although her translations did not begin the Vonnegut craze, she was instrumental in the attempt to resynchronize the U.S.S.R. with the West (and the rest of the world) with the aid of Vonnegut’s most influential works. Her translation of *CC* was published by MG seven years after the *ST* as *Kolybel’ dlia koshki*; *SF* was serialized as *Boinia nomer piat’* in the March and April issues of *NM* in the same year; and *BC* was excerpted in *LG* as *Zavtrak dlia chempionov* only one year after the *ST* and then subsequently serialized in the January and February issues of *IL* after one more year (Kalmyk n. pag.). The publication process of these novels differs greatly from that of *C22*, primarily because the content of Rait’s translations, in excerpted or serialized periodical form, is almost identical to the later book versions, indicating that any censorial or editorial involvement must have come at a very early stage. Thus, in contrast with *C22*, Vonnegut’s three novels allowed me to demonstrate the differences between the tricks and traps of minor and established translators and to trace the development of a paradoxically productive period in Soviet translation of American satire during one of the most stagnant periods of the U.S.S.R.

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<sup>193</sup> «сокращённый» This is not specified in the text itself.

<sup>194</sup> Lottman notes that, unlike KhL, MG was a more esoteric publisher; however, its minimum printings (such as for the Faulkner biography) were in the hundreds of thousands and “reprintings are frequent” (115).

<sup>195</sup> Konstantin Kalmyk’s bibliography includes publications in periodical, book, and collected form. Despite some occasional minor errors, it is the most complete and best reference of its kind. In comparison, the *Index Translationum* maintained by UNESCO (even in its print form) is woefully incomplete and its online version contains no records prior to 1981 for Russian translations of Vonnegut and no records prior to 1988 for Russian translations of Heller.

Friedberg argues that the V/T translation of *C22* and its built-in menagerie of prevarications had transformed the novel into a serviceable work of Soviet propaganda, an “authorized translation” (Gallagher n. pag.) that was “intended primarily for Soviet soldiers”<sup>196</sup> (Friedberg, *Euphoria* 41). This explanation in part fits with the mid-1970s, when all Russian males over eighteen were subject to two-year conscription (unless they pursued post-secondary studies). Vonnegut had become a new literary messiah for Russian university students who (although ostensibly living in a classless society) had, by virtue of their education, employment, and interests belonged to either the “technician class” or (like my father) the “engineer class,” who were born in the Thaw Era under Khrushchev and came of age under Brezhnev during the Era of Stagnation (Gershkovich 1), and who had the wherewithal to reject the formulas of Soviet literature (Friedberg, *Euphoria* 71; Borisenko, Skype interview. 18 Jul. 2014.) in favour of a new wave of Western translated works (Friedberg, *Euphoria* 64). They were ravenous for something different and when they encountered Vonnegut they were completely and utterly enthralled. Indeed, between 1967 and 1978 (with the exception of small gaps in 1968, 1969, and 1977), more than thirty items of Vonnegut’s short stories and novels were translated by more than a dozen translators, in addition to Rita Rait-Kovaleva and her daughter Margarita Nikolaevna Kovaleva. Demand and interest in the author were so high that two competing translations of “The Barnhouse Effect” (Vonnegut’s first short story) appeared in 1970 and 1973, and two takes on “Harrison Bergeron” came out in 1976 (Kalmyk n. pag.). Almost as if by some serendipitous principle, Vonnegut’s Soviet publications mirrored the breadth of his works printed in the U.S.: on the one hand, he was published in periodicals dealing with culture and literature in the U.S.S.R. and its republics (such as *Literaturnaia Rossiia*, *Literaturnaia gazeta*, *Prostor*, and *Pamir*) and with world literature (such as *NM*, *IL*, *Amerika*, *Nedelia*, and *Segodnia i zavtra*); on

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<sup>196</sup> My father insists that the book was produced specifically for a small group of officers. (“Ulovka.” 15 May 2015. E-mail.)

the other hand, he was also printed in periodicals targeted towards young adults, youths, and their parents (such as *Rovesnik*, *Sem'ia i shkola*, *Sel'skaia molodezh'*) and those periodicals and anthologies geared towards fostering interest in popular science and mechanics (such as *Fantasticheskie izobreteniia*, *Praktichnoe izobretenie*, *Iunyi tekhnika*, *Znanie-sila*) (Kalmyk n. pag.). (True enough, when one considers the fact that *Amerika* was almost exclusively the reading material of *apparatchiks* and was nearly impossible for an ordinary Russian to obtain, or that *Sel'skaia molodezh'* was, like *Ural*, a calculated cultural outlet on the national outskirts, far from the Moscow/Leningrad centres of publishing controls, the selection turns out to be far from coincidental.) Vonnegut was read far and wide, by those attuned to reading him.

As early as 1970, Heller appeared to have been vaguely aware of the “Russian plagiarism” of his work (“Dialogue” 68). However, the full story is somewhat more involved. Konstantin Bogomolov, the current executive editor of *Ural*,<sup>197</sup> recounts,

[i]n June [of 1967] by some weird means Joseph Heller was sent<sup>198</sup> a copy of *Ural* with the beginning of his *Catch*. (. . . many years later a *Ural* writer A. Vernikov with his sensitive ear will catch the pun and inscribe: *Uralovka-22*.) No one had ever seen the Russian journal *Ural* in New York. Let alone with Heller's novel inside. And Heller gladly shows it in all the editorial offices he visits. And sometimes he visits them just to show it.<sup>199</sup> (n. pag.)

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<sup>197</sup> Curiously, Bogomolov does not appear to be aware of the 1964 and 1965 pre-publication of the excerpted chapters of *C22*.

<sup>198</sup> Presumably by the staff of *Ural*—Bogomolov does not make this clear

<sup>199</sup> «В июне Джозефу Хеллеру каким-то макаром переслали „Урал” с началом его „Уловки”. (. . . много лет спустя уральский писатель А. Верников своим глубоким ухом уловит каламбур и начертает: „Ураловка—22”.) Никто никогда не видел в Нью-Йорке русский журнал „Урал”. Да ещё и с романом Хеллера внутри. И Хеллер охотно его показывает во всех редакциях, где бывает. А бывает отчасти затем, чтобы как раз показать».

Notwithstanding the fact that Heller did not know Russian (although he had Russian-speaking relatives [Daugherty 28]), it makes sense that, in 1975, when Friedberg wrote Heller for comment, the author reiterated the idea that there was no “approval sought for the right to publish at all,” but also added that he “was not aware that changes *had* been made in the Russian version of *Catch-22*” (qtd. in Friedberg, *Euphoria* 21n10). It is doubtless that most of the politics surrounding the publication and reception of the novel would have been entirely alien to the American writer, but the simplest explanation is that Heller (unlike Vonnegut) was much more complacent about the fate of his work, as it underwent inter- and intra-cultural transformation. For instance, commenting in an interview on the production of the film version of *C22* in 1972, Heller flatly responded: “I’ve never felt that anyone had any obligation to remain faithful to the

**Figure 3** “KV with his Russian translator Rita Rait at the Writers’ Union in Moscow (under photograph of the Russian poet Mayakovsky), 1974” (Krementz qtd. in Klinkowitz and Lawler 45).

book or to me, or even to make a good movie” (“Talks” 305).<sup>200</sup> As Vonnegut biographer Charles J. Shields explains, prior to 1972, Vonnegut too “had known nothing of Rait translating his novels (or the royalties owed to him<sup>201</sup>) because of the political filters between American authors and Soviet publishers during the Cold War” and the practice of “pirating” foreign works, until Donald M. Fiene, a Russian professor at University of Louisville,<sup>202</sup> wrote to Vonnegut on May 12, 1972; Vonnegut met Rait in Paris on October 28, 1972 of the same year (Fiene 168; Friedberg, *Euphoria* 21; Vonnegut, “To America” 221); he then met her again “twice in Moscow [see Figure 3] and once in Leningrad” (Vonnegut, *Fates* 180). The writer soon became impressed with the “salty” old lady, and on January 28, 1973 wrote an impassioned plea to “Invite Rita Rait to America!” in the *New York Times Book Review*, calling her “the champion and translator in the Soviet Union of William Faulkner and J. D. Salinger and John Updike and Franz Kafka and Anne Frank and Robert Burns, among others” (221) and her English “excellent” (222), noting that “*I’ve been told* she’s first-rate by those who are entitled to an opinion. Her *Catcher in the Rye* is one of the sensational best sellers of all time over there” (223; emphasis added).<sup>203</sup> On June 25, 1974 Vonnegut wrote to William Styron<sup>204</sup> that “[s]he is one of those who wants to stay there, and, with a little help from her friends, to make the Soviet Union more amusing and humane. Fat chance, I suppose” (*Letters* 216-217).

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<sup>200</sup> This marks another difference between Heller and Vonnegut: whereas the former began a fruitful collaboration with Rait, the latter admitted: “I don’t like working with people. . . . I like working alone” (“Talks” 311).

<sup>201</sup> According to the *Encyclopedia of Soviet Law*, the Soviet copyright agency VAAP, was not established until 20 September 1973 (807) in part due to pressures created during contact with authors such as Vonnegut. Lottman explains that the agency soon became just another measure of control: “Nothing, repeated [VAAP Vice-Chairman Yuri F.] Zharov, prevents direct contacts between American and Soviet publishers. But of course all contracts must be signed with VAAP, because that copyright agency is responsible for executing agreements under the Soviet state monopolies in foreign trade and foreign currency” (Lottman 103).

<sup>202</sup> When Fiene was a doctoral student at Indiana University he began to correspond with Rait about Vonnegut (Fiene, “Dostoevsky” 129).

<sup>203</sup> Vonnegut’s plan did not come to fruition until 1984 (*Letters* 153). For more information on Vonnegut’s many attempts to invite Rait to the United States, see Appendix I.

<sup>204</sup> The author of *Sophie’s Choice* (1979)

As a result of Vonnegut's developing relationship with Rait, <sup>205</sup> *The Wanderings of Billy Pilgrim*, <sup>206</sup> a stage play based on *SF* (see Figure 4 and Figure 5), premiered at the Central Academic Theater of the Soviet Army on December 25, 1975 (Fiene 185; Leighton, "Kovaleva's Vonnegut" 412) to different official and

**Figure 4** "A scene from the play *The Wanderings of Billy Pilgrim* in the production of the Central Theatre of the Soviet Army. 0-356381." (*The Private Collection of Bobrov N. N.* Moscow. May 1976. The Russian Government Archive of Cine-Photo documents.)

unofficial reactions: Vonnegut himself was ecstatic and sent a telegram that was reprinted in *Moscow News* in English and *Izvestiia* in Russian (Rait, "Kanareika" n. pag.). *Moscow News* (Fiene 188) and *Trud* (189)

reviewed the 1976 production

positively and Fiene wrote in 1977

that "after one year the play has had

fifty performances and is still going

strong" (181). However, David

Shipler's 1976 *Chicago Tribune*

review (despite its misleading title

"Vonnegut Fares Well on a Soviet

Stage") addresses the problematic

**Figure 5** "A scene from the play *The Wanderings of Billy Pilgrim* in the production of the Central Theatre of the Soviet Army. 0-356382." (*The Private Collection of Bobrov N. N.* Moscow. May 1976. The Russian Government Archive of Cine-Photo documents.)

<sup>205</sup> After Vonnegut befriended Rait, he often sent her page proofs of novels before they were published (Rait, "Kanareika" n. pag.).

<sup>206</sup> «Странствия Билли Пилигрима» Vonnegut received no royalties for the play (Shipler 15).

adaptation of *SF*, explaining that the Soviet production

proved to be an exercise in converting the literature of the absurd into the theater of realism. The Vonnegut book is a bizarre, dreamlike, hilarious tragedy of war and violence . . . It is a strong psychological drama, a philosophical statement . . . The play is none of these. It does not violate the book, but diminishes it. It uses as its backbone the book's antiwar theme and stops there. . . . it is a slightly zany but nonetheless realistic story . . . the Soviet authors obliterate every trace of Billy's vaguely right-wing sympathies . . . [For example, t]here is no speech at a Lion's Club luncheon by a Marine major who calls for North Viet Nam to be bombed back to the Stone Age[.] (15)

My father (at the time, a military chemical engineer in Moscow), similarly argues that the production was "primitive," the roles were hammed up,<sup>207</sup> and the play was in actuality quite poorly attended because tickets were sold as a "bonus" for buying tickets to a more popular production, as part of a quota-fulfillment scheme:

They made out of a tragic thing a semblance of a farce. And I at this time worked with a special type of logarithmic ruler to calculate inevitable losses from the deployment of nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons. You turn these dials—sort of munition, type of explosion, wind direction, weather conditions, and so forth—and you get a result: 350,000 killed, 500,000 wounded, out of which this many will die on the second day, during the first week, and so forth.

*Slaughterhouse* was very important for forming my attitude to all this.

(Khmelnitsky, Gregory. "Balaganchik." 29 Jul. 2014. E-mail.).<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> This is corroborated by other persons' first-hand reminiscences. See "B'iut chasy, iadrena mat'!" (n. pag.)

<sup>208</sup> «Они сделали из трагической вещи вид балаганчика. А я в это время занимался со специальными линейками типа логарифмических, чтобы подсчитать неизбежные потери от применения ядерного, химического или биологического оружия. Крутишь такие шкалы – вид боеприпаса, тип взрыва, направление



As Shipler explains, “Vonnegut . . . said he never saw the Russian play script of his novel . . . [stating] ‘One of my closest friends, Rita Rait . . . translated my novel . . . She then worked closely with the authors and director. I trust her judgment in this matter. She is one of my favorite translators’” (15). Clearly, the relationship between author and translator was often quite close and based on trust that required no proof. On November 11, 1977, Vonnegut wrote to Donald Fiene about a trip to Leningrad:

[Rait’s] bosses . . . sent contracts along  
with her, made her their sole negotiator,  
instructed her to tell us to accept their  
terms or go to hell, that they weren’t all  
that interested in publishing me anyhow.  
Their offer was a generous one by Russian  
standards, but the shabbiness of making  
Rita close the deal was dishonorable in the  
extreme. (*Letters* 254-255)

In 1978,<sup>209</sup> all three novels in Rait’s translation were collected and published (along with *God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater, or Pearls Before Swine* which appeared there

**Figure 6** Cover of *Kurt Vonnegut* by I. Sal’nikova. (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1978.)

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ветра, погода и т.п. – и получаешь результат: 350 тысяч убитых, 500 тысяч раненных из которых столько-то умрёт на второй день, в течении первой недели и т.п. . . . „Бойня” была очень важна для формирования моего отношения ко всему этому».

<sup>209</sup> The dates printed in the front matter presumably refer to the English editions that Rait used for her translations. It is thus possible to calculate the approximate amount of time Rait had available to work on each novel. However, while for *CC* (1963), a 1965 edition is listed (178), allowing five years before the 1970 translation in *NM*, for *SF* (1969), a 1968 edition is listed (22), suggesting that the book was translated one year before it had been published in English!; only for *BC* (1973) is the first edition listed (53), allowing just one year before the 1974 translation of the two chapters published in *LG*. The same errors exist in A. Zverev’s introduction to the collection (6, 7). The most obvious explanation for these discrepancies is the need to conceal the embarrassing “cultural delay” of the arrival of Western works into the U.S.S.R.

for the first time in novel form<sup>210</sup>) by Khudozhestvennaia literatura<sup>211</sup> (see Figure 6), and it was precisely this edition, published in the Era of Stagnation, that survived the restructuring of Tvardovskii's *NM*, that could only be bartered for but never bought,<sup>212</sup> that circulated in a very limited circle of Soviet *intelligentsiia*, and that I had read and re-read in my teenage years, between my family's immigration to Israel and the aftermath of the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.<sup>213</sup> However, my investigation of Rait's translations did not begin until two decades later when, while reading *BC* in English for the first time (for the American Literature reading group run by the students of my Master's program), I became shocked upon discovering what seemed to be innumerable inaccuracies, lacunae, and plain *otsebiatina*<sup>214</sup> on the part of the preeminent translator:<sup>215</sup> although the two novels ostensibly contained the same narrative, the multitude of differences between them (that I was yet to identify) appeared to yield two very disparate forms of satire, profoundly unsettling my *Weltanschauung*.

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<sup>210</sup> The novel was first translated by I. Razumovskaia and S. Samostrelova and serialized in the March, April, and May issues of *Avrora* (1976) (Kalmyk n. pag.).

<sup>211</sup> KhL was a prestigious publisher. In "The Soviet Way of Publishing," Herbert R. Lottman calls it "a star of the literary group of publishers," explaining that it "chooses the books it will publish not only from the so-called thick journals of Moscow . . . but from anywhere a good book is republished throughout the U.S.S.R." (109).

<sup>212</sup> Leighton notes that "[c]opies of . . . [Vonnegut's] works in English are a welcome gift from American visitors and they reportedly bring a high price on the black market" ("Kovaleva's Vonnegut" 412). In fact, Rait could not procure her own author's copy of the 1978 collection. As poet and essayist Liubov' Kachan recalls, "[t]he book, as usual, was impossible to obtain. And only after a year, after Rita Iakovlevna once again came to Akademgorodok [a city in Novosibirsk], we succeeded (with a special call!) personally procure for her five copies from some sort of fonds" (n. pag.) («Книгу, как обычно, невозможно было достать. И только через год, когда Рита Яковлевна в очередной раз приехала в Академгородок, нам удалось (по специальному звонку!) лично для неё достать пять экземпляров из каких-то там фондов».)

<sup>213</sup> The only other comparable reprintings of Rait's collected translations of Vonnegut were published very far from U.S.S.R.'s intellectual centres: in Kishinev, Moldova (1981); Minsk, Belarus (1988); and Stavropol' (1989) (Kalmyk, n. pag.).

<sup>214</sup> «отсебятинa»—A pejorative term literally meaning *from the self*, signifying *an awkward improvisation*. According to the *Tolkovyi slovar' V. Dalia*, the word was coined by K. Briulov to signify "a poor scenic composition, a painting composed from the self, not from nature, [by means of] one's own foolishness" («плохое живописное сочиненье, картина, сочинённая от себя, не с природы, самодурью») (n. pag.)

<sup>215</sup> On October 25, 1974, Vonnegut wrote to Donald Fiene that "[t]hat country sure is full of envy, by the way. Simonov drank a toast to this effect: 'We all argue as to who our finest novelist is, who our finest poet is, who our finest playwright is—but nobody argues about who our finest translator is. It is indisputably Rita Rait.' The faces of other translators at the table shriveled as though drenched in lemon juice" (*Letters* 220-221).

## Back in the U.S.S.R.

Wishing to resolve my sense of cognitive dissonance and gain a broader understanding of more recent responses to the translations, as well as a view from “the other side,” my father and I engaged the community of the online Russian forum Librusek in an attempt to gauge the reactions of Rait’s readers over the years (“Lost in Translation”<sup>216</sup> n. pag.). The responses ranged from the helpful and tolerant to the nationalistic and aggressive:

I absolutely cannot imagine that omitted textual fragments could be so significant as to have an influence on a worldview.<sup>217</sup>

That very same *fuck* . . . can hardly be constantly translated *literally*. . . . The wealth of unprintable language in Russian allows the selection of the right word (conveying the mood, the character of the hero, his condition, the level of his development, etc.). . . . As for textual omissions, then, of course, this is unacceptable . . . Still, I find it difficult to imagine an omitted fragment so significant that its inclusion could change one’s worldview.<sup>218</sup>

The reader measures the value of the cut-down . . . from the position of the “rational, good, eternal.” The passage about penises [from *BC*] carries none of these attributes— . . . it does not shine with an aesthetic value, either.<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> «Потеряно в переводе» I later learned that similar questions (especially with regard to equivalence and fidelity) had already been raised in extensive online discussions. See for example Andreev, Oleg, et al. “Pro Rait-Kovalevu, Vonneguta s Sélindzherom, i Dovlatova” and Kuznetsov, Sergey, et al. “Pro Sélindzhera i Rait-Kovalevu.”

<sup>217</sup> «Совершенно не могу себе представить, что выпущенные фрагменты текста могут оказаться настолько значительными, чтобы оказать влияние на мировоззрение» (n. pag).

<sup>218</sup> «Тот самый *fuck* . . . вряд ли можно постоянно переводить *дословно*. . . . Богатство русской нецензурной речи позволяет выбрать подходящее (передающее настроение, характер героя, его состояние, уровень его развития и т.д.). . . . Что касается купюр в тексте, то, разумеется, это недопустимо. . . . Но тем не менее мне трудно представить себе настолько значимый изъятый фрагмент, наличие которого могло бы поменять мировоззрение» (n. pag).

<sup>219</sup> «Читатель меряет ценность урезанного . . . с позиций „разумного, доброго, вечного”. Отрывок о членах . . . ни одного из этих атрибутов не несёт - . . . эстетической ценностью он тоже не блещет» (n. pag).

We ought not to forget about the censorship of Soviet times. I think it would not have passed books enumerating penis sizes or where one encounters obscene language. Here too shone the translator's mastery, to still carry the work to the reader, in a minimally cut-down or changed form.<sup>220</sup>

I had the good fortune of being acquainted with Rait-Kovaleva . . . Believe me, she didn't have a spot of hypocrisy or shame and in conversations with us she used vocabulary . . . of any kind.<sup>221</sup>

Rait-Kovaleva is nevertheless a very decent translator, of the old school. In *Breakfast* she omitted only fragments that did not pass Soviet censorship—about sex . . . In truth, there is quite a bit there about sex, as a result the book turned out emasculated.<sup>222</sup>

Rait-Kovaleva, Kashkin, Khinkis, Apt, and others are (without exaggeration) great translators of the old school. Trampling on their bones would hardly be fair.<sup>223</sup>

I believe our talented translators, without their labour we would have been deprived of communication with many greats.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> «Не стоит забывать про цензуру советского времени. Думаю она не пропустила бы книги где идёт перечисление размеров члена или встречается нецензурная лексика. Здесь тоже проявлялось мастерство переводчика, все-таки донести произведение до читателя, в минимально урезанном или изменённом виде» (n. pag).

<sup>221</sup> «Имел счастье быть знакомым с Райт-Ковалёвой . . . Поверьте, у неё не было и тени ханжества или стыдливости и в разговоре с нами она использовала лексику . . . да любую» (n. pag).

<sup>222</sup> «Райт-Ковалёва все же очень приличный переводчик, старой школы. В „Завтраке” она пропускала только фрагменты, которые не проходили советскую цензуру - о сексе . . . Правда, о сексе там довольно много, в результате книга получилась выхолощенная» (n. pag).

<sup>223</sup> «Райт-Ковалёва, Кашкин, Хинкис, Апт и проч. - великие (без преувеличения) переводчики старой школы. Топтаться на их костях вряд ли было справедливо» (n. pag).

<sup>224</sup> «Я верю нашим талантливым переводчикам, без их труда мы были бы лишены общения со многими великими» (n. pag).

[Americans are reborn] from shit, in short. . . . And the poor translators, plugging their noses and holding back so as not to vomit, must carry this “rebirth” to the reader who, in principle sympathizing with “the reborn,” nonetheless entirely cannot imagine how it is possible to sit in shit up to the ears?<sup>225</sup>

For example, “and then the bartender knocked his brains out with a hockey stick” . . . In Vonnegut, of course, a baseball bat is specified. But, at that time . . . a normal Soviet reader did not even know what it looks like, so the “picture” just did not paint itself. Well a hockey stick, this is dear and familiar.<sup>226</sup>

In the U.S.S.R. (from the beginning of the 1920s, I think) there were two different schools of translation: “bukvalist” (i.e. maximally exact transmission of the text at the expense of aesthetics and even meaning) and “semantic,” (i.e. attempting to convey the spirit of the work as accurately as possible, the thought of the author—not necessarily using those realia mentioned in the original. Some looked for a golden mean . . . This is to say that to speak of some unified Soviet school, some unified approach (and what more with the conscious intention to “castrate” the translated book)—we must not.<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> «Из дерьма, короче. . . . А бедным переводчикам, затыкая нос и сдерживаясь чтобы не блевануть, это „возрождение” нести к читателю, который, в принципе сочувствуя „возрожденцам”, тем не менее совершенно не представляет, как можно сидеть в дерьме аж настолько по уши?» (п. pag).

<sup>226</sup> «К примеру, „и тогда бармен хоккейной клюшкой выш[и]б ему мозги” . . . У Воннегута, конечно, бейсбольная бита указана. Но, в то время . . . нормальный советский читатель даже не знал, как она выглядит, так что „картинка” не рисовалась. Ну а хоккейная клюшка, это родное и знакомое» (п. pag).

<sup>227</sup> «в СССР (с начала 1920-х, думаю) существовали две различные школы перевода: „буквалистская” (т.е. максимально точная передача текста в ущерб эстетике и даже пониманию) и „смысловая” (т.е. старавшаяся как можно точнее передать дух произведения, мысль автора - не обязательно в тех реалиях, которые упоминались в оригинале). . . . Кто-то искал и золотую середину . . . Это к тому, что говорить о какой-то единой советской школе, каком-то едином подходе (да ещё и с осознанным намерением „кастрировать” переводимую книгу) – нельзя» (п. pag).

The discussion (I have represented its more palatable samples here) did not leave me convinced: not only did the omissions in Heller's and Vonnegut's novels seem to be more than just sexual, but they also had less to do with the "rational, good, [and] eternal" (or any purely aesthetic considerations) and more with the realities of Cold War politics and Soviet literary and publishing practices. It also struck me as fascinating and troubling that the rhetoric of the other participants in the 2010 discussion often reflected the language of the Soviet reviewers and critics of Heller and Vonnegut in the 1970s. Despite our interlocutors' extremely xenophobic and acrimonious tone (I withdrew from the discussion just before someone eventually reached the conclusion that my father and I are *zhidomasonry*<sup>228</sup>), I was able to use this unlikely survey to derive a framework for an investigation: First, the crossroads of languages and cultures at which I stood required the elucidation of distinct Soviet and Western perspectives—both theoretical and practical—in relation to the historical context of the Cold War and the translation of the texts at hand and texts in general. Second, in order to begin the motion towards evaluating the adequacy or acceptability<sup>229</sup> of the translations, I needed to derive specific categories of problematic translation choices specific to the genre, ideology, and narrative of the text. Third, after explicating the production of Soviet translations, I needed to determine the effect that established TS scholars and translators had on the discipline and whether any influence on their parts affected the canonicity of translated works and the possibility of retranslating them with new parameters. The proof of the pudding was still in the eating.

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<sup>228</sup> Like *kosmopolit* in the mid-twentieth century, the dysphemism *zhidomason* (albeit an archaic term) remains a Russian epithet for the cultural Other in general and Jews in specific. The compound word refers to the Judaeo-Masonic conspiracy by way of a variety of documents written in French in the late 1800s and published in Russian in 1903 as *Protokoly sionskih mudretsov* (Cohn 65; Hagemeister n. pag.); after Henry Ford's sponsorship of the English translation in 1920 (Cohn 152), the text has been more commonly known in English as *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*.

<sup>229</sup> Although I felt strongly about what a "good" translation should be like from the outset of my project, this was my preliminary attempt to avoid binary evaluative terms such as *good/bad*, *erroneous/correct*, or *faithful/unfaithful*.

## Same Time, Different Place

Western critical sources pertinent to Rait's Russian translations of Vonnegut have been scant; however, I was able to locate four resources that commented on the translations, corroborated some of my preliminary findings, and raised new questions. Ann C. Vinograd's rather terse article, "A Soviet Translation of *Slaughterhouse-Five*," published in the *Russian Language Journal* in 1972, directly addressed the 1970 *NM* translation:

As a whole the translation is faithful to the original; the Russian reader meets all the characters and follows the plot . . . In many small instances, however, the translated text contains apparently deliberate changes which are not justified by translator's license . . . [which] may be divided into the following categories: 1) Politics, 2) Obscenities and Sex, [and] 3) Miscellaneous. (14)

Vinograd argues that "[t]he second category is the largest [owing to] Soviet literature . . . [and] its puritanical taboos" (15-16),<sup>230</sup> and gives examples of "change[s that] give the Soviet reader an interpretation different from that intended by Vonnegut" (16). She briefly draws "a curious parallel to . . . the first American translation of Tolstoy's *Resurrection*" (18)<sup>231</sup> and goes on to discuss "miscellaneous . . . omissions and word replacements," noting an instance where Vonnegut's irony is lost as a result of such gaps and concluding that the serialized novel is "an unscholarly, questionable job of translation" (18). Vinograd's assessment of Rait's translation is ultimately predicated on the assumption that the "faithful" translation is equivalent to the ST.

Donald M. Fiene's "Kurt Vonnegut's Popularity in the Soviet Union and His Affinities with Russian Literature" published in *Russian Language Triquarterly* in 1976 commented on

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<sup>230</sup> Ironically, all instances of *mother fucker*, *shit*, and *piss* are censored in Vinograd's own article.

<sup>231</sup> See also Michael Holman on "Tolstoy's uncommonly frank portrayal of relations between the sexes" in "The Sanification of Tolstoy's *Resurrection*" (275).

Brukhnov's 1967 "mediocre translation" of *PP*, Fiene's encounters with Vonnegut fans in Russia in 1975, the culturally "important" stage production in 1976 (167) (arguing with Shipler's review of it [168]) and remarked on the "not altogether successful" translation of *GB* by Razumovskaia and Samostrelova (169) as well as Rait's translations of Vonnegut's works (167). Fiene's assessment mirrors Vinograd's when he compliments the translator's "skill at finding vivid Russian equivalents for the colorful cursing and slangy dialogue of contemporary American fiction . . . all the more remarkable for the fact that she has never visited the United States [until 1984]" (167). However, unlike critics before or after him, Fiene also draws distinct parallels between Vonnegut's writing and those of Russian authors: Gogol's—"laughter through tears" (173, 175); Dostoevsky<sup>232</sup>—he "does not merely advocate a kind of . . . charity, but is in some sense a suffering victim himself" (175), he is "occasional[ly] sentimental" (178), and both authors have "the tendency . . . to dramatize in a single work of fiction one major idea, often exaggerating it to an extreme limit" (178);<sup>233</sup> Saltykov-Shchedrin (175); and "Vonnegut's penchant for inventing new religions . . . [is] a tentative counterpart to Gorky's 'God-building' or *bogostroitel'stvo*" (176). A particularly salient feature of Fiene's article is the assertion that, on the one hand, Vonnegut owes his popularity in Russia to the fact that his readers "recognize in his prose many of the familiar features of classical Russian literature" (175), but, on the other hand, "[a]s far as the question of literary influence is concerned, I somehow doubt that a genuine

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<sup>232</sup> Especially *Brothers Karamazov*

<sup>233</sup> Fiene emphasizes "a connection between Dostoevsky's 'Dream of a Queer Fellow' (in which the narrator dreams of a visit to another planet) and Billy Pilgrim's time-tripping to Tralfamadore—in that the point of departure for both is a rejection of unjust life on earth" (N. Gubko qtd. in Fiene 175). However, Fiene does concede that there is one major difference between the two authors: "Dostoevsky was a believer who was able to feel in the depths of his being the despair of the atheist[. w]hile Vonnegut is a despairing atheist who is able to feel in the depths of his soul the life-saving faith of the believer" (180). As for the famous passage in *BC*—"It's all like an ocean!" cried Dostoevski. I say it's all like cellophane." (*BCe* 680)—although Fiene cunningly notes, "I have not yet found the source for this" (183), he later ("Dostoevsky" 134) admits that it is from *The Brothers Karamazov*: «а ведь правда, ибо всё как океан, всё течёт и соприкасается»—"but it is true, for all is like the ocean, all flows and joins" (Dostoevsky n. pag.).



Russian influence can be proved in Vonnegut's case" (177). Ultimately, the question that Fiene so delicately raises but never answers is *who*, precisely, infused Vonnegut's texts with a sense of Russia that his readers immediately recognized as their own?

Maurice Friedberg's *A Decade of Euphoria: Western Literature in Post-Stalin Russia, 1954-1964* (1977) touches on Vonnegut's translations only tangentially, very briefly discussing the difficulty of censorship of obscenity (29-30), the treatment of homosexuality (33-34) and depiction of WWII-era Russian soldiers (37) in *SF*. However, Friedberg thoroughly comments on "the political usefulness of Western literature" to Soviet ideologues, using the example of the 1967 translation of *PP*:

The edition was supplied with an introduction of some twenty pages. Its author was, significantly, not a literary critic, but J. Bestužev-Lada, identified as Doctor of Historical Science, an academic title far more prestigious than the American Ph.D. Judging by the book's publisher, Molodaja gvardija, the volume was intended primarily for young readers.<sup>234</sup> According to the Soviet historian,<sup>235</sup> *Player Piano* offers a valuable glimpse of capitalist society in the near future. . . . In capitalist conditions . . . replacement of human labor by machines brings relief to the working people . . . The caveat [is] that a work's political uses need not coincide with its author's views or intentions[.] (293-294)

Although Friedberg does not offer a thorough assessment of the translation's success, two decades later he will comment in *Literary Translation in Russia: a Cultural History* on the requirements that translations had to brave to pass the muster of Soviet ideology .

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<sup>234</sup> This is only somewhat correct. MG also focused on releasing emerging writers and genres, such as science fiction.

<sup>235</sup> Bestuzhev-Lada was actually a futurologist.

Lauren Leighton's detailed (albeit jaundiced and self-contradictory) review, "Rita Ra[i]t-Kovaleva's Vonnegut," published in *The Slavic and East European Journal* in 1980, reviews the 1978 collection and responds to Vinograd's article. Leighton writes that

The book was awaited with impatience by Russian readers, and when it appeared, after numerous delays, it was an immediate sellout. Translation is a high art in Russian culture, and Russian readers would not lightly accept a poor or average translation . . . Perhaps only Ra[i]t-Kovaleva, greatly admired for her translation of Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*, enjoys the prestige necessary for this language task. (412)

Oddly enough, Leighton begins with the unqualified "premise that this [the 1978 edition] is an excellent translation" (412). However, he soon admits that "the wrong choice of a Russian lexical equivalent or a single incorrect reordering of syntax could give Russian readers a most unfortunate idea of what Vonnegut is about" (412-413), implying that Rait has succeeded by expressing perfectly an equivalent of Vonnegut's work. However, Leighton's argument is full of self-contradictions. For instance, he argues that, although Rait's "direct early acquaintance with English as it is spoken by Americans occurred in Murmansk during World War II" (413), and although Rait is "a foreigner isolated from natural contact with other cultures . . . [and] such acute phenomena . . . [as] Henry J, or Seven-Up, or Pall Malls, to say nothing of zap guns, crankcase drainings, contract labor, [or] barbershop quartet[s]" (418), she "has a remarkable command of our idiom" (413) and is "knowledgeable about American culture," so that "[t]he translation has remarkably few errors" ("Rita" 417). When Leighton qualifies Rait's professional background, he explains that Rait "is one of the many translators who were schooled by the late Kornej Čukovskij, . . . [whose] summation of the art of translation" would stipulate that "[t]he

Russian translator of Vonnegut must have a total command of our [English] idiom . . . and must have, besides, the tact, the instinct, [and] the intuitive grasp of the ways in which Vonnegut turns a trite everyday phrase into a finely ironic aphorism” (413), lest she give the “wrong idea” about the author” (99). While Leighton reaffirms Vinograd’s position in his discussion of “the Soviet aversion for explicit sexual language in print” (413) and “the consistent deletion of anything in the least way derogatory to Russians” (417), he disagrees with Vinograd’s close reading, arguing that “if . . . [Rait’s] equivalents are a clear example of revisionism, she manages *to honor the spirit, if not the reality*, of the original, and she is adroit at toning the language down while conveying, usually, exactly what is meant” (416; emphasis added). Leighton is most caustic when he describes the sexual omissions from the English text, in statements like “[v]ery lamentable in the translation is the absence of Vonnegut’s careful research into the question of penis lengths. . . . Surely Russian readers might have liked to know that Vonnegut’s own penis is three inches long” (416). However, he does seriously discuss questions of obscenity and omission, albeit incorrectly stating that “more than a few of Vonnegut’s most explicit words and phrases were somehow permitted into print” (416). When Leighton uses descriptors like *deftly*, *aptly*, and *perfect* for his wide-eyed praise of Rait’s translation of “distinctive American expressions” (413) and “distinctive Vonnegutisms” (415), he presents the English and transliterated Russian phrases side by side, without any additional qualification, as if the existence of an equivalent in the TT (let alone the translator’s self-evident proficiency) is *de facto* evidence of the translation’s inherent success.<sup>236</sup> In one paragraph, Leighton covers less-successful equivalents, which he characterises in terms of “close[ness] in spirit” and conveying

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<sup>236</sup> In fact, whether Leighton discusses “perfect” (413), “properly banal” (415) or “obviously fudged” (414) equivalents, the notion of *correspondence* persists throughout the article (peppered with the word *equivalent* and its derivations).

“the character of the original,” concluding that “[t]he Russian language does not have the capacity to provide equivalents for . . . [certain] distinctive Americanisms” (414). Ultimately, Leighton takes a position diametrically opposed to Vinograd’s, concluding that “Ra[i]t-Kovaleva’s Vonnegut” is one of the best Russian translations in a culture noted for its excellent translations” (418). Eleven years after publishing his review, Leighton dedicated a brief chapter, “Kurt Vonnegut in Russia,” to Rait’s translations of Vonnegut in his book *Two Worlds, One Art: Literary Translation in Russia*. It is curious that, despite demonstrating a very thorough knowledge of Soviet translation practices, Leighton continues to make sweeping, unqualified statements about Rait, emphasizing the notion that she is “recognized as one of the best translators in Soviet letters” (97)<sup>237</sup> and suggesting that Rait’s indisputably extensive *experience* implies *proficiency* (97). Leighton shows ignorance of the history between translator and author by stressing the prestige of the Thornton Wilder Prize that Rait received in 1983 (actually 1984), even though the awarding of the prize was, in fact, one of many desperate ploys on Vonnegut’s part to get Rait to be allowed to visit the U.S (see “To Donald Fiene. January 8, 1984” in Appendix D).

Although he does return to productive criticism, for instance, with regard to the relationship between banality and irony in Vonnegut that signals a sense of despair (99, 104) or Rait’s intertextual appropriation of the word *svikhnuksia* from Gogol’s *The Government Inspector*<sup>238</sup> (106), Leighton’s assessment of the quality of Rait’s translation is, nonetheless, still built upon subjective, evaluative terminology such as *pungent* and *sharp*, as well as *ad hoc* side-by-side presentation of the English text and its untranslated Russian counterpart meant to draw attention to the ways in which the structure of the Russian passage either successfully

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<sup>237</sup> By whom, precisely?

<sup>238</sup> «Ревизор»

“handl[es] . . . equivalents for distinctive Americanisms” (104, 105, 107) or preserves the “correct Russian order” (103) of lexical units; if a specific effect is different in the two languages, Leighton takes it as a given and moves on to the next idea (102). Also, Leighton never makes clear what ultimately underwrites the equivalence: on the one hand, Rait painstakingly works to create it; on the other hand, “[m]any of Ra[i]t’s equivalents are ready-made for her in the Russian language” (105). To this sense of equivalence, Leighton adds another—the notion of the “stylistic key” (dynamic equivalence) that ensures that language would “make the same impact on the new reader . . . as [it] did on the reader of the original” (101). Leighton is pleased that Rait lets Vonnegut speak “just like he might have written in Russian” (104), praising the translator for “not reinterpret[ing] Vonnegut” (103), “not succumb[ing] to the temptation to create for herself” (102, 107),<sup>239</sup> not “provok[ing] the reader’s curiosity (105), and choosing style over literalism (106). Leighton justifies the “elimination” of parts of speech from ST in the service of “equivalent Russian style” (102), arguing that Rait’s “modifications are not motivated by a desire to improve Vonnegut” (102); instead, Rait, follows “Russian usage,” “correct Russian [word] order,” and ensures that Vonnegut “sounds like his American self [!] in Russian”(103). Leighton does chide Rait for conveying a few expressions “too literally” (106), although he considers conveying the onomatopoeic “pooteewet” as “piuifiut” by means of transliteration to be “brilliant” (107). Finally, he includes a good three pages comprised of a list of his favourite translated words and phrases, assuring his readers of the righteousness of equivalence while (despite being aware of the existence and activities of the censorship apparatus [37]) making not a single mention of the excised passages that had excited his indignation a decade prior.

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<sup>239</sup> On the other hand, Rait is “as inventive in Russian as Vonnegut is in English” (105).

## New Research, Old Problems

Most recent studies of Russian translation and censorship of translated works appear to pertain mainly to the Thaw Era (1953-1964), rather than the Era of Stagnation (1964-1987) that followed it. Moreover, despite Anastas'ev and Zverev's concerns (that, one year after their publication, were reprinted in English as the paltry "abstract" titled "Novy Mir Upbraids 'Shockingly Poor' Translation of '... Here to Eternity,' Bowdlerized 'Catch-22'"), Lorie and company seem to have done such a bang-up job in the 1970s that not only do serious re-evaluations of the V/T translation of *C22* not exist in the West, but the issue has also been considered closed in Russia until Natalia Timko completed her dissertation titled "The Main Problems of Linguocultural Relay in the Translation Process"<sup>240</sup> in 2001. Timko devoted an entire chapter to 1967 translation and 1988 retranslation of the novel.<sup>241</sup> Unfortunately, she reinvents the wheel by proposing entirely unnecessary<sup>242</sup> categories of translation technique: *strong adaptation*, that occurs when "the differences of cultures are softened, the sharply specific is replaced with the more general . . . or the similar"<sup>243</sup> (in Western criticism this is called *domestication*; in Russian, *vol'nyi* [free] translation); and *weak adaptation*, that occurs when "the reader is carried to the world of the carriers of the source language [SL]: cultural differences are occasionally even underlined"<sup>244</sup> (the Western term for this is *foreignization*; the Russian,

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<sup>240</sup> «Основные проблемы лингвокультурной трансляции в процессе перевода» Timko repeats her assertions in her 2007 monograph *Factor "Culture" in Translation* («Фактор „КУЛЬТУРА” в переводе») which is an unmodified reprint of her earlier work.

<sup>241</sup> Timko also examines the English and German translations of Somerset Maugham, Katherine Mansfield, and J. D. Salinger.

<sup>242</sup> In fact, the TS field has rejected Timko's terms outright: in the past fourteen years, her two terms have appeared in no scholarship pertaining to translation, with the exception of one brief article (published in a 2006 issue of the Serbian journal *Zbornik matitse srpske za slavistiku: Review of Slavic Studies*. In the article, L. A. Letaeva provides a broad overview of developments in the field, where she mentions the terms *en passant* (312), takes them for granted, and moves on.

<sup>243</sup> «смягчаются различия культур, резко специфическое заменяется более общим . . . или сходным» (7)

<sup>244</sup> «читатель переносится в мир культуры носителей ИЯ: культурные различия порой даже подчёркиваются» (7)

*bukvalizm* [literalism]). Likewise, although Timko claims that she bases her work on publications by specialists in the fields of linguistics, translation theory, and cultural linguistics from both Russia and abroad, the few recognizable Western names are Christiane Nord and Claire Kramsch (relatively minor theorists), while the majority of the Russian scholars she lists in her introduction, such as Barkhudarov, Komissarov, Retsker, Chukovskii, and Shveitser, are, in fact, foundational theorists from the Soviet period who were at the heights of their popularity in the 1960s and 1970s (8, 90), which makes the bias of Timko's theoretical approach readily visible and troubling, especially when she relies on their *examples* of poor, "unacceptable," or "unnatural" translations (37, 64, 69, 76, 86, 135 et passim) and shows a preference for even older concepts from mid-twentieth century translation theory such as Nida's dynamic equivalence (89), functional equivalence (169), adequate equivalents (7), and equivalent perception (95). When Timko states that *vol'nyi* translation "appeared to be the main obstacle on the path of convergence of tongues and cultures"<sup>245</sup> she soon shows her position when she minces words when trying to differentiate *bukval'nyi* (literal) and *bukvalistskii* (literalist) translation, although, sure enough, *bukval'nyi* translation turns out to be "always bad."<sup>246</sup> Timko's attempt to create new categories by misrepresenting old ones is, as the Russians say, *dragged in by the ears*. For example, she plays fast and loose with the dates of her sources: by specifying Mikhail Gasparov's famous article "Briusov and Bukvalizm" (1971) as published in 1995 she can claim that "in *present time* there exist scholars who consider *bukval'nyi* translation singularly possible"<sup>247</sup> (emphasis added) so that she can offhandedly claim that "[t]his point of view

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<sup>245</sup> «являлся главным препятствием на пути сближения языков и культур» (84)

<sup>246</sup> «всегда плох» (87)

<sup>247</sup> «в настоящее время находятся учёные, которые считают буквальный перевод единственно возможным» (87) As I will show, this is not what Gasparov argues, calling for syncretism between the two extremes.

contradicts the *social* mission [?] of translation”<sup>248</sup> (emphasis added). Much worse still, Timko employs Era of Stagnation rhetoric when she argues that “[*b*]ukval’nyi translation and vol’nyi translation must be distinguished from *sobstvenno* translation [proper], established as a result of ‘trials and errors’ in *social* practice, that translation *that corresponds to the expectations of society*”<sup>249</sup> (emphasis added). This obvious emphasis on the Sovietism “social need”<sup>250</sup> terminates in a bewildering and revealing footnote that states that “[w]ith the exception of the works of L. K. Latyshev [Timko’s own dissertation supervisor], the social mission of translation is not formulated anywhere.”<sup>251</sup> Aside from Timko’s rather obvious sycophancy and the irrefutable fact that seventy-four years of socialist realism doctrine have defined this mission *quite specifically* in Soviet TS, Timko’s conclusion implies that “translation proper” is whatever the socially-minded theorist *du jour* wishes it to be. (“‘That’s some catch, that Catch-22,’ Yossarian observed. ‘It’s the best there is,’ Doc Daneeka agreed” [Heller 10].) As a result, when Timko attempts to apply her “techniques” to the 1967 and 1988 translations of *C22*, she musters exactly those categories that Lorie established a good thirty years prior: “Errors caused by the translator’s ignorance of material and spiritual culture,”<sup>252</sup> “Errors in connection to inept adaptation in the transmission of the original content,”<sup>253</sup> “Errors associated with the incorrect translation of significative connotations [cultural references],”<sup>254</sup> “Errors associated with the distortion of characters’ characterization,”<sup>255</sup> and so forth. In fact, Lorie’s comparison between

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<sup>248</sup> «Такая точка зрения противоречит общественному предназначению перевода» (87).

<sup>249</sup> «Буквальный перевод и вольный перевод необходимо отличать от собственно перевода, утвердившегося в результате „проб и ошибок“ в общественной практике, того перевода, что соответствует ожиданиям общества» (88).

<sup>250</sup> «общественную потребность» (88 et passim)

<sup>251</sup> «За исключением работ Л. К. Латышева, общественное предназначение переводе нигде не сформулировано» (88).

<sup>252</sup> «Ошибки, обусловленные незнанием переводчиками материальной и духовной культуры» (140).

<sup>253</sup> «Ошибки в связи с неумелой адаптацией при трансляции исходного содержания» (149).

<sup>254</sup> «Ошибки, связанные с неверным переводом сигнификативных коннотаций» (153).

<sup>255</sup> «Ошибки, связанные с искажением в характеристике персонажей» (155).



the 1961 ST and 1967 TT was so detailed and exhaustive that Timko (under the spell of academic rapture) neglects to cite passages from Lorie's essay on about fifteen occasions. Notwithstanding the issues with her scholarship, Timko's dissertation does demonstrate the surprising fact that the 1967 V/T translation was actually *more* defamiliarizing than Kistiakovskii's 1988 versions in a variety of ways (and I will return to this distinction when I compare the five versions of C22); however, because Timko manages to misidentify a number of passages when quoting both translations (despite using the standard editions), it would have been a mistake to rely on her findings directly.

Although literary criticism of Vonnegut's works and theoretical evaluation of his writing have been produced steadily in articles, monographs, and dissertations since the early 1970s, no thorough investigation of *translations* of his works existed until my second year of research, when two graduate students, Yana Skorobogatov and Samantha Sherry, defended an M.A. thesis in history and a Ph.D. dissertation in Russian literature in August and November of 2012 in Austin, Texas and Edinburgh, respectively. The fact that both graduate students are of my generation signalled to me a certain *Zeitgeist* marked by a revived interest in Cold War era culture. Skorobogatov's "Kurt Vonnegut in the U.S.S.R." addresses the author's reception in the Soviet Union, focusing on war and anti-war historiography and Cold War rhetoric. However, she dedicates only a brief chapter to the translation and circulation of literature where she describes the meeting between Rait and Fiene (5), Rait's contract with MG to translate *CC* (6), and another to translate *SF* (8). The fact that Skorobogatov often takes assessments of the official Soviet reception of Vonnegut (such as Fiene's) at face value (3) is problematic; however, despite this approach, she does examine a particularly interesting peritext, Igor Bestuzhev-Lada's preface to *Utopia-14 (PP)*, and its ideological slant (43). Skorobogatov's most productive thrust is in her

investigation of Vonnegut's audience: she acknowledges that "[t]he typical Soviet Vonnegut reader fit somewhere in between 'conformist' and 'reformist,' a broad demographic that can be explained by a brief look at the . . . conditions in Brezhnev's Russia at the time of Vonnegut's literary debut" (11); however, while she acknowledges the extremely low print runs of Vonnegut's works (and the fact that "even Rait had trouble getting ahold of extra copies of her own translated stories due to their limited circulation" [11-12]) Skorobogatov does not account for the competition from *samizdat*, only noting that "Vonnegut was no underground phenomenon" on the strength of mentions and reviews of his work in the mainstream Soviet press (11). Skorobogatov's evaluation of the translation itself is cursory: she quickly arrives at the conclusion that "Rait struggled but ultimately managed to preserve as much of Vonnegut's original as possible. She found many suitable equivalents for most of Vonnegut's puns and sarcastic remarks, but certain words and expressions completely eluded her" (7) and so "Rait managed to honor the spirit, if not the reality<sup>256</sup> of Vonnegut's authentic voice, all the while infusing the text with the occasional Russian flourish" (8; emphasis added). Any specificity with regard to the nebulous concepts of *spirit* and *authenticity* is absent. However, with regard to equivalents, Skorobogatov does provide a number of examples that baffled Rait, and prompted her to write to Fiene for explanations (9); Skorobogatov also mentions "the requirements of the Soviet censors" in tandem with examples of translated passages, however, without explaining what the specific requirements were (7). In the end, Skorobogatov reaches the same conclusions that Fiene and Leighton arrived at four decades prior, with little to show for it except for the continued emphasis on the notion of equivalence and the assertion that "Russian readers like Rait believe that Vonnegut and they spoke the same language, both literally and figuratively" (9).

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<sup>256</sup> Here, Skorobogatov seems to suffer from the same "academic rapture" as Timko, with regard to Leighton's 1980 article (416).

Samantha Sherry's "Censorship in Translation in the Soviet Union in the Stalin and Khrushchev Eras" focuses on "translated literature in the Soviet Union between the 1930s and the 1960s" (i), a period which overlaps with the Thaw Era of somewhat-relaxed rules and restrictions. The dissertation promises to examine the aspects of the translation process mediated by power and authority by way of Foucault and the "unification of the linguistic market" by way of Bourdieu (10). Sherry takes a sociological approach to the issue of censorship, focusing on practical questions of editorial redaction, political motivation, empowerment and disenfranchisement. She begins the dissertation with Román Álvarez and M. Carmen-África Vidal's assertion that translation is

not the production of one text equivalent to another text, but rather a complex process of rewriting that runs parallel both to the overall view of language and the "Other" people have throughout history and to the influences and balance of power that exists between one culture and the other. (1)

However, when Sherry discusses "structural censorship," she soon returns to the notion of "literal equivalents for swear words . . . let alone equivalents which preserve the evocative force of the original word or phrase" (145, 146). Sherry quotes Jekaterina Young's assertion that Rait "did not so much translate the slang of American teenagers as invent the Russian equivalent single-handed" (153). Sherry examines the "impossibility of creating a neologism . . . and the lack of a suitable semantically equivalent term" (214). There is a sense of an absent context in Sherry's investigation which painstakingly describes the *means* of censorship, but not its broad textual implications in terms of literary or ideological function. She also engages with actual texts only on an occasional, piecemeal basis, relying on only a handful of outdated studies for evaluation of the quality or acceptability of translations, such as Vinograd's "case study of a

single text”<sup>257</sup> or Julius Telesin’s 1976 investigation of censorship of Hemingway’s works (34). The lack of grounding in translation theory, the absence of close reading, and the focus on the Thaw Era greatly limits Sherry’s findings. Her 2013 article “Better Something Than Nothing: The Editors and Translators of *Inostrannaia literatura* as Censorial Agents” briefly revisits Vonnegut, cursorily mentioning his friendship with Rait (751-752) and Rait’s “celebrated translation of *Catcher in the Rye*” (755, 757) and its policy of “softening.” Here, at long last, Sherry acknowledges “[t]he interpretive role granted to the translator” in the context of ensuring ideological compliance (749); nonetheless, she does not take the opportunity to observe that this admission obviates the question of equivalence that has plagued critics of Vonnegut’s translations from 1972 to 2012. Forearmed by the issues raised and questions asked in these investigations parallel to my own, I proceeded to the question of the literary and ideological controls of literary products.

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<sup>257</sup> Sherry cites Vinograd’s article as published in 2008 but it is actually a four-page blustering review published in 1972.

## Chapter 2

### Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Soviet Literary and Ideological Controls

Величайшее несчастье русского искусства,  
что ему не дают двигаться органически, так,  
как движется сердце в груди человека: его  
регулируют, как движение поездов.<sup>258</sup>

—Viktor Shklovskii  
*The Hamburg Score*

In Gogol's story, "The Nose," Major Kovalev  
wakes up one morning, looks into the mirror  
and discovers, to his horror, a smooth empty  
place on his face where the nose should be. In  
Russian literature, there is still an empty place  
where the genitals should be.

—Mirra Ginsburg  
"Translation in Russia"

When a director was asked what an allusion  
is, he said, "You see, that's when you sit in  
the movie theater watching a travel film;  
they show the mountains of the Caucasus,  
and you think, 'Still, Brezhnev is a son of a  
bitch.'"

—Vladimir Voinovich  
"Censoring Artistic Imagination"

Before I tackle the question of censorial and editorial textual interventions in the U.S.S.R., I have to distinguish the unique aspects of Soviet cultural controls. As I have already demonstrated, Soviet criticism of works of literature was allowed to prosper in the popular and academic press, provided that it toed the party line and used approved rhetorical means; however, the process of *influencing* works for specific ends *before* they reached a public forum is a very different question altogether.

### Out of the Frying Pan and Into the Fire

As Marianna Tax Choldin points out in "Censorship via Translation," whereas the visible process of "covering over with caviar,"—as nineteenth-century Russians used to describe the inking out of offending passages" had been an overt, obvious technique, "the ink itself, as well as what it covers, . . . [became] invisible" (48) in the Soviet period and censorship was said to cease to exist (30); this, in effect, had allowed it to exist everywhere. Lenin's regime did not create a

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<sup>258</sup> "The greatest misfortune of Russian art is that they do not allow it to move organically, like the heart moves in a man's chest: they regulate it, like the movement of trains."

new system; rather, it “just adopted earlier mechanisms and made them more effective” (Choldin qtd. in Gallagher n. pag.). In *Giving Offense*, J. M. Coetzee writes that “[s]urveillance and control of writing in the Soviet Union built upon certain Tsarist precedents and inherited certain Tsarist structures” (120). The system has its roots in the early 1800s, when Aleksandr I created “a secret police force to report on the activities of political opponents, intercept mails, oversee the issuing of passports, and supervise press and theater censorship” (120). Early directives were rather permissive: in 1804, the statute on censorship “included among its forty-seven articles one that recommended that ‘in case of a doubtful passage having a double meaning, it is better to interpret it in the way most advantageous to the author, than to prosecute him’” (Parthé 55). However, “the definitive 1828 statute[ ] fundamentally revised this: ‘Do not permit passages in works and translations to be printed if they have a double meaning and one of the meanings is contrary to the censorship laws’” (55). Nikolai I institutionalized censorial controls (in response to the 1825 Decembrist uprising and 1830 revolutions across Europe) by means of creating the Third Section of the Imperial Chancery that directly reported to him and which, by 1848, embodied a nightmarish, proto-Kafkaesque system of “proliferating bureaucratization . . . in which censors sat over censors, decisions were made more and more in secret, and paranoia . . . swept the land” (Coetzee 120). For a time, Aleksandr II relaxed censorship, but pulled the reins in after a failed assassination attempt in 1866 (122). In an 1873 letter to Mikhail Stasiulevich, Ivan Turgenev wrote about the former’s translation of Heinrich Heine’s “Germany”: “There is one concern, though. What will the censorship say? It has become even stricter today than during the blessed day of Nic[h]olas I. And yet the translator would not want his text to be heavily edited and would prefer to withdraw his manuscript if need be” (45). The situation was complicated further when, “[s]tarting with Belinsky and Chernyshevsky, writers began to evade the censor by disguising political comment as literary criticism . . . [so that] a censorship not only of texts but of *readings* had to be instituted” (121; emphasis added). In his *Lectures on Russian Literature*, Nabokov argues that “the censor’s task was made more difficult by his having to

disentangle abstruse political allusions instead of simply cracking down upon obvious obscenity”

(4). By the late nineteenth century, the “‘ruling view’ or ‘tendency’” of a text began to be examined as a means to establish an author’s intentions, and it is at this point that the system cleaved writers into two camps: supporters of the *status quo* and the insular and suspicious *intelligentsia* (Coetzee 122): one half of it attempted to fill language with ellipse, innuendo, allusion, allegory, and “Aesopian language” while its other half attempted to detect it.

In the twentieth century, the text was shaped and massaged to specification from the moment it was a twinkle in its author’s eye to the moment it was in the hands of the reader. As far back as 1905, V. V. Trofimov described total control of Russian self-expression in “About What You Can Write”.<sup>259</sup>

You cannot write: about the bureaucratic,  
Of officers, soldats fanatic,  
Of strikes, or any modern movements,  
Of clergy, social improvements,  
Of the muzhik,<sup>260</sup> ministre seditious,  
Of executions, Cossacks vicious,  
Of the gendarmes, detentions presto,  
Of robberies, of manifestos!  
But all the rest—print simply must  
Denounce with apposite disgust!  
And when you write it—check, prithee,

“128” and “103” . . .<sup>261</sup>

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<sup>259</sup> «О чём можно писать»

<sup>260</sup> Russian peasant man

<sup>261</sup> «Нельзя писать: о бюрократе, / Об офицерстве, о солдате, / О забастовке, о движении, / О духовенстве, о брожении, / О мужике, о министерстве, / О казни, о казачьем зверстве, / О полицейских, об арестах, / О грабежах, о манифестах! / Но остальное всё — печать / Должна сурово обличать! / Когда ж напишешь - просмотри / „128“ и „103“. . .» (n. pag.). “The numbers refer to the ‘political articles’ of that period’s criminal code” (Blum, “Directives” 271).

In “Reading in the Context of Censorship,” Valeria D. Stelmakh argues that

Control over readers is possible only where the state has a complete monopoly of book publishing and distribution. In the 1970s and 1980s such a system, typical of a totalitarian state, was finally in position, and state publishing comprised over 80 percent of all printed output. The essence of the state’s book strategy consisted of forcing the public to read what was prescribed for it . . . The obligatory literary selection should be the only one accessible to the whole of the country’s population. (145)

If a text could not be bridled, it (especially as a physical artefact<sup>262</sup>) often found its way to the Orwellian “memory hole.” In *The Permanent Purge of Soviet Libraries*, Boris Korsch relates that, at the height of Stalin’s rule, “[p]eople were purged and everything related to them had to disappear, including every word they had ever written. Their books, articles, and speeches became ‘unbooks,’ ‘unarticles,’ and ‘unspeeches,’ just as they had become ‘unpersons’”<sup>263</sup> (27); “library purges were done in daylight. Everybody knew about them. Lists of books to be removed [or mutilated] were openly distributed. Decrees of library purges were officially issued, and every instruction came publicly from above” (18-19). Even in the more “relaxed” periods, such as the Khrushchev Thaw, total control over every step of textual production (Choldin

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<sup>262</sup> As Mikhail Gronas demonstrates in *Cognitive Poetics and Cultural Memory*, the mnemonic arts of Soviet citizens were another question altogether.

<sup>263</sup> A classic, often-cited anecdote concerns “one of the more bizarre examples of Soviet-era censorship. An original volume of the *Big Soviet Encyclopedia* published in the final years of Josef Stalin contains a lengthy article on Lav[ ]renti Beria, the dictator’s notorious secret police chief, plus a full-page picture. Shortly after Stalin’s death, his successors purged and executed Beria. [International s]ubscribers to the encyclopedia soon found in their mail a treatise on the Bering Sea—coupled with instructions on how to carefully remove the Beria article with a razor blade and replace it with this new material” (Gallagher n. pag.). Some of these excisions and replacements were more pernicious than others: “A chap named Zelenin was purged when a new edition of the encyclopedia was in galleys . . . The article about him was quickly replaced by a scientific treatise on a newly discovered ‘green frog’ . . . concocted by the censors in their desperate haste to come up with a replacement for the Zelenin article” (Gallagher n. pag.).



dubbed it *omnicensorship* or *vsetsenzura* [Goriaeva 9]) was not limited to printed matter and persisted in every imaginable aspect of Soviet life so that, as a result, “in some way everyone was a censor” (Choldin qtd. in Gallagher n. pag.). In fact, the writer and dissident Vladimir Voinovich posits that

the real censorship is all of the Soviet state . . . all of Soviet society works against the writer: the censors, editors, . . . publishers, and others who meddle in literature as well. . . . the KGB . . . plays a peculiar but specific role as an institution [and i]n addition to political requirements, there are also purely aesthetic ones. . . . literature must be uniform, nothing should exceed the limits of the permissible. (in Friedberg et al. 89)

To this, dissident writer Leonid Finkelstein adds, “if censorship were to be eliminated from the Soviet system, it would no longer *be* the Soviet system: it is that well entrenched” (in Finkelstein et al. “Censorship” 57). However, because of its fantastical magnitude, the extent of this system was often not fully appreciated in the West. However, because of its fantastical magnitude, the extent of this system was often not fully appreciated in the West. Writing in 1979 about the *status quo* in *Soviet Literature in the 1970s*, N. N. Shneidman asserts that “one can write today about anything in the Soviet Union as long as one does not challenge openly the foundations of Soviet society and does not question the policies of the Soviet state” (8). Such an underwhelming assessment (What *else* is there to contest?) reminds me of the famous Israeli joke in which a man complains at length about a myriad problems in his life when his exasperated friend finally asks, “And other than that?” The man shrugs and replies, *vehúts mizéh hakól beséder*<sup>264</sup>—“and other than that everything’s fine.” While moral and political disapproval of the content of Heller’s and

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<sup>264</sup> וחזן מזה הכל בסדר

Vonnegut's novels existed in both the U.S.S.R. and the U.S., the difference between the reactions of the two nations to offending works during the Cold War was fundamental: whereas Russian authors and editors laboured to quietly and privately produce a definitive, regime-appropriate text, their American counterparts had no compunctions about vocal and public (and, quite often, litigious) censure or condemnation. Moreover, debates regarding disputed works were covered by the U.S. media and became a part of the public and historical record.

### **Show 'Em How It's Done**

One must not underestimate the cultural powers of legal precedent and test cases in the West, such as *United States v. One Book Called Ulysses* (1933), *The People of the State of California v. Lawrence Ferlinghetti* (1957), or *Grove Press, Inc. v. Gerstein* (1964), that (albeit by legal fiat) brought problematic cultural questions into the public eye and played an important role in changing American attitudes to the notion of "obscenity" in general and to the works of literature and genre in specific (Nesworthy 1). *C22* did not court as much controversy as Vonnegut's works simply because Heller had only one book in print until 1974. Nonetheless, in 1972 (five years after the publication of the V/T translation in the U.S.S.R.) the members of a school board in Strongsville, Ohio "refused to approve the use of [the book] . . . Then, in August, . . . *Catch-22* [was] . . . removed from the school libraries. Board members objected to the language and the content" (Karolides, "*Cat's Cradle*" 93). As Dawn B. Sova explains in *Literature Suppressed on Social Grounds*, in 1974 and in 1979 other jurisdictions, such as the Dallas (Texas) Independent School District and the Snoqualmie Valley (Washington) School District, raised specific objections over "[t]he use of the word *whore* . . . [and] the 'overly descriptive passages of violence' and the increasingly bizarre threats by squadron members against each other" ("*Catch-22*" 84); "[i]n 1974, the U.S. District Court for the Northern District

of Ohio ruled that the board did not violate First Amendment rights because it had followed the law” (83); however, in 1976, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit overturned the decision:

Stating . . . that “a library is a storehouse of knowledge,” the presiding judge warned that libraries are created by the state for the benefit of students in the schools. . . . The judge ordered the Strongsville school board to replace the books in the school library. In response, the school district appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, but the court refused to hear the case. (83).

Challenges to Vonnegut’s works were posed during the same period. Sova describes the difficulties that faced *Welcome to the Monkey House*, a 1968 collection of previously-published<sup>265</sup> Vonnegut short stories: although the titular story is, in effect, a satire of censorship, indicting a society “absolutely disgusted and terrified by the natural sexuality of common men and women” (Vonnegut 754), it had ironically been criticized for its sexual content (Sova, “Monkey House,” 287). In 1970, a teacher in Montgomery, Alabama was fired for assigning the story for a class (288), and in 1977 a parent had withdrawn his seven children from a school in Bloomington, Minnesota to prevent them from reading the story. In *Literature Suppressed on Political Grounds*, Nicholas J. Karolides describes similar legal challenges posed to *CC*: in 1972, the book was not approved for class use and (along with *Catch-22*) was removed from school libraries in Strongsville (93) and was not returned until 1976 (94). In 1981, Vonnegut wrote that

even now my books, along with books by Bernard Malamud and James Dickey and Joseph Heller . . . are regularly thrown out of public-school libraries by school board members, who commonly say that they have not actually read the

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<sup>265</sup> From 1950 to 1964 (Sova 287)

books,<sup>266</sup> but that they have it on good authority that the books are bad for children. (PS 3)

In the same year, Vonnegut wrote an impassioned editorial, “Why are you banning my book?” in the *American School Board Journal*, pointing out that “[m]any suppressors say they have not read it [SF] and do not need to. That is how terrible a book it is” (35). In the 1982 “*Board of Education v. Pico*” trial, the U.S. Supreme court ruled 5-4 against the [school] board’s restriction, citing a violation of the First Amendment” (Morais n. pag.) A close examination of the dozen passages that were challenged in the decision (see Appendix II) reveals an opposition to a varied mix of obscenity, sexual frankness, and criticism of Christianity. In the same year, the book (along with *Ordinary People*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*, and *The Other*) was subject to being removed from a high school reading list, but was eventually made into “optional reading” (95).

Ultimately, no other Vonnegut work has been challenged more than *SF*. In “The Neverending Campaign” Betsy Morais points out that “[s]ince it was published, *Slaughterhouse-Five* has been banned or challenged on at least 18 occasions” (n. pag.). In 1971 (only one year after the serialization of the novel in *NM*) a “circuit judge Arthur E. Moore told an area high school to ban the book for violating the Constitution’s separation of church and state” (Schmidt and Karolides 448) and,

[w]hen the book was stricken from the public schools of Oakland County, Michigan in 1972, the circuit judge called it “depraved, immoral, psychotic, vulgar, and anti-Christian.” In 1973 the Drake Public School Board in North

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<sup>266</sup> This rhetorical move is curiously reminiscent of state-sponsored “letters to the editor” in the U.S.S.R. where quite often periodicals “printed letters of protest from an ‘average Soviet worker,’ an ‘ordinary collective farmer,’ or from a group of . . . ‘honest toilers’ writing from the depths of the provinces to express their spontaneous righteous indignation at some non-approved author’s breach of current taboo” (Hingley 218).

Dakota set 32 copies aflame in the high school's coal burner. A few years later, the Island Trees school district of Levittown, New York . . . removed *Slaughterhouse-Five* and 8 other books from its high school and junior high libraries. Board members called the books "anti-American, anti-Christian, anti-Semitic, and just plain filthy." (Morais n. pag.)

It is necessary to make a brief detour here to emphasize the particular significance of the wording of the Drake School Board rhetoric in the context of Cold War politics. In 1979, Albee, Miller, Styron, Updike, and Vonnegut (unwittingly endangering Rait's position<sup>267</sup>) sent a letter of protest to the Soviet Writers' Union "denouncing both the suppression of a literary anthology known as *Metropol* that had been planned<sup>268</sup> by 23 Soviet writers and the union's suspension of . . . Yevgeny Popov and Viktor Erofeyev" (Kuznetsov 21). Feliks Kuznetsov, the chairman of the union whom Vonnegut knew personally and naïvely considered to be a friend (*PS* 11), proceeded to publish an open letter titled "A Soviet Reply to 5 U.S. Writers" in the *New York Times*, citing the opinions of Soviet literary experts who considered the publication "Pornography of the Spirit," full of "compositions . . . unsound in the literary sense" (21). Most telling, however, is Vonnegut's reply to Kuznetsov, where he writes, "What you may not know about our own culture is that writers such as those who signed the cable are routinely attacked by fellow citizens

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<sup>267</sup> On January 4, 1980, Vonnegut wrote to Fiene that "Rita did not get elected an honorary member of the National Institute and Academy. It is my fault. I was so damned innocent. I thought her nomination (seconded by Miller and Updike) would be so appealing that she would be a shoo-in. Too late have I learned, unsurprisingly, that the making of honorary members is a highly political enterprise . . . She called me on my birthday, as she always does, and indicated that she had no work and expected no work. Things were hopeless, and she allowed me to suspect, I think, that my protest about the *Metropole* affair [*PS* (12); Gorieva (366)] was partly to blame. I have heard from Americans who were in Moscow in the past few months that serious artists are exhausted at last, are giving up on doing anything much that might be deep or complicated. They talk now of getting out of the country somehow. Only if they can get out from under the dead weight of the bureaucracy, they now seem to feel, can they experiment and, with some luck, grow" (*Letters* 274).

<sup>268</sup> It was subsequently "published in facsimile by Ardis, a Russian-language publisher in Ann Arbor, Michigan" (Kuznetsov 21).

as being pornographers or corrupters of children and celebrators of violence and persons of no talent and so on” (*PS* 13-14). In his later recollections Vonnegut emphasized that there was

a desperate wish on both sides that each other’s utopias should work much better than they do. We want to tinker with theirs . . . so that people there . . . can say whatever they please without fear of punishment. They want to tinker with ours, so that everybody here who wants a job can have one, and so that we don’t have to tolerate the sales of fist-fucking films and snuff films and so on. (*PS* 14-15)

Interestingly, the incident revealed not only that Vonnegut himself was *not* classed by the Soviets with the “muckrakers” he had supported (although he had recognized himself to be one), but also that the moral and political objections of the two Cold War superpowers were not necessarily dissimilar. As Maurice Friedberg pointed out in 1977, “Kurt Vonnegut’s *Slaughterhouse-Five* contains some language that was until quite recently considered unprintable even in the United States” (*Euphoria* 29); by 1987 the book was again banned, in a school in Fitzgerald, Georgia.<sup>269</sup> However, in the U.S.S.R. a translation of a new Vonnegut short story continued to come out in print almost every month. The problem was not a dramatic difference between objections grounded in questions of morality, politics, or taste; rather, it was the ability to discuss and negotiate such objections in an open forum and the limiting, unilateral official expression that arose in the absence of such a forum. Although (for instance, knowing Heller’s arduous path to releasing *C22*), far be it from me to insist that editorial involvement did not exist

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<sup>269</sup> *SF* continues to be challenged well into the twenty-first century. In 2000, the book was removed from a required reading list in Coventry, Rhode Island, and in 2001 it was withdrawn from the Advanced Placement English curriculum in Moreno Valley, California (Schmidt and Karolides 453). In 2011, “the school board of Republic High School in southwestern Missouri . . . voted 4-0 to ban Kurt Vonnegut’s 1969 novel from their curriculum and pull it from the library’s shelves” (Morais n. pag.).<sup>269</sup> While opposition to *C22* had abated by the 1980s, *Slaughterhouse-Five* appears in place 67 on the list of the “100 Most Frequently Challenged Books: 1990-1999” and in place 46 on the list of to “Top 100 Banned/Challenged Books: 2000-2009” maintained by the American Library Association (n. pag.)

in the U.S., it becomes apparent that twentieth-century literary practices in the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. can be distinguished insofar as the former emphasized the *overt* attempts to prohibit or remove the *wholesale* text from use while the latter focused on the *covert* attempts to modify *parts* of it or, failing to do so, to unmake it.

### **All's Fair in Love and Cold War**

In order to fully comprehend the role of literature in the Cold War, it is essential to appreciate the fact that its two major belligerents took the dictum *à la guerre comme à la guerre* to its most extreme logical conclusion: the printed word was just another weapon in the ongoing fight. In fact, the strategic use of the printed word was only a small component of something that the U.S. eventually finessed into the fine art of the psychological operation (PSYOP), defined by the Air Force Intelligence and Security Doctrine as

[p]lanned operations to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals. The purpose of psychological operations is to induce or reinforce foreign attitudes and behavior favorable to the originator's objectives. (n. pag.)

The classic example of the literary PSYOP in action is that of British intelligence passing microfilm to the CIA who, in turn, went on to print “at least 9,000 copies of a miniature edition of *Doctor Zhivago* [in 1959] . . . creat[ing] the illusion that this edition of the novel was published in Paris by a fictitious entity, the Société d’Edition et d’Impression Mondiale”; the CIA then distributed 2,000 copies “to Soviet and Eastern European students at the 1959 World Festival of Youth and Students for Peace and Friendship . . . in Vienna” (Finn and Couvée n. pag.) in order to foment dissidence in the U.S.S.R. using Boris Pasternak’s novel. This context

explains why it was not only within the direct scope but on the immediate agenda of Voenizdat's operations to massage Heller's *C22* so that it could be transformed from a work of fiction to a work of rhetoric designed to "expose" the dissoluteness and debauchery of American ideals in general and the cowardice and cravenness of U.S. servicemen in specific. However, there is one notable difference between the two cases (although it does not necessarily make the former any better than the latter): although PSYOPS are typically a "bottom-up" effort designed to appear like grassroots campaigns to turn one's culture against itself in *another* nation, its counterpart, the attempt to subvert and undermine the culture in *one's own* nation, is called propaganda. It is thus not a coincidence that the Soviet military publishing apparatus was created a full three years prior to its counterpart entirely dedicated to literary censorship (or that Voenizdat, unlike most Soviet organizations, actually survived the collapse of the Soviet Union). As the expert on Soviet repressions Arlen Blum explains in the annotated document collection *Censorship in the Soviet Union: 1917-1991*,<sup>270</sup> prior to 1922, a number of different agencies vied for the role of preliminary censor (Blum 31n1; Ermolaev 6). The 1918 order of the Revvoensovet (Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic<sup>271</sup>), was

the first attempt to introduce a total preliminary censorship. Although the resolution prescribed the submission to the Military-revolutionary censorship . . . only of materials containing information of military nature, in fact, right up to the establishment of Glavlit on June 6, 1922, without the permission grif [seal] R.V.Ts.<sup>272</sup> . . . no publication could be released regardless of subject matter.<sup>273</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> «Цензура в Советском Союзе. 1917—1991. Документы.»

<sup>271</sup> «Революционный Военный Совет Республики»

<sup>272</sup> Permitted by Military Censorship

<sup>273</sup> «первая попытка ввести тотальную предварительную цензуру. Хотя постановление предписывало представлять в Военно-революционную цензуру . . . только материалы, содержащие сведения военного характера, на самом деле, вплоть до учреждения Главлита 6 июня 1922 г., без разрешительного грифа Р.В.Ц. . . . не могло выйти в свет ни одно издание независимо от тематики» (Blum 11n2).



On October 24, 1919, Protocol 63<sup>274</sup> integrated all forms of military publishing (Sklianskii and Butov 448), and, the very next day, Order 1761 established the goals of the Literary-Publishing department known as Litizdat PUR (Kazharskii 180). Litizdat PUR made its goal

§ 4. . . . 1) the preparation and release of periodical publications, posters, paintings, drawings, open letters of military-agitational character. . . . 2)

Preparation and release of books, brochures, leaflets, paintings, tables, and posters of military-technical and military-pedagogical character. 3) Preparation . . . of publications . . . of military-agitational character, intended for distribution among soldiers of enemy armies . . .<sup>275</sup>

Paragraph 5 of the order provided Litizdat PUR with total operational independence and paragraph 7 mandated the merging of all military publishing under the organization's leadership. Although the publisher will change its organization name many times (among them Litrevsor from 1921, VGIZ from 1924 [Karaichentseva n. pag.], and from May 1936 Voenizdat [Akulenko n. pag.]), the specifics of each successive transformation of the publisher are less important than two facts: First, even if responsibilities for propaganda functions had to be occasionally juggled between organizations, at no point was there a break in the continuity of literary control and production. As Colonel Sergei Kalmykov notes in his article<sup>276</sup> "Voenizdat: History and Modernity,"<sup>277</sup> "[t]he postwar years became a time of flourishing"<sup>278</sup> for the publisher: from

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<sup>274</sup> I am grateful to David Stone for providing me with the scans and citations of documents pertaining to the establishment of Voenizdat ("Help with leads on Voenizdat?" n. pag.).

<sup>275</sup> «§ 4. . . . 1) составление и выпуск периодических изданий, плакатов, картин, рисунков, открытых писем военно-агитационного характера. . . . 2) Составление и выпуск книг, брошюр, листовок, картин, таблиц и плакатов военно-технического и военно-педагогического характера. 3) Составление . . . изданий . . . военно-агитационного характера, предназначенных для распространения среди солдат неприятельский войск . . .» (Sklianskii and Rakovskii 5)

<sup>276</sup> I am grateful to Sergei Kalmykov for providing me with a full version of his article.

<sup>277</sup> «Воениздат: История и современность»

<sup>278</sup> «Послевоенные годы стали порой расцвета» (54)

1946 until 1974 it released 71,300 titles in 1.9 billion copies; during Khrushchev's reign, it printed 1,400 titles in 21 million copies; during Brezhnev's time, 1,800 titles in 29 million copies (54); in the 1970s alone, it released approximately 2,500 books, brochures, magazines, and posters, reaching a total print run of 70 million copies (55). Second, at no point did the mandate of the publisher change: In a 1989 interview pointedly titled "A Sacred Cause,"<sup>279</sup> the chief editor of Voenizdat, Air Force Major General Vitalii Kazharskii repeats almost verbatim the publication types mandated by Order 1761, arguing that the output of the previous seventy years amounts to "the richest documentary and literary chronicle of the heroic defense of the nation and patriotic education of the people";<sup>280</sup> however, in a momentary rhetorical break, Kazharskii adds, "like any chronicle, it carries in itself both the vagaries of time and the subjectivism of authors and the volatility of publishers' positions. In it, it is possible to find all the vices of our history."<sup>281</sup> However, the official history on Voenizdat's current website makes no mention of Joseph Heller, James Jones, or Anton Myrer, but does note that "[i]n the 1960s-1970s there were published works of fiction that received a wide popularity among readers and that were later translated *into* many foreign languages"<sup>282</sup> (emphasis added). Finally, in a 2009 interview titled "Voenizdat: Books for the Army, Books About the Army,"<sup>283</sup> the general director of Voenizdat Viktor Akulenko does not mince words when he states that "the release of fiction was never for Voenizdat a priority. . . the main portion of the production was made to order and in the interests of the Ministry of Defense."<sup>284</sup>

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<sup>279</sup> «Священное дело»

<sup>280</sup> «богатейшая документальная и литературная летопись героической обороны страны и патриотического воспитания народа» (180)

<sup>281</sup> «как всякая летопись, она несёт в себе и превратности времени и субъективизм авторов и изменчивость позиций издателей. В ней можно найти все пороки нашей истории» (180).

<sup>282</sup> «В 1960—1970 гг. были изданы художественные произведения, получившие широкую известность среди читателей и переведённые потом на многие иностранные языки» (n. pag.)

<sup>283</sup> «Воениздат: книги для армии, книги об армии»

<sup>284</sup> «выпуск художественной литературы никогда не был для Воениздата приоритетом. . . . основная часть продукции делалась по заказу и в интересах Министерства обороны» (n. pag.).

## The Ninth Circle of Hell

In “The Sanification of Tolstoy’s *Resurrection*,” Michael Holman sets up a basic workflow of negotiating the straits of censorship prior to 1917:

Russian writers could usually predict with a fair degree of accuracy what would . . . pass the censor and “get through,” and what would not. . . . If they wanted to publish legally inside Russia, they would first exercise varying degrees of self-censorship and then, ever anxious to say that little bit more (and still be published) they would vigorously argue each individual case with the censor, consenting to compromise here in exchange for license to publish there. If they wished completely to escape the attentions of the censor (but not always the police), they would either circulate their works in manuscript in Russia or publish them illegally on clandestine, underground presses. Alternatively, . . . they could seek publication abroad, either in Russian-language émigré presses, or by placing translations with foreign publishers. (274)

In the twentieth century, unofficial publication became significantly more difficult when censorship became institutionalized and regimented in the extreme soon after the creation of Voenizdat when the founding of Glavlit (Central Administration in Matters of Literature and Publishing<sup>285</sup>) took place in 1922 (Goriaeva 16; Friedberg, *Euphoria* 3; Frankel 133; Ermolaev 7). Interestingly, as Leonid Vladimirov argues in “A View from the Inside,” “[i]t is unlikely that the introduction of censorship in Russia was carefully planned by Lenin before he came to power . . . More than once he thundered in articles and speeches against censorship . . . Yet the Decree of the Press that, in effect, reintroduced censorship . . . was signed by Lenin almost

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<sup>285</sup> Главное управление по делам литературы и издательств

immediately (in two days) after the Bolsheviks seized power” (15). Glavlit soon made its goal the “total practical control over all forms of printed production: books, newspapers, magazines, posters, postcards, and so forth.”<sup>286</sup> The organization was established on every possible level of governance in the form of a central *apparat* with branches in autonomous republics, *okrlit* and *oblkrailit* in various types of districts, *gorlit* in cities, *railit* in city areas; moreover, individual representatives were added to the staff of major periodicals and publishing houses (Frankel 134). The agency and its various subordinate branches and offices could really do almost anything: In 1924, with the aid of Glavrepertkom,<sup>287</sup> it banned the foxtrot dance (Trainin 80). In 1925, it began prohibiting the publication of information about anything from unemployment and suicide statistics to conditions in prisons and poor crop yields (Blum, *Censorship* 91). In 1926, Glavlit amended the criminal code to make propaganda and agitation punishable by six months in prison (in wartime, by firing squad); contravention of rules regarding publication or operation of printing establishments was punishable by six months of labour or a fine (99). By 1927, it had the ability to arbitrarily reduce print runs or prevent the reissue of book editions (127).<sup>288</sup> By 1929, it could control the import into and export from the U.S.S.R. an exhaustive list of printed and audio-visual media of any kind (159). In 1931, the head of Glavlit Pavel Lebedev-Polianskii gave a secret speech in which the new working principle of the organization was no longer only mere *observation* of released books, but the detection of *future tendencies* and impending dangers (195). By 1933, Glavlit was involved in the checking of dictionaries (Orlov 221-222). In

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<sup>286</sup> «Главная задача Главлита и его региональных отделений состояла в тотальном практическом контроле над всеми видами печатной продукции: книгами, газетами, журналами, плакатами, открытками и т.п.» (Blum n. pag.).

<sup>287</sup> A separate organization, called Glavrepertkom had been created in 1923 to control “censorship of theatre, cinema, radio broadcasting, stage and circus art” (Goriaeva 131). («цензуру театра, кино, радиовещания, эстрадного и циркового искусства») In 1928, Glaviskusstvo was also created to control art in a more general sense (193, 199).

<sup>288</sup> In the very same year there was a curious exchange between Kornei Chukovskii and Glavlit officials about censorship of the fourth edition of his children’s book *Barmalei* (Blum, *Censorship* 128-130).

1937, it was already identifying enemies of the people and performing a *chistka* (clean-sweep) on the members of its own Leningrad office under the watchful eye of the terrifyingly-named head of Lenoblgorlit I. I. Chekavyi<sup>289</sup> (258-259). By 1941, entire catalogues of orders such as “Cross out the mention of ~ on the title page,” “Remove the introduction from ~,” “Cut out the photo of ~,” “Remove pages ~ to ~” (Sadchikov<sup>290</sup> 313-314) directed at library books as well as books held by second-hand stores were a mere matter of routine, and sometimes little remained of the physical text. As the Soviets joked, “a telegraph pole is a thoroughly edited tree” (Friedberg, *Euphoria* 40).

Despite the fact that words *tsenzura* and *tsenzor* seemed to have disappeared from use overnight<sup>291</sup> (“a formal ban” was implemented on “employing the words in correspondence or over the telephone” [Hingley 210]) the workings of Glavlit were codified in “one of the most jealously guarded books in the Soviet Union[,] the so-called Talmud, the Glavlit index of forbidden topics, names, [and] facts” (Coetzee 128). In 1979, Hingley describes it as a 300-page tome (210); in 1989, it was described as “more than 400 pages of rather small type [in 1966]. On its green cover, above the title, the words ‘Secret. Copy No.\_\_\_\_’ . . . embossed in gold” (Vladimirov 18); a practical version was also available in the form of a *spravochnik* (reference book) carried by Glavlit censors<sup>292</sup> (Frankel 135). What was forbidden was almost never known

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<sup>289</sup> The Cheka (1918-1929) was the precursor of the KGB. Chekavyi was head of Lenoblgorlit from 1937 to c.1941.

<sup>290</sup> Head of Glavlit (1938-1946)

<sup>291</sup> A Glavlit circular from 1926 “candidly stated that ‘there is no censorship in the U.S.S.R.’” (Goriaeva 148) and in 1931 the word *tsenzura* was replaced with the euphemism *kontrol*’ (Sherry, “Something” 736).

<sup>292</sup> Mikhail Voslensky describes his personal experience with Glavlit staff: “If you open the door to one of Glavlit’s editorial rooms, you will find two or three young men sitting at their desks. By the way, there are no nameplates on that door, and entry is prohibited. These men are reading the manuscripts which the editorial censorship has passed on to them. They read according to a special norm and there is no pile of manuscripts in the office. If the written text does not evoke any doubts concerning political criteria, their work is done very fast. . . . People have no idea where these rules come from. Every day new rules are added to the ‘Talmud’ while some old ones are deleted” (Voslensky 29).

to authors or translators, let alone the reading public. Furthermore, a work could still be printed but never see the light of day. In the 1920s, a special category of *grifovannye*, not-for-sale books was created, bearing stamps such as “Only for members of the Bolshevik Communist Party,”<sup>293</sup> “Only for Komsomol officials,”<sup>294</sup> “Not subject to sale,”<sup>295</sup> and “For official use,”<sup>296</sup> books that, in the latter case, also bore a serial number and were kept under lock and key (Goriaeva 186; Stelmakh 144). According to Blium, in the sphere of official book publishing, from the 1950s to the 1970s, production of translations was further controlled when a new stamp, reading “For academic libraries,”<sup>297</sup> came into being:

Such books—exclusively in translation and published predominantly by the Foreign Literature Publishing House (in 1964 renamed to “Progress”) . . . were not sold; obtaining and storing them was only possible for the biggest libraries, [but] without lending rights. In addition, getting into such libraries was not simple: only [Soviet] individuals with postsecondary education were admitted, and in some departmental libraries a letter from the employer [listing position, pay grade, and so forth] was required.<sup>298</sup>

Whereas in pre-revolutionary Russia censorship was based solely on undesirable content, the undesirable was now ideological, both proscriptive, against “*meschchanstvo*, a petty concern

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<sup>293</sup> «Только для членов РКП(б)» (Blium n. pag.)

<sup>294</sup> «Только для комсомольского актива» (Blium n. pag.)

<sup>295</sup> «Продаже не подлежит» (Blium n. pag.)

<sup>296</sup> «ДСП» — «Для служебного пользования» (Blium n. pag.) Blium also points out that many books in the humanities were considered secret for the only reason of having this stamp which was, in the first place, imprinted on the book merely by virtue of the unfortunate coincidence of being printed by a “closed” research institution that also happened to publish top-secret research.

<sup>297</sup> «Для научных библиотек»

<sup>298</sup> «Такие книги — исключительно переводные и выпускавшиеся преимущественно Издательством иностранной литературы (в 1964 переименованном в „Прогресс”) . . . не поступали в продажу, получать и хранить их могли лишь крупнейшие библиотеки, без права выдачи на дом. К тому же попасть в такие библиотеки было непросто: допускались лишь лица с высшим образованием, а в некоторых ведомственных библиотеках требовалась и справка с места работы» (n. pag.).

with private life and private feelings,” and prescriptive, checked against allegiance to Marxist philosophy reflected in three distinct requirements: “*partiinnost* . . . [p]arty-spiritedness . . . *ideinnost* (ideological consciousness) and *narodnost* (awareness of the people)” which, *ex definitione*, excluded the notion of anything of “alien” origin (Coetzee 123-124). In addition, as Coetzee points out, textuality *per se* ceased to have a direct connection to censorship. One particularly infamous, harrowing case reads like a passage out of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (such conditions were hardly fiction, and a full decade and a half later they will inspire Orwell to write the novel in response to Stalinist repressions):

In November 1933, Osip Mandelstam composed a brief poem<sup>299</sup> on Stalin . . . *The poem was never written down*, but was recited to a small gathering of friends. In May of 1934 the security police searched Mandelstam’s apartment; it is generally assumed that they were looking for a copy of the poem. Arrest, interrogation, incarceration, and eventually exile . . . followed. In Voronezh, isolated, spied upon, in poor health, unable to earn a living, Mandelstam yielded to pressure and wrote an ode to Stalin.<sup>300</sup> The Ode did not save him from rearrest as the Terror mounted or from death in a Siberian camp in 1938, though it may have saved his wife. (104; emphasis added)

Inevitably, in a time when even typographical errors were punished to the fullest possible extent (Goriaeva 291) and when Stalin and his *apparat* demanded that the *intelligentsia* swear allegiance to him regardless of the spirit, quality, or sincerity with which their works expressed such sentiments (Goriaeva 310; Coetzee 106), the need to be able to gauge the boundaries of

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<sup>299</sup> The sixteen-line satirical poem is now known as the “Stalin Epigram.”

<sup>300</sup> For a theory on the encoded language in the Stalin Ode, see Andrei Chernov’s “Ode to the Pockmarked Devil.”

one's self-expression and let the policeman in the head prevent it (lest the policeman in the street do the same) slowly began to arise.

### **Alles klar, Herr Kommissar?**

The system of *kontrol* 'reached its zenith in the early 1960s (Coetzee 124), becoming even more stringently structured: "[t]he forces at work [that] included . . . a state censorship apparatus . . . made unapproved publications impossible, and a security apparatus operating beyond the bounds of legality" regulated both composition and publication, in addition to "subtler pressures from a variety of sources" (105). Despite the unfavourable treatment of post-WWII Western writing in the 1940s (Friedberg, *Euphoria* 5), 1955 "marked the beginning of a rapid expansion in the publication of Western writing" (8). The journal *IL*, "devoted almost entirely to foreign literature and the arts" had been founded (7),<sup>301</sup> and discussion of foreign literature and translations had been published in "the foremost 'liberal' monthly" *NM*, as well as "the 'moderate' *Moskva*, 'conservative' *Neva* and *Zvezda*, [and even] the 'neo-Stalinist' *Oktjabr*" (9). On June 4, 1959, "a resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party decreed that Soviet translations of Western books in the social sciences 'be published in limited printings' and that such translations 'are to be supplied with lengthy introductions and annotations'" ; passages being "of no scholarly or practical interest" were to be summarily deleted (25). At this time, Glavlit had total access to the output of publishing houses like MG (Goriaeva 203-204, 210, 308), which released Rait's translation of *CC*, and journals like *NM* (210, 236, 330, 337, 355), which carried Rait's translation of *SF*,<sup>302</sup> and *LG* (355), which carried

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<sup>301</sup> *IL* replaced the journal *Internatsional'naia literatura*, published from 1933 to 1942 (Sherry, "Something" 739).

<sup>302</sup> *NM* specifically was for many years subject to "double" preliminary censorship according to the scheme 'Glavlit—Central Committee of the CPSU—Glavlit' ("„двойной” предварительной цензуры по схеме — „Главлит — ЦК КПСС — Главлит») (Goriaeva 328). Ermolaev states that the May 1968 issue "was in the hands of these agencies for three and a half months. It came out in August . . . reduced by one-third" (183);



two chapters of Rait's translation of *BC*). By the time Rait began translating her first Vonnegut novel, "a new work had to pass the scrutiny of no fewer than twelve distinct committees, editors with political responsibilities, and other gatekeepers before it could emerge into the light of day" (Coetzee 124). Glavlit now commanded an army of censors numbering 70,000<sup>303</sup> (Finkelstein et al. 65), well-paid<sup>304</sup> and eager to work (Hingley 211).

In *Publishing in the U.S.S.R.*,<sup>305</sup> Boris I. Gorokhoff provides an insight into the end-to-end Glavlit workflow by describing the stages that a printed work had to pass through prior to publication, *before* the censor's final approval: At the Editorial Branch, the author signs a contract and delivers a manuscript in two copies; an editor writes a review and submits it to the chief editor; the manuscript is either accepted or rejected; the editor or a special editor reviews it; a junior editor proofreads it; the editor and the author sign the reworked manuscript; the chief of the Editorial Section approves the manuscript (53-54). At the Production Branch, a "passport" for the text (providing its technical data) is produced; a proofreader reviews the manuscript; a technical editor and the editor determine format and illustrations; the Editor, the chief of the Editorial Section, and the Chief Editor provide their final approval (54-55). Next, the manuscript is checked at the Planning and Economic Section (55). "Then, according to prewar

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specifically to 1978, "[i]f a work was intended for serialization in the liberal *Novyi mir*, the censors were likely to read it from the beginning to the end before sanctioning the printing of its first installment" (Ermolaev, *Censorship* 209-210).

<sup>303</sup> Coetzee notes that "[i]n 1979, at a time when the Writers' Union had some 7,000 members, Glavlit was reputed to have a staff of 70,000" (253n14).

<sup>304</sup> According to Hingley, "censors indeed do belong to the élite . . . [judging by] their salary scale; it begins at about 280 roubles a month [the average salary was 150 r. or less], nearly twice the average industrial wage, and rises to impressive heights at the top" (Hingley 211).

<sup>305</sup> Although Gorokhoff's book was published in 1959, it remains the most careful, detailed, and authoritative guide to the inner workings of Glavlit. The fact that Gorokhoff's findings are corroborated by more recent (but also more brief) overviews not only confirms his research but also the entrenchment of Glavlit in the Soviet publishing process. See also Finkelstein et al. (50-62) and Ermolaev, *Quiet Don* (7-8).

regulations,<sup>306</sup> the manuscript is read by the censor,<sup>307</sup> changed if necessary, and approved for setting by the printer. Finally, the manuscript goes to the printer” (5). Galley proofs (*granki*, often optional), page proofs (*verstka*), and second page proofs (*sverka*) are sent to the Proofreading Section, the editor, and the technical editor; the final proof is sent to the author; the editor, the chief of the Editorial Section, and the chief editor sign the final proof. (55). “At this stage, according to prewar regulations, the proofs are studied by the censor (although he has already read the manuscript)[;] he grants permission for publication, and assigns the censorship number” (55). The printer sets up the print run<sup>308</sup> and the publisher produces “signal” copies for the proofreader, the editor, and publishing house officials; “the ‘signal copies,’ according to a 1939 law, are sent to the headquarters of *Glavlit* . . . the Army, the Communist Party in Moscow, and the Secret Police (74). If any of these bodies disapprove of the publication, the edition may be confiscated” (55-56) and the type may be broken up.<sup>309</sup> The book is released only after “control copies” and “legal deposit copies” are sent to various cultural repositories (56).

If one refused to play ball at any stage of this workflow, it was a simple matter of enforcing the state secrets doctrine. By 1953, the words “military and governmental” were added to Glavlit’s full title and, as Gorokhoff explains, in 1956 “[t]he basis for the Soviet censors’ work in guarding state secrets is the decree of April 28. . . . Violation of the secrets law either through

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<sup>306</sup> Gorokhoff notes that, prior to WWII, “[t]he censorship of new publications was twofold, preliminary and subsequent. The preliminary censorship was effected . . . by ‘political editors,’ who read the proofs and deleted any material which was listed as prohibited. . . . The subsequent censorship was carried out in Moscow, where advance copies were examined by various agencies” (74-75). This system became more nuanced and centralized after the war.

<sup>307</sup> The question of whether Glavlit representatives read manuscripts (rather than final proofreading galleys) is a contentious one. Sherry claims that they did (“In Translation” 163) but already by 1973 Finkelstein stated that the censors no longer checked manuscripts (48); Walker, who in 1978 recounts a process that matches Gorokhoff’s description states that manuscripts are not read “unless the publisher specifically requests advice about material before it is sent to the compositor” (66).

<sup>308</sup> Finkelstein notes that “[e]verything hinges on the eight years’ imprisonment to which any printer is liable if he prints more than ten copies of any edition without the censor’s approval” (51).

<sup>309</sup> The term for this is «рассыпать набор» (scatter the type). As B. M. Firsov argues in *Links of Eras* («Связь времён»), Glavlit bore no economic responsibility for trashing entire print runs, if the need ever arose (36).

publication or in other ways, including the loss of confidential documents,<sup>310</sup> is . . . [punishable] by imprisonment in concentration camps<sup>311</sup> . . . execution by shooting . . . [or] ‘corrective labor’” (Gorokhoff 83). By August 1966, the full title of Glavlit “lost the words ‘and Military’” suggesting the agency’s expanded independence (Ermolaev, *Censorship* 182), and by September 1966, “the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Republic added article number 190-1 to the republic’s *Criminal Code*. It stipulated a fine, forced labor, or imprisonment for oral, written, or printed dissemination of ‘deliberate fabrications slandering the Soviet social and state system’” (181). In this regard, Solzhenitsyn was riding the razor’s edge when, still miraculously a member of the Writers’ Union, he wrote an open letter<sup>312</sup> denouncing Glavlit to the Fourth Soviet Writers’ Congress on May 16, 1967 (Friedberg, *Euphoria* 26). On September 1, 1969, Anatolii Kuznetsov, author of *Babi Yar* who eventually became a *nevozvrashchenets* when he defected to the U.K., gave an interview to „Der Spiegel“, stating that

[t]his is a very complex system. The editor submits to Glavlit, i.e. censorship. The censorship submits to the ideological department of the party. KGB monitors loyalty. The censor receives instructions from the Central Committee. Censorship must monitor the protection of state secrets in print and it has the right to involve itself in matters of art. . . . The modification of literary texts is done by the publishing editor. They tell me or an author: “This is good, but censorship won’t

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<sup>310</sup> In the U.S.S.R., document control at all levels of governmental and civil work was a very real everyday concern. When my father attended the Military Academy, a fellow student with an officer’s rank lost a single sheet of paper with classified information. As punishment, the man was expelled and sent off to serve in some distant location. When the man was cleaning out his desk, he found that the sheet had fallen behind a desk drawer; of course, it was already too late. On another occasion, visiting the offices of Gosplan (the State Planning Committee), my father asked why all the windows were closed on a hot day. He was told that one day a gust of wind carried a sheaf of classified papers out of window and one of the terrified office workers had to run onto the street to stop a trolley bus to the roof of which one of the sheets had stuck. (Telephone interview. 10 Feb. 2015).

<sup>311</sup> One could also be “declared legally irresponsible and remanded to [a] psychiatric hospital[ ]” (Coetzee 131).

<sup>312</sup> The letter was ignored (Ermolaev, *Censorship* 219).

let that pass.” And how many times did I ask: show me this man, acquaint me with those who do not let this pass, and I will prove that this can be passed. But no one let me do this. These personalities are backstage, no one sees them. They are some mythical figures.<sup>313</sup>

While Khrushchev’s Thaw<sup>314</sup> appeared to relax some of these restrictions and Glavlit’s work was ostensibly narrowly limited to the retention of military and economic secrets (Blium n. pag.),<sup>315</sup> by the time of *Zastoi*, it was, in effect, an unstoppable, insane Behemoth: the January 1969 Central Committee resolution to curtail the agency’s activities had no effect, and its years of omnipresence have rubbed off on editorial boards who *began to reject materials that Glavlit had approved* (183), after all, the editor had to initial every page of the manuscript that he read prior to handing it off to Glavlit (better safe than sorry) (Voslensky 29). As a result, it became impossible to tell without exhaustive textual investigation “whether the translator, editor, or a higher official is exactly responsible for the process of *active* (rather than *reactive*, as in Tsarist times) censorship process” (Choldin, “Political Writing” 32), because “the Soviet government had in a real sense become the ‘co-author’ of all written work” (Parthé 63). At the same time, it was a system in which “everyone is scared of everyone else . . . basically you don’t know what

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<sup>313</sup> «Это очень сложная система. Редактор подчиняется Главлиту, т. е. цензуре. Цензура подчинена идеологическому отделу партии. КГБ следит за лояльностью. Цензура получает указания от Центрального Комитета. Она должна следить за охраной государственных тайн в печати и у неё есть право вмешиваться в вопросы искусства. . . . Изменение литературных текстов производит издательский редактор журнала. Они говорят мне или автору: „Это хорошо, но цензура этого не пропустит”. И сколько раз я просил: покажите мне этого человека, познакомьте меня с теми, кто это не пропускает, и я докажу, что это можно пропустить. Но мне этого никто не разрешал. Эти личности за кулисами, их никто не видит. Это какие-то мифические фигуры» (qtd. in Goriaeva 353-354).

<sup>314</sup> *Отменель*—Hingley identifies three Thaw periods: “The first phase of relaxation occurred in 1953-4, taking its name from Ehrenburg’s short novel *The Thaw* . . . A second Thaw followed Khrushchev’s so-called Secret Speech of 25 February 1956 to the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU, in which he guardedly denounced Stalin . . . The sequel was yet another Thaw (the third), of which the most notable single manifestation was the publication, by Novy mir in November 1962, of Solzhenitsyn’s . . . *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*” (Hingley 48).

<sup>315</sup> Sherry’s assessment that “[i]n the 1950s, the Central Committee transferred the main burden of censorship to editors and publishers” (“Something” 738) is off by a decade.

they are afraid of. Ultimately everyone is being intimidated by something abstract and the entire machine runs on this abstraction” (Anatolii Kuznetsov in Belinkova et al. 89).

One revelation remains particularly astounding: at the end of the day, *Era of Stagnation censorship stopped editing* and the image of the “red pencil,” perpetuated by critics such as Friedberg and Belinkov does not tell the entire story. In the early 1960s, Glavlit began “a series of *besedy* [conversations] with editors and representatives of publishing houses to teach them about the censorship requirements . . . consciously aimed at instituting the internalisation of censorship standards” (Sherry, “In Translation” 57-58). For the translators themselves, there was the Translators’ Section of the Soviet Writers’ Union that regulated admission, certification, training, and “internalisation of censorship norms” (97). It is for these reasons that Markish states a remarkable fact: “I do not know of a single case when the censor would forbid or demand excisions, having read a translation prepared for print. . . . It follows that all censorial work was performed by the translators and editors themselves.”<sup>316</sup> During a roundtable on “Intellectual Life,” writers Vasilii Aksenov and Vladimir Voinovich concur: “Soviet censorship does not cut”; it is

preoccupied mainly not with the extraction of anything but with augmentation. . . . Censorship makes additions to an opus. What does it add? It adds love, and it is always concerned when there is a leakage of love. To whom does the leakage of love flow? We need not say to whom; everyone knows to whom it flows. When there is little love, censorship becomes anxious and preoccupied with this augmentation of love. (in Friedberg et al. 107)

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<sup>316</sup> “Я не знаю ни одного случая, когда цензор запретил бы или потребовал купюр, прочитав подготовленный к печати перевод. . . . Следовательно, вся цензорская работа проводится самими переводчиками и редакторами” (n. pag.).

The problem, as Aksenov puts it, is that “[t]he difference between censorship and ‘sovcens’ is as deep as the difference between authoritarian and totalitarian regimes. The former simply demand[s] subordination from their citizens, [while] the latter insist[s] on nationwide, tender, and faithful love. It’s much easier to submit to a rapist than to love him”; the crisis, he argues, began when the people’s love for the abusive Big Brother “started to fade” in the 1950s (3). The result was a schizophrenic state: On the one hand, new options for self-expression were slowly coming into view (though not necessarily into reach) every day. On the other hand, the policeman in the head had long ago established permanent residence, on a daily basis adding fuel to a sense of constant paranoia. How, then, did that system, that demanded nothing but to “Like us. Join us. Be our pal.” (Heller C22e 467), that did not edit and did not cut, still manage to produce volume after volume of textual grotesqueries, continuing to curate its *Kunstkamera* well into the 1980s?

### **Das höllische System**

The answer was simple: total institutional insanity. As Edith Rogovin Frankel amply demonstrates in *Novy Mir: A Case Study in the Politics of Literature*, despite its official position, Glavlit was not the only cog in the Kafkaesque culture-producing machine of the Soviet Union (see Figure 7): “[a]t each stage there is a possibility of give and take, from the internal dialogue of the author, to the discussions with the editor, all the way up to the possible interference of the Party leaders” (136). Influence could be exerted at the highest levels by means of official edicts of the Communist Party, the involvement of the Central Committee by way of the Department of Culture (129), the interests of the Commission on Ideology that rose to prominence in the 1960s (130), or even by low-level local party officials of the *obkom* (132-133). Frankel also reminds us

[of] the importance here . . . of the omnipresent KGB. Assigned ultimate

responsibility for internal security, it clearly considers that it has a vital stake in what is painted, printed, or performed. . . . Efim Etkind . . . described the KGB as the highest rung in the publication process. The “Big House,” as it is termed in popular parlance, casts a long shadow. (140)

Whereas Glavlit performed some of the more mechanical “advisory” functions, pressure invariably came from a nebulous source “up top.” In *Novyi mir and the Soviet Regime*, Dina R. Spechler argues that the bottom line was that “countless man-hours were wasted on checking and

**Figure 7** “The Pattern of Literary Control and Influences in the U.S.S.R.” (1957) (Frankel 128) controlling, which should have been spent in productive activity” (6-7). In the case of *NM*, a *chistka* (clean sweep) was also just a matter of time, because “[n]o other publication equalled *Novyi mir* in the sheer volume of dissent it carried. Moreover, no other publication was so widely read for so many years” (Spechler xix). By 1965, *NM* was openly accused of anti-Soviet activity and arrests and manuscript confiscations had begun (219). The fact that the journal historically never had an in-house Glavlit representative (Frankel 134) and had to send representatives to Glavlit meetings in the offices of KhL (186) did not help. Because of editor Alexander

Tvardovskii's publication of Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* in 1962,<sup>317</sup> which was extremely problematic despite receiving Khrushchev's personal imprimatur<sup>318</sup> (Coetzee 128; Spechler 157) because Khrushchev was very interested in discrediting Stalin but did not have direct control over Glavlit. In the wake of the defiant publication of Il'ia Ehrenburg's memoirs and Solzhenitsyn's other stories (Spechler 177), low rumblings began to occur; "[t]he publication of 'permitted dissent' began to diminish sharply in 1966, when the new Brezhnev-Kosygin regime initiated a more repressive policy toward intellectual and political activity" (xvi). 1970 was the last straw. *SF*, released in March and April issues of *NM*, was one of Tvardovskii's last gifts to his readers. In January, his editorial board was disbanded and replaced by *apparatchik* loyalists (227) and he was forced to resign (Goriaeva 334; Kozlov 1943; Spechler 227) after a period of being hounded by the Writers' Union (which had no actual power to dismiss him [Frankel 123] but had direct ties to the Central Committee through its department of culture and enjoyed an advantageous intermediary position, being "neither a government nor a Party body" [137]).

Tvardovskii had been long noted for the clarity of his feelings on Glavlit's activities.<sup>319</sup> In his poem "Terkin in the Next World,"<sup>320</sup> the eponymous hero (a character somewhat akin to

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<sup>317</sup> It is important to observe the difference in philosophies between Tvardovskii and Solzhenitsyn: while the latter often pushed the boundaries of the system by openly railing against it, Tvardovskii believed he could save the system by changing it from within (Aldwinckle 158) by means of a four-pronged attack: 1. seeking patronage "from highly placed figures in the Central Committee" (167); 2. "acting as a counterweight to the neo-Stalinist mouthpiece *Oktyabr*" and the neo-Slavophile *Molodaia gvardiia* (169); 3. "acting as a sounding board for trying out various reformist ideas" (169); and 4. "functioning as a safety valve for the liberal-minded intelligentsia who had no other legal forum" (169).

<sup>318</sup> Because Khrushchev bypassed the entire censorship process, Glavlit had to urgently stamp its retroactive "permission" on every page of the novel's *verstka* (page proofs) (Ermolaev, *Quiet Don* 8).

<sup>319</sup> A KGB memo from Andropov to the Central Committee, "Materialy o nastroeniakh poëta A. Tvardovskogo," dated September 7, 1970, demonstrates not only that Tvardovskii had long been under surveillance, but also that his "private conversations" were reported and recorded. In particular, the memo notes Tvardovskii's thoughts on "whitewashing Stalin" («обелить Сталина») and on censorship. (n. pag.).

<sup>320</sup> «Тёркин на том свете» The poem, a sequel to his extremely popular poem "Vasilii Terkin" that he wrote during WWII while working as an editor in the *Krasnaia Armiia* newspaper in Voronezh (Spechler 181; *Zhurnal'nyi zal* n. pag.), was supposedly begun from previously-censored fragments (Spechler 181).



Švejk, Yossarian, and Billy Pilgrim) arrives in the underworld and meets the editor of the newspaper *Grobgazeta*,<sup>321</sup> busy with an article:

Bathed in sweat and apprehension,  
Beak to—fro, just like a bird:  
Here subtracts, here adds a mention,  
Here a word—his own invention.  
Here strikes out another’s word.  
Here he’d note words with a checkmark,  
He himself both Glav and Lit,  
Here he’d put them in quotations,  
Here again strip them of it.<sup>322</sup>

As Tatiana Goriaeva notes in *Political Censorship in the U.S.S.R.: 1917-1991*, “for party and censorship functionaries it was unpleasant to observe that Soviet writers, especially in the ranks of the chief editor . . . who very well know[ ] the ‘rules of the game,’ broke them and, instead of ‘bending themselves,’ tried to resist authority.”<sup>323</sup> In “The Politics of *Novyi mir*,” Linda Aldwinckle explains that “[t]he breakup of Tvardovsky’s journal had two vital political consequences . . . the end of the possibility of legally and openly expressing liberal, reformist ideas in the Soviet Union . . . [and] the final polarization of political positions into ‘pro-Soviet’ and ‘anti-Soviet’” (172). However, as Friedberg adds, a fundamental acknowledgement of the problem of censorship as a factor in cultural transmission existed as far back as 1932, when Il’ia

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<sup>321</sup> *Coffin Gazette*

<sup>322</sup> «Весь в поту, статейки правит, / Водит носом взад-вперёд: / То убавит, то прибавит, / То своё словечко вставит, / То чужое зачеркнёт. / То его отметит птичкой, / Сам себе и Глав и Лит, / То возьмёт его в кавычки, / То опять же оголит» (п. pag.).

<sup>323</sup> «Для партийных и цензурных чиновников было неприятно убедиться в том, что советские писатели, особенно в ранге главного редактора . . . которому хорошо известны „правила игры”, нарушали их, и, вместо того чтобы „прогнуться”, сами пытались противостоять власти» (355).

Il'f<sup>324</sup> and Evgenii Petrov<sup>325</sup> published a *feuilleton* titled “How Robinson Crusoe Was Created” in *Pravda*. In the satirical story that playfully inverts the traditional “Soup from an Axe” tale (or “Stone Soup” in Western folklore),

an enterprising Soviet editor conceives the idea of commissioning a novel of adventure that would captivate young Soviet readers as much as Daniel Defoe’s immortal hero, but that would, in addition, serve as a model for emulation by Soviet children. This, of course, requires that Robinson Crusoe be Soviet. (343)

In the story, the humorous reasons for a work being “not Soviet enough” are, in actuality, a shorthand for Glavlit policy. The editor asks the writer, “Where is the *mestkom*?<sup>326</sup> Where is the leading role of the *profsoiuz*?<sup>327</sup>”<sup>328</sup> and so in the second draft the survivors of the shipwreck include Robinson, the chairman of the *mestkom*, two full-time committee members, a store supervision committee, a female dues collector, a fireproof safe (for storing the dues), and a conference table (complete with tablecloth, water pitcher, and bell); rum is removed and scurvy medicine is replaced with ink. When the writer suggests that the dues collector marry the chairman or Robinson for the sake of reader interest, the writer is warned not to “roll down into *bul'varshchina*, into unhealthy eroticism.”<sup>329</sup> Instead, the island is now an inhabited peninsula, the plot revolves around the female dues collector (who finds problems with collecting union dues) and the “broad masses”<sup>330</sup> and “repentant chairman”<sup>331</sup> who help her set the issue straight. The story concludes with a general meeting. In the final version, the shipwreck and Robinson are

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<sup>324</sup> The pseudonym of Il'ia Faizil'berg

<sup>325</sup> The pseudonym of Evgenii Kataev

<sup>326</sup> local committee

<sup>327</sup> trade union

<sup>328</sup> «Где местком? Руководящая роль профсоюза?» (n. pag.)

<sup>329</sup> «Не скатывайтесь в бульварщину, в нездоровую эротику» (n. pag.)

<sup>330</sup> «широкие слои» (n. pag.)

<sup>331</sup> «раскаявшийся председатель» (n. pag.)

both eliminated, the latter being an “[a]bsurd and unjustified figure of a whiner.”<sup>332</sup> Friedberg succinctly summarizes this “ship of Theseus” problem in the question “Is a Soviet *Robinson Crusoe* possible?” to which he responds with “a very hypothetical and qualified yes” (344).

Whereas *NM* answered this question with a tentative *yes* of its own owing to its newfound dissident position in the 1960s,<sup>333</sup> as Sherry demonstrates in “Better Something than Nothing,” *IL* took a more careful approach (although a note by Central Committee<sup>334</sup> sent as far back as January 1956 indicates that its editor Aleksandr Chakovskii was also not far from the precipice). On the one hand, the journal “erod[ed] authoritative discourses and creat[ed] an imagined West that became increasingly important for their self-definition” (740); on the other hand, as archival materials demonstrate, *IL* did not try to create a distance from Glavlit and was part and parcel of the organization’s total oversight procedure, and “[a]t each stage in the sometimes long and drawn-out process of publication, the editor acted as a gatekeeper, approving both style and content” (741). Whereas, in its own limited way, *NM* had “won a victory against Glavlit” (745), *IL* remained far more beholden to “informal opining” that was invariably interpreted as tacit instructions for censorship (742). In addition to translators’ “normalization” of erotic content and obscenities, Chakovskii’s opposition to criticism of censorship (747), and the overall maintenance of the *status quo* assured that *IL*’s editors

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<sup>332</sup> «Нелепая, ничем не оправданная фигура нытика» (n. pag.)

<sup>333</sup> The notion of enlightenment as prerequisite for social change “linked the journal with Lunacharsky’s *Novy Mir* of the 1920s . . . Theirs was not a task of propagandizing, or foisting alien habits and traditions on to the Russian people, but of making them aware of their own intrinsic value” (Aldwinckle 160). By encouraging feedback from readers and allowing its readers to shape its content and direction, *NM* of the 1960s was able to return to its old populist position and allow its readers to act as a “barometer of the social climate” (145).

<sup>334</sup> The note, responding to Chakovskii’s query about publishing Sinclair and Priestly, permits the publication but strongly urges him to “objectively assess his [Sinclair’s] activity and literary heritage, to republish those of his realistic works that expose capitalism, criticizing weak, reactionary facets of artistic creativity” («объективно оценивать его деятельность и литературное наследие, переиздавать его реалистические, разоблачающие капитализм произведения, критикуя слабые, реакционные стороны творчества»); the journal is reminded of its task of illuminating ideological struggles, and the editorial board (that does not express enough critical views and has adopted the positions of bourgeois authors) is encouraged to avoid “ideological concessions” («идеологических уступок») (Polikarpov and Vinogradov n. pag.).

“occupied a privileged position in the Soviet cultural hierarchy with access to trips abroad and interaction with foreign writers . . . act[ing] as representatives of the Soviet Union in the West and, at the same time, producers of an image of the West in the Soviet Union” (747). Throughout its long tenure, Soviet censorship maintained this image by focusing on a number of specific subjects: religion, that despite its relatively safe status during the tsarist period (Goriaeva 124), was decisively taken off the books (179); “antisoviet” or “non-progressive” material (Friedberg, *Euphoria* 206), a broad category that included anything from unfavourable mentions of the U.S.S.R. to even the possibility of ideologically-loaded statements by “hostile elements” (Goriaeva 324); and obscenity and *mat*<sup>335</sup> (195, 252). Ideological “correction” of translation was simply one more mode of censorship, as Goriaeva puts it, a “perfected and largely unassailable method”<sup>336</sup> that resulted in the “falsification of the real development of the literary process as a mirror of the struggle of ideas in society and in art”<sup>337</sup> and rendered authors’ works completely unrecognizable (364). Goriaeva produces a series of telling examples that make one raise a brow at Friedberg’s assertion that the changes to “foreign works published in the USSR usually require only *cosmetic surgery*” (*Culture* 20; emphasis added). Upon its release in U.S.S.R. in 1970, Arthur C. Clarke’s *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) simply lost its final chapters (where the protagonist David Bowman becomes an alien being) as a result of being “inconsistent with Clarke’s own, quite scientific worldview,” as the afterword explained (Goriaeva 363); Carlos Baker’s 700-page biography of Hemingway was condensed to “thirty-odd pages” (Friedberg, *Euphoria* 27); Studs Terkel’s *Working* (1974) was compressed from a 500-page ST to a 12-page

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<sup>335</sup> A register of Russian profanity considered particularly offensive

<sup>336</sup> «совершенным и трудно уязвимым методом» (363)

<sup>337</sup> «фальсификация реального развития литературного процесса как зеркала борьбы идей в обществе и в искусстве» (363)

pamphlet (Friedberg, *Euphoria* 27-28; Choldin, "Censorship" 337);<sup>338</sup> an epigraph was redacted from Faulkner, and Updike's interest in the "intimate side of life" was excised by means of removing a page of text describing a love scene in *Rabbit, Run* (1960), impoverishing character development (Goriaeva 364). This was all done with gentle (but insistent) coaxing by the translator's friends in "the organs" of the Soviet apparatus.

### **A Report from the Junior Anti-Sex League**

One particularly broad category of censorship concerned "pornography" (Friedberg, *Euphoria* 8; Goriaeva 179, 187, 193, 354, 366), defined by nebulous terms such as *naturalizm* and *modernizm*<sup>339</sup> (Friedberg, "In the U.S.S.R." 546), "shoddy erotism"<sup>340</sup> and "unhealthy erotism"<sup>341</sup> that could be made to include anything pertaining to sex, sexuality, profanity, and slang, best summarized in the immortal phrase blurted out by Liudmila Ivanova in a July 17, 1986 televised videoconference between Leningrad and Boston organized by Vladimir Pozner and Phil Donahue: "We don't have sex [in the U.S.S.R.], and we're categorically against it."<sup>342</sup> Although the often-cited exclamation was taken out of context by the broadcast producer (it was in response to sex in advertising), it was not at all far from the truth. "Until the 1920s," writes Friedberg, "Russian literature was about as explicit in its treatment of sex as was Western writing at the time" (*Euphoria* 29); moreover, "in everyday speech most Russians are no more decorous and prudish than are ordinary people elsewhere, and the great and mighty Russian tongue is more

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<sup>338</sup> Choldin explains that "the general sense and unity of the original has been destroyed. It is difficult to recognize *Working in Rabota*: Nearly three-quarters of the interviews are gone, and the ones chosen for inclusion tell only parts of the story. Terkel's introduction is omitted, as are his acknowledgments, his numerous epigraphs, his three prefaces, and his arrangement of the interviews into books with well-chosen titles and subtitles" ("New Censorship" 337).

<sup>339</sup> This term is unrelated to its Western counterpart (aside from signifying "the West"). As Friedberg explains, *modernizm* was a euphemism and a "shorthand for 'excessively' psychological, clinical scrutiny of the subconscious, as well as disregard of canons of traditional realism" ("In the U.S.S.R." 546).

<sup>340</sup> «низкопробный эротизм» (195)

<sup>341</sup> «нездоровый эротизм» (195)

<sup>342</sup> «Секса у нас нет и мы категорически против этого» (Mukusev 58).

than adequate for a faithful rendition of any kind of slang, oath, or expletive” (39-40). However, sexologist Igor’ Kon begs to differ, arguing that writers who came from the working class lacked experience with erotic imagery and vocabulary (76) and thus did not have a stable expressive register. Moreover, the problem was not with the *available* means of expression, but with “the deficiencies of the *acceptable* Soviet language of sex” (Sherry, “In Translation” 145; emphasis added). The “puritanical censorship” (Ermolaev, *Censorship* 214) was, in actuality “a peculiar sort of censorship called ‘moral-ethical editing,’” explains writer and translator Boris Akunin:<sup>343</sup> “There could be no sexually explicit descriptions in a published text. An editor would cross out all the ‘immoral’ scenes, and if it could not be done without ruining the logic of the plot, the editor would urge the translator to ‘soften the sharp angles,’ as it was called” (“Confessions” n. pag.). Sherry argues that “Russian tends to be less explicit and shows a preference for terms based around the [euphemistic] word *любовь* [love] . . . [so that the] language of sex *is* the language of love, and therefore it is no surprise that the translators opted more often than not to translate *sex* in this way” (“In Translation” 147); however, such a purely-linguistic explanation does not account satisfactorily for the underlying ideology. It is also surprising that Friedberg compares this “softening” to “[t]he procedure . . . employed by American television in ‘editing’ recent ‘adult’ films in order to make them acceptable as family entertainment” (*Euphoria* 29) which is openly declared at the beginning of such a broadcast. The Soviets’ goal was not to merely protect public chastity or preclude prurient interest; it was, rather, to get the concept of sex (along with hunger, poverty, crime, corruption, racism, discrimination, war, and censorship) *to appear not to exist*. As Ermolaev points out, “pre-1965 censors thoroughly desexualized [works of literature, and] . . . their post-1965 colleagues did not raise the standards of sexual

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<sup>343</sup> The pseudonym of Grigorii Shalvovich Chkhartishvili. Akunin published his “serious” translations under his real name and his extremely popular detective fiction under a pseudonym (“Confessions” n. pag.).

purity. Nevertheless, the standards were still there and the literary controllers watched that they would not be violated” (*Censorship* 215). As late as 1981, “time went on, [but] the censors did not seem to relax their opposition to ‘naturalistic’ transgressions” (217). Thus, Friedberg’s assertion that “in the Anna Karenina tradition, fairly explicit mentions of sex are tolerated even in indigenous Soviet works provided that the physical details are muted” (“In the U.S.S.R” 546) reminds me of Shneidman’s wide-eyed assessment of Soviet censorship, especially when Friedberg implies that expression of sexuality without depiction of sex whatsoever is somehow tolerable or preferable. Certainly, as Friedberg admits, “portrayal of sex and other ‘pathology’” was an available (if hazardous) rhetorical weapon for “exposing” the corruption of the literature of the West (546), but what happened to the Russians’ own genitals?

In *Strawberry on the Birch Tree*,<sup>344</sup> sexologist Igor’ Kon attempts to get at the cultural and psychological substrates of these conditions. For one thing, he argues,

[i]n Russian culture the opposition between the ‘public’ and ‘private’ is blurred . . . Historians and sociologists have long noted that one of the peculiarities of Russian history is a deficit of that which in English is called “privacy” (something private, intimate, strictly personal, closed off to outsiders).

In the Russian language there is not even such a word.<sup>345</sup>

The system of self-expression becomes polarized, for instance with regard to the problem of the most extreme register of Russian profanity, *mat*. On the one hand, “it pierces through the entire Russian folklore”,<sup>346</sup> on the other hand, as Kon argues, *mat* operates on the “physiological-

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<sup>344</sup> «Клубничка на берёзке» *Strawberry* is a Russian euphemism for “sex” or “pornography”; the birch tree is a native symbol of Russia.

<sup>345</sup> «В русской культуре оппозиция „публичного“ и „частного“ размыта . . . Историками и социологами давно отмечена как одна из особенностей русской истории дефицит того, что по-английски называется „privacy“ (нечто приватное, интимное, сугубо личное, закрытое для посторонних). В русском языке нет даже такого слова”» (4).

<sup>346</sup> «она пронизывает весь русский фольклор» (9)

technical level of sexual interaction, but is totally inadequate for the expression of complex emotional experiences.”<sup>347</sup> Thus, the extreme polarities of “low” culture lacking in spirituality and idealistically *disembodied* “high” culture were established; however, as a result, “Russian censorship and literary criticism in practice did not see a difference between pornography and erotica,”<sup>348</sup> so that frivolous French novelists and moral English sentimentalists (to say nothing of Afanasii Fet, Iakov Polonskii, or Konstantin Sluchevskii) all seemed equally vulgar (49). Kon separates Russian sexual culture into four distinct periods, one of which is particularly relevant to my investigation: 1917-1930,<sup>349</sup> 1930-1956,<sup>350</sup> 1956-1986 (“the replacement of totalitarianism with authoritarianism; . . . transition from outright denial and suppression of sexuality to the policy of its regulation and domestication; attempts at medicalization and pedagogization of sexuality”<sup>351</sup>), and 1987-present [1997].<sup>352</sup> Kon recollects a number of incidents from his publishing career indicative of the total sexual insanity of the regime: In the 1950s, Lenizdat refused to print a photograph of Venus of Milo, having declared it pornographic (thankfully, the

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<sup>347</sup> «физиолого-технический уровень сексуального взаимодействия, но совершенно неадекватен для выражения сложных эмоциональных переживаний» (80)

<sup>348</sup> «русская цензура и литературная критика практически не видели разницы между порнографией и эротикой» (45)

<sup>349</sup> “weakening of the institution of marriage and sexual morality based on it; sharp increase in the number of abortions, rise in prostitution and venereal diseases; normative uncertainty and debates about sexuality” («ослабление института брака и основанной на нем сексуальной морали; резкое увеличение числа аборт, рост проституции и венерических заболеваний; нормативная неопределённость и споры относительно сексуальности») (65)

<sup>350</sup> “the triumph of totalitarianism; the course towards strengthening marriage and family, establishment of total control over the individual; denial and suppression of sexuality; liquidation of sexual culture” («торжество тоталитаризма; курс на укрепление брака и семьи . . . ; установление тотального контроля над личностью; отрицание и подавление сексуальности; ликвидация сексуальной культуры») (65)

<sup>351</sup> «смена тоталитаризма авторитаризмом; . . . ; переход от прямого отрицания и подавления сексуальности к политике её регулирования и приручения; попытки медиализации и педагогизации сексуальности» (65).

<sup>352</sup> “collapse of the Soviet regime; weakening of governmental power and all forms of social and ideological control; sex leaves the underground; anomie and moral panic; politicization, commercialization, and Americanization of Soviet sexuality; first steps towards rebirth of sexual culture and a new wave of sexophobia” («крах советского режима; ослабление государственной власти и всех форм социального и идеологического контроля; секс выходит из подполья; аномия и моральная паника; политизация, вульгаризация, коммерциализация и американизация совковой сексуальности; первые шаги по возрождению сексуальной культуры и новая волна сексофобии») (65)



secretary of the party *obkom* personally defended her honour [78]). In the 1960s, when Kon managed to get some hard currency allocated to Leningrad libraries for the purchase of foreign literature to buy a book by psychiatrist Frank Samuel Caprio on sexual crimes, he got a call from the terrified censor V. M. Tupitsyn who himself had received a call from the head of Glavlit in Moscow who insisted that this book could not even be stored in a *spetskhran* (storage for prohibited items);<sup>353</sup> Kon thanked his lucky stars that Tupitsyn called him rather than the *obkom* of the party (95-96). His most telling and revealing Orwellian recollection is that of the history of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*.<sup>354</sup> Volume 46 of the first edition published in 1946 contained a conservative article on “Sex life,”<sup>355</sup> mitigating coverage of “unhealthy interest”<sup>356</sup> and proudly informing the reader that “in the U.S.S.R. there is no sexual question.”<sup>357</sup> By the time the second edition rolled off the presses in 1955, both “sex life” and the “sexual question” went the way of the dodo: Volume 33 contains the article “Gender,”<sup>358</sup> devoted entirely to biology; the human being is never mentioned, although “sexual crimes”<sup>359</sup> are. When Kon received the galleys for the third edition prepared for publication in 1970, “sex life” was reinstated, but the “Gender” article contained no social content and no human being: “it all came down to genetics of gender,

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<sup>353</sup> In fact, all sexological literature (including Freud) continued to collect dust in various *spetskhrany* unread and unused, until 1987 (Kon 95). As Friedberg puts it, “[w]hen you arrive at the Library of Foreign Literature, you will discover that Arkadii Raikin, the Soviet comedian, was right when he said ‘*U nas est’ vsë, no ne dlia vsekh.*’ We have everything, but not for everybody” (“From the Outside” 23). Sherry explains that “[m]any books in foreign languages were automatically placed in a *spetskhran* upon receipt at the post office in the Soviet Union. Access to these *spetskhrany* was limited to those with a particular purpose, such as specialist researchers and translators, and was on a reference-only basis” (“In Translation” 54). However, because it was always safer to err on the side of caution, the collections often contained “completely innocent works” (Stelmakh 144), so that by the mid-1980s, “foreign publications made up 80 percent of the stocks” (146). When a *spetskhran* in a St. Petersburg library was opened in 1993, researchers discovered “some 220,000 publications stacked on the shelves of the windowless room” (Dobbs n. pag.).

<sup>354</sup> «Большая советская энциклопедия»

<sup>355</sup> «Половая жизнь» (107)

<sup>356</sup> «нездоровый интерес» (107)

<sup>357</sup> «СССР нет полового вопроса» (107)

<sup>358</sup> «Пол» (107)

<sup>359</sup> «Половые преступления» (107)

mainly on the example of the silkworm being fruitfully studied by Soviet geneticists.”<sup>360</sup> In “Sex in the Soviet Union,” È. Iu. Kukshinov explains that

sex education was, in its nature, moral education. In textbooks of anatomy, naturally, there were no images of genitalia, and reproduction was explained using rabbits! Questions of sexual character were attempted to be thoroughly bypassed.<sup>361</sup>

Sure enough, Kon (half-facetiously) considers the main achievement of the 1960s and 1970s the birth of medical sexology which in the U.S.S.R. was called *sexopathology*; “this name,” explains Kon, “is symptomatic, presupposing that ‘normal’ sexuality is free of problems, in it everything is clear, and he who has problems must surrender to the will of the doctors.”<sup>362</sup> However, despite the close watch of the government, any attempts to control and modify the behaviour of Soviet citizens proved fruitless in the most catastrophic respect,<sup>363</sup> so that by the 1980s the Russians were only approaching 1960s-era mores of the West (Kukshinov n. pag.). The Soviet leadership must have taken Lady Macbeth a little too literally when they had exclaimed, “Come, you spirits / That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here, / And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full / Of direst cruelty!” (1.5.38-41)—and it was so.

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<sup>360</sup> «всё сводилось к генетике пола, в основном на примере шелкопряда, которого плодотворно изучали советские генетики» (107)

<sup>361</sup> «половое воспитание было, по своей сути, нравственным воспитанием. В учебниках по анатомии, естественно, не было изображения половых органов, а размножение объяснялось на кроликах! Вопросы сексуального характера тщательно пытались обойти стороной» (n. pag.)

<sup>362</sup> «Название это симптоматично, подразумевая, что „нормальная“ сексуальность беспроblemна, в ней все ясно, а тот, у кого проблемы есть, должен отдаться на волю врачей» (100).

<sup>363</sup> In the 1960s and 1970s, critical shortages of contraceptives, large numbers of unplanned births and abortions, and poor sexual education (a portion of women interviewed in Moscow in the mid-1960s did not know what IUDs or condoms were); “[a]s a result, all of the simmering processes that took place secretly (and possibly from the people themselves, i.e. subconsciously) splashed out in the late 1980s” («В итоге, все бурлящие процессы, которые происходили скрытно (возможно и от самих людей, т.е. подсознательно) выплеснулись в конце 80-х») (Kukshinov n. pag.).

## The Comedy of Errors

Once everything possible could be done to the author, the translator, and the text, the printed work had to actually reach *some* readers to justify its existence. Unfortunately, in 1963 (the same year that *CC* was published in the U.S.) Goskomizdat (State Committee of the Soviet of U.S.S.R. Ministers in Matters of Publishing, Printing, and Book Trade of the U.S.S.R.<sup>364</sup>) was founded. This organization's mandate centered on the economic aspects of the production of cultural materials, merging 62 publishing houses into 44 (Kupriianova 118), among them KhL which published Rait's translations of Vonnegut's four novels in the 1978 collection, and creating hierarchies between "secretaries of the U.S.S.R. Writers' Union and Union Republics . . . chief editors of magazines and directors of publishing houses and . . . heads of regional writers' organizations and deputy chief editors"<sup>365</sup> (Goriaeva 363). The bureaucracy was so incredibly counter-productive to the publication of printed literary texts that in 1974, as a result of million-copy *tirazhy* (print runs)<sup>366</sup> of party publications and miscellaneous literature, the country had simply run out of paper. As Gregory Walker explains in *Soviet Book Publishing Policy*, "[t]he edition size . . . of a book is one of the most significant features in its unit production cost, and is also regarded in the USSR as one of the determinants, along with the work's quality, of its social impact" (63). Thus, it is significant that, in comparison with

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<sup>364</sup> Государственный комитет Совета Министров СССР по делам издательств, полиграфии и книжной торговли СССР

<sup>365</sup> «секретари СП СССР и союзных республик . . . главные редактора журналов и директора издательств и . . . руководители региональных писательских организаций и заместители главных редакторов»

<sup>366</sup> Popular writers such as Howard Fast had been reprinted steadily in annual print runs of 280,000 (on average), so that 2,500,000 copies of Howard Fast's works were printed from 1948 until 1957 (Friedberg, *Euphoria* 11) when Fast broke rank by publishing the anti-Soviet *The Naked God* (259). As Walker points out, the concept was also important for reprinting, because "[a] single *tirazh* may be printed by more than one printing enterprise, but further identical copies ordered separately at a later date (within the time limit of the original contract with the author) are described as a *dopolnitel'nyi tirazh*, i.e. a second, or subsequent impression" (xi).

estimated U.S. print and sales figures for books and periodicals<sup>367</sup> that, while official publications (like party materials) ran into the millions of copies, translated fiction had occupied a paltry portion of Soviet book production (see Table 1). Still, low print runs meant a ramping-up of demand, and Russians were ravenous for reading material. As a result, Goskomizdat had to decree that the purchase of belletristic literature was possible only after bringing in a certain amount of waste paper for recycling (363). According to Friedberg,

in September 1974,<sup>368</sup> government agencies announced that nine book titles would be printed in half a million copies each . . . To obtain a copy of one of these, one would have to deliver to a storehouse twenty kilograms of scrap paper . . . The list of books . . . [was] to lure Soviet citizens into collecting and hauling the heavy bundles of old newspapers, magazines, and unwanted volumes. (*Euphoria* 76)

However, as my father recalls, although the book coupons that could be obtained in exchange for the *makulatura* (waste paper) were desirable, the books one received were ordinary classics: My mother had obtained a copy of *Three Musketeers* and my father three volumes of Pushkin poetry (the Lermontov that had been promised to him never materialized by the time my family left the country). Moreover, individuals would return copies of valuable and hard-to-obtain books as paper for recycling in order to obtain copies of popular translations of Dumas's *La Dame de Monsoreau* (1846)<sup>369</sup> or Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White* (1860) (Telephone interview. 4

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<sup>367</sup> Sherry states that “in the 1960s the number of [*IL*] subscribers rose dramatically to between two hundred and fifty thousand and three hundred thousand. . . . [*NM*’s] circulation rose to between two hundred and fifty thousand and three hundred thousand by the Brezhnev era” (“In Translation” 21); however, these figures underestimate real-life data in the former case and overestimate it in the latter (see Table 1).

<sup>368</sup> Friedberg alternately gives the date as October 25, 1974 (“Market” 180).

<sup>369</sup> “Demand is unfortunately higher than supply . . . [Alexandr I.] Pouzikov[, editor-in-chief of *KhL*,] continues, ‘When we suggested printing 500,000 copies of an edition of Alexandre Dumas, Soyuzkniga said we needed 2-million to meet the demand; so it was decided to sell the 500,000 copies to libraries exclusively, so that even more people could read them’” (Lottman 111).

<b>Table 1 Print Runs of Publications in the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.</b>				
<b>Text / Author</b>	<b>Periodical</b>	<b>Circulation Year (Items Published)<sup>370</sup></b>	<b>U.S.S.R. Circulation</b>	<b>U.S. Circulation (approx.)</b>
JH	<i>Atlantic Monthly</i>	1950 (1948)	—	169,500 copies
KV	<i>Cosmopolitan</i>	1955 (1954-1955, 1958, 1961)	—	1,000,000 copies
KV	<i>Collier's Weekly</i>	1957 (1950-1952)	—	4,000,000 copies
JH	<i>Esquire</i>	1960 (1947-1948)	—	800,000 copies
KV	<i>The Saturday Evening Post</i>	1960 (1952, 1954, 1955, 1957, 1961, 1968)	—	6,000,000 copies
C22	<i>Krokodil</i>	1965	2,900,000	—
C22	<i>Ural 4-5</i>	1967	20,000	—
C22	<i>Ural 6-8</i>	1967	24,000	—
JH	<i>Playboy</i>	1969	—	4,500,000 copies <sup>371</sup>
SF	NM 3-4	1970	163,000 <sup>372</sup>	—
BC	IL 1-2 <sup>373</sup>	1974-1975	595,000	—
<b>Text</b>	<b>Publisher</b>	<b>Printed/Sold Year (First Published)</b>	<b>U.S.S.R. Print Run</b>	<b>U.S. Print Run (approx.)<sup>374</sup></b>
HE	Signet	1959 (1951)	—	3,000,000 sold
C22	Dell	1963 (1961)	—	1,250,000 printed 1,150,000 sold <sup>375</sup>
C22	Voenizdat	1967	50,000	—
PP	MG	1967 <sup>376</sup>	215,000	—
HE	Voenizdat	1968	200,000	—
CC	MG	1970	100,000	—
PP	Herald	1976 (1952)	—	537,000 printed
CC	Dell	1976 (1963)	—	2,060,000 printed
OE	Putnam	1976 (1968)	—	1,000,000 sold <sup>377</sup>
SF	Dell	1976 (1969)	—	2,113,000 printed
SH	Knopf	1976 (1974)	—	1,600,000 printed
SH	Raduga	1978	100,000	—
SF, CC, BC, GB	KhL	1978	50,000 <sup>378</sup>	—
OE	Voenizdat	1978	100,000	—
C22 <sup>379</sup>	Raduga	1978	50,000	—

<sup>370</sup> Serialized novels in the U.S.S.R., short fiction in the U.S.

<sup>371</sup> Danes (51).

<sup>372</sup> Kozlov incorrectly gives the number as 146,000 copies (1943). See also Huffman-Klinkowitz, Klinkowitz, and Pieratt (95), Kalmyk n. pag., and Lempert (1282).

<sup>373</sup> Two chapters of *BC* were first published in the January 1 issue of *LG* in 1974.

<sup>374</sup> Because Soviet and Russian publishers customarily provide print run figures with the rest of the back matter (Hingley 244) but U.S. publishers do not, I have gleaned these approximate statistics from *Publishers Weekly* reports.

<sup>375</sup> Daugherty (240).

<sup>376</sup> Huffman-Klinkowitz, Klinkowitz, and Pieratt incorrectly cite it as 1968 (10).

<sup>377</sup> “a million-plus seller” Crider (71).

<sup>378</sup> Huffman-Klinkowitz, Klinkowitz, and Pieratt incorrectly give the number as “100,000 copies” (10).

<sup>379</sup> This collection also includes works by William Saroyan.

Aug. 2014.). A partial listing of books (1981-1990) exists in the online group *Objects of Soviet Life*,<sup>380</sup> where the compiler notes that the “[p]rinciples of selection are generally understandable (light historical genre, plus popular classics, plus some amount of sci-fi and detective fiction).”<sup>381</sup> Possibly because different books were provided regionally, Friedberg’s list<sup>382</sup> only partially corroborates this list and my father’s.<sup>383</sup> Regardless, Friedberg notes that “[o]f the nine titles, only three were by Soviet authors” (76). While “[t]he overwhelming success of the scheme surpassed all expectations” (77), it is absolutely essential to add that these works had originally been published between 50 and 150 years prior; thus, as Friedberg points out in “The Soviet Book Market,” if one considers the “distinction between ‘uneducated demand’ and ‘authoritatively defined needs’” (183), it becomes difficult to believe that the scheme managed to quench the Soviet *intelligentsia*’s thirst for *contemporary* foreign writing.

The problem of the unending paper shortages (177-178; Hingley 244) and harebrained trade-in production schemes was actually the problem underlying the ultimate failure of the Soviet Union as a whole, that is, the top-down centralization (Lottman 101) of economic supply and demand yoked to party mandate according to which “circulation figures are determined arbitrarily by the authorities and do not necessarily reflect changes in public demand” (Friedberg, *Culture* 43). However, printed material still had to come from *somewhere* and so the addition of two and two still sometimes yielded five as, when asked about paper shortages by *Publishers Weekly* in 1978, the chairman of Goskomizdat Boris Stukalin stated with a straight face: “[w]e

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<sup>380</sup> Предметы советской жизни

<sup>381</sup> «Принципы отбора в общем и целом понятны (лёгкий исторический жанр плюс популярная классика плюс некоторое количество фантастики с детективами)» (n. pag.).

<sup>382</sup> “I’f and Petrov, *The Twelve Chairs* (1928), Aleksej N. Tolstoy, *Aelita* and *Engineer Garin’s Hyperboloid* [1923], Hans Christian Andersen, *Fairy Tales* (in two volumes) [c.1830s-1840s], Ethel Voynich, *The Gadfly* [1897], Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* [1902], Wilkie Collins, *The Woman in White* [1859], Georges Simenon, *The Maigret Stories* [c.1940s-1960s and] Alexandre Dumas, *Queen Margot* [1845]” (*Euphoria* 76)

<sup>383</sup> Walker names at least three of the same titles (90).

have a paper shortage, but we increase printings every year” (qtd. in Lottman 102). True enough, Stukalin’s organization could magnanimously command the “increase in publishing of foreign authors” (as it did after the Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation of 1975) (Lottman 102), but there was still no paper on which to print the foreign authors. According to Walker, “[a]lthough publishers make a preliminary estimate of the edition size for each title when preparing their annual publishing plan, they are usually strongly influenced in the number of copies which they finally order from the printer by the number of copies which the book trade organizations order in advance for publication” (63). Also, while fiat decisions regarding the volume of print runs precluded the possibility of satisfying the needs of the reading public by design, the *ad hoc* regulation of supply could also be used in the inverse capacity, *limiting* the manufacture of undesirable Soviet and foreign literature. As Friedberg explains, exceptions did occur, but ultimately

[t]he publication of . . . leading twentieth-century Russian authors after decades of prohibition was quite transparently intended as a gesture to mollify the disappointed liberal intelligentsia. This was evident from the relatively limited press runs of such books. It was sometimes difficult to avoid the suspicion that such books were also deliberately highly priced. (*Culture* 31)

The same principle applied to works in translation. Because prices from the late 1960s were not available to me (and because comparing prices from different time periods would be inaccurate by not accounting for inflation), I could not perform a comparison for *C22* or *PP*.<sup>384</sup> However, by calculating data based on books available to me and correlating it with the data for 1977 provided in “Preiskurant No. 166” from January 1, 1977 reproduced in Walker (130-136), a

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<sup>384</sup> *C22V* (1967) is 5.56 KPPS; *PP* (1967) is 6.15 KPPS; *CC* (1970) is 5.09 KPPS

consistent comparison could be generated for 1977-1978 (see Table 2). These findings demonstrate that *Once an Eagle* (if it could even *be* obtained) was prohibitively expensive (costing six times more than a party publication—Brezhnev could not dream of such popularity), followed by Heller’s *SH*, followed by translations of contemporary poetry and the 1978 collection of Rait’s translations of Vonnegut. In fact, the three authors held the lead even over the average price of any translated work. Insights gleaned from official statistics are interesting in a general sense, insofar as they indicate that certain works were inaccessible to the common reader due to not only economic considerations (a 6 r. 20 k. book on a 150 r. monthly salary cost something akin to a CAD \$165 book in 2015) but also the lack of availability resulting from poor distribution, high demand, and strategic theft (Belinkov in Belinkov et al. “Censorship” 9). “For

Table 2 Disparity in Price Between Official and Translated Publications in the U.S.S.R.					
Text	Publisher/Periodical	Published	Price (in kopeks)	Printed Sheets	Kopeks per Printed Sheet
<i>OE</i>	Voenizdat	1978	620	50.5	12.2
<i>SH</i>	Raduga	1978	320	28.65	11.1
translations of contemporary poetry (Walker 133)		1977	—		10.8
<i>SF, CC, BC, GB</i>	KhL	1978	410	38.762	10.57
translations of contemporary prose (133)		1977	—		10.3
contemporary Soviet poetry (133)					10.3
“Prose, poetry, drama, memoirs, and letters of foreign writers in foreign languages” (134)					10.0
contemporary Soviet prose (133)					6.3
translations of “[c]ontemporary popular scientific and mass literature” (130)					4.0
“Works of the founders of Marxism-Leninism” (130)					2.4
official publications, speeches, and propaganda (130)					2.1



every book on display [in Dom Knigi],” explains Herbert R. Lottman in *The Soviet Way of Publishing*, “there are four more books in the basement” (107) because, when a title is “announced a week in advance in the weekly Goskomizdat publication *Book Review* . . . each bookstore puts its allotment of copies on sale at one time . . . announcing . . . how many copies it has to offer”; so that (although buying more than one copy was disallowed), entire print runs were sold out in a matter of an hour (Lottman 111). As if by magic, “in 1973, bookstores had ordered 6,330,000 copies of books . . . but received only 1,650,000. . . . two years later . . . the corresponding figures were 7,245,000 and 1,555,000” (Friedberg, “Market” 180).

Popular books could be read and resold on the black market, and a desirable book with a low print run could become a “hot” commodity overnight. As Stelmakh points out, in the Era of Stagnation this was an important social milieu: “[b]uying books directly from other people was how 35 percent of Soviet adults acquired books for their own homes, and 68 percent of families living in major cities bought books only on the black market” (146). To this Friedberg adds that “the distinction of most *defitsitnaia kniga* [scarce book], the category in which shortages are most acute, belongs to translations of West European and American writing, in particular those deemed ideologically questionable or books that can be classified as escapist reading” (“Market” 180). Thus, in a practical sense, official statistics are entirely beside the point. As Lottman puts it so very succinctly, one could “hardly find a book worth buying in a Moscow bookstore” (107). In the 1960s “black marketeers were doing brisk business in Franz Kafka, then published in Russian for the first time ever” (180) while in 1968, at the tender age of seventeen, my father (see Figure 8) had flirted his way into furtively returning two different books to the Military Academy library when he could not bear to part with its copy of the 1967 V/T translation (1 out of a mere 50,000 printed). In the 1970s, when Vonnegut was selling like hot cakes (Leighton,

*Two Worlds* 98), my  
 father had to do electrical  
 work as a favour in order  
 to be able to buy the  
 1978 collection of  
 translated novels; the  
 book (once again, 1 in  
 50,000) was simply  
 unobtainable.

**Figure 8** Gregory Khmel'nitsky (third from left) reads *Catch-22* in Lefortovo Park, Moscow, 1971. "At the Stadium. Graduating Class of 1975. 1971."  
 (Zaitsev n. pag.)

### **Et in Arcadia ego**

The print machinations of Goskomizdat were immediately visible because one could observe the obvious dearth of certain printed materials on the bookshelves and the overabundance of others (often, ironically, "the writings or speeches of Marx, Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev") at warehouses and recycling stations (Hingley 244). However, the material workings of Glavlit could often be gleaned only from a few innocent-looking factoids on the publication's copyright page (usually found at the back of a Russian publication), for instance, the "lapse of time" (Frankel 134) between a text being "Sent to typesetting"<sup>385</sup> and "Signed for printing,"<sup>386</sup> as well as a mysterious number,<sup>387</sup> for instance "A 01038" that appears on the March issue of *NM* carrying *SF* and "A 01054" on the April issue. It thus becomes possible to calculate the publication delays that arose from the involvement of Glavlit and (by

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<sup>385</sup> «Сдано в набор» As Frankel points out, "[c]ompositors do not need the censor's stamp before they begin setting the text in type. Printers do" (134).

<sup>386</sup> «Подписано к печати»

<sup>387</sup> Gorokhoff explains that in the past "such numbers were preceded by the additional note that it was the number of the *Glavlit* representative (e.g., 'Glavlit representative no. A-04381')"; however, while "the note has been dropped the same pattern of numbers continues. . . the system . . . is basically geographical, with each city assigned a letter or a pair of letters which precede the number" (81).

comparing periodical issues) the number of items examined by a single Glavlit censor in the interim (see Table 3; for a more extensive sample, see Appendix III). These peritexts, taken together and correlated with other works printed in similar and different formats yield a host of fascinating insights into the inner workings of Soviet censorship: *C22V* (in addition to the unusual fact that it was issued in book form an entire month *before* its serialized periodical form) was not only subject to oversight by Glavlit but also by “[d]efense publishers” who produced the “[p]ublications of military, semimilitary, and secret police organizations” (evidenced by the letter Г in its serial number) (Gorokhoff 81, 257);<sup>388</sup> in its *SR*, *Krok*, and *U* versions it was also

Table 3 Delays in Publication Due to Glavlit Involvement						
Text	Publisher / Periodical	Sent to Typesetting	Signed for Printing	Published	Delay (Days)	Glavlit Serial No.
<i>CR</i>	<i>IL</i>	Aug. 27, 1960	Oct. 18, 1960	Nov. 1960	52	A 07366
<i>C22</i>	<i>SR</i>	—	—	Nov. 15, 1964	—	B 04596
<i>C22</i>	<i>Krokodil</i>	—	Jan. 9, 1965	1965	—	A 02207
<i>C22</i>	Voenizdat	Dec. 15, 1966	Mar. 3, 1967	1967	78	Г-47057
<i>C22</i>	<i>Ural 4</i>	—	Apr. 4, 1967	Apr. 1967	—	HC 19548
<i>C22</i>	<i>Ural 5</i>	Mar. 15, 1967	May 4, 1967	May 1967	50	HC 19568
<i>C22</i>	<i>Ural 6</i>	—	Jun. 1, 1967	Jun. 1967	—	HC 19577
<i>C22</i>	<i>Ural 7</i>	May 15, 1967	Jun. 27, 1967	Jul. 1967	43	HC 19595
<i>C22</i>	<i>Ural 8</i>	Jun. 15, 1967	Jul. 26, 1967	Aug. 1967	41	HC 19648
<i>PP</i>	MG	Apr. 12, 1967	Sep. 19, 1967	1967	160	—
<i>HE</i>	Voenizdat	Aug. 8, 1968	Nov. 25, 1968	1968	109	—
<i>SF</i>	<i>NM 3</i>	Jan. 23, 1970	Mar. 2, 1970	Mar. 1970	77	A 01038
	<i>NM 4</i>	Feb. 23, 1970	Apr. 13, 1970	Apr. 1970	60	A 01054
<i>CC</i>	MG	Mar. 19, 1970	May 22, 1970	1970	64	—
<i>BC</i>	<i>LG</i>	—	—	Jan. 1, 1974	—	A 07716
<i>BC</i>	<i>IL 1</i>	Nov. 5, 1974	Dec. 10, 1974	Jan. 1975	35	A 10434
	<i>IL 2</i>	Dec. 3, 1974	Jan. 3, 1975	Feb. 1975	31	A 09203 <sup>389</sup>
<i>SH</i>	Raduga	Oct. 14, 1977	Jan. 27, 1978	1978	105	—
<i>SF, CC, BC, GB</i>	KhL	Jan. 20, 1978	Jul. 6, 1978	1978	167	—
<i>OE</i>	Voenizdat	—	Oct. 27, 1978	1978	—	—
<i>C22</i> <sup>390</sup>	Raduga	Nov. 9, 1987	Jul. 29, 1988	1988	263	—

<sup>388</sup> Gorokhoff provides an entire chart with every single censorship symbol used by Glavlit (257).

<sup>389</sup> For more details about variation in serial numbers, see Appendix III.

<sup>390</sup> This collection also includes works by William Saroyan.

processed by at least three other different Glavlit censors in different offices (the letter B denoting a Moscow national newspaper, A a civilian Moscow publisher, and HC a civilian publisher in Sverdlovsk). It also took less time to examine progressive issues of *Ural*, with the number of items examined between publications fluctuating widely: 20, 9, 18, 53. Notably, *HE* and *OE*, also published by Voenizdat and subjected to similar literary critique, are missing censorship symbols outright (although *HE* was subjected to an unusually long examination of 109 days). There is a vast difference between the delays involved in releasing Vonnegut's first work in the U.S.S.R. in Brukhnov's translation (160 days), his second translated novel (64 days). In addition, the issues of *NM* and *IL* that bore the same novels as the 1978 Vonnegut collection (*SF* and *BC*) took an average of 69 and 33 days to examine, respectively,<sup>391</sup> with *Ural* occupying the middle position with 53 days, while each item in the 1978 collection took an average (dividing the total number of days by four) of 42 days to examine. An issue of *NM* took twice as long to examine as an issue of *IL*.

In Appendix III, I have collected samples of peritexts from twelve months of issues of *NM* and *IL* published in 1960, 1970, and 1975. Here, too, useful insights abound: In *IL*, the sequence of Glavlit numbers "resets" somewhat more frequently, indicating the involvement of a different Glavlit censor (unlike *NM*, *IL* had an in-house Glavlit representative). Conversely, (following Tvardovskii's departure from *NM* in January 1970), the examination of the February issue spikes to 87 days (the longest delay of the year) and then, under new, party-loyal management, gradually eases back to 48 days in December. In 1960, it took 29 days on average to examine an issue of *NM* and 41 days to examine an issue of *IL*; moreover, the Glavlit censor responsible for *NM* examined 28 issues per month on average, while the one assigned to *IL*

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<sup>391</sup> Because the materials in the periodical and book versions (unlike in the case of *C22*) are nearly identical, the book galleys took a shorter time to examine.

examined 36. After Tvardovskii's fall from grace, the amount of time to examine an issue doubles to 66 days on average per issue, but the amount of Glavlit oversight decreases to 14 items per month on average; for *IL*, because it continues to toe the line, the delay remains 44 days, but its Glavlit censor examines 144 items per month on average. Following the normalization of the post-Tvardovskii editorial board, the amount of time to examine an issue of *NM* falls to 49 days and the number of items examined per month remains 15; for *IL*, the delay remains 40 days while its Glavlit censor examines 68 items per month. In Appendix IV, I have collected a representative sample of Soviet manuals and treatises on translation (some of which I use in the following chapter), as well as their censorial peritexts. The sample includes books from 1955 to 1988, and while most (except for a few that were published on the Soviet peripheries) bear a wide variety of Glavlit numbers such as A, III, AT, Л, М, and ВФ,<sup>392</sup> every single one is subject to at least 80 days of processing (regardless of print run); moreover, the procedure continued well after the declaration of *glasnost* in 1986.<sup>393</sup> In 1966, V. P. Uvarova's *How to Learn to Understand and Translate a Foreign Text*<sup>394</sup> took 337 days for a Glavlit *apparatchik* to read and in 1987, Nikolai Liubimov's *Incombustible Words*<sup>395</sup> was read for the same number of days. Most tellingly, Kornei Chukovskii's seminal translation treatise *High Art*<sup>396</sup> took 265 days to examine in 1968 while in 1987 the exact same book (the author long dead) was examined for 268 days; both books bear a Glavlit number.

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<sup>392</sup> Indicating processing at Glavlit offices in Moscow ("national publishers," "fields under Ministry of Culture"), Minsk, Moscow ("republic and city publishers"), Leningrad, and Erevan (Gorokhoff 257)

<sup>393</sup> As Gessen notes, although Gorbachev "virtually abolished censorship in 1988, under his leadership the Central Committee of the Party continued to appoint the editors of national publications and monitor their content" (16).

<sup>394</sup> «Как научиться понимать и переводить иностранный текст»

<sup>395</sup> «Несгораемые слова»

<sup>396</sup> «Высокое искусство»

Translated works in the U.S.S.R. were not limited only by print runs, prices, and censorial scrutiny. Prior to the nation's accession to the copyright convention, it soon became clear that, despite the fact that its translations were framed in a socialist context, its modes of production ironically returned to a staunchly capitalist position. On January 28, 1973, Vonnegut wrote:

The piracy of books . . . [is] practiced so smarmily in the U.S.S.R. The scheme is this: Foreigners' books are published there without permission from their authors. This has happened to several of my books and I haven't even been notified of their publication. The smarmy part is that royalties based on God-only-knows-what are deposited to each author's credit just as secretly in accounts God-knows-where. The rumor is that an author can spend that money only in the U.S.S.R. This much is sure: It can't be given to Solzhenitsyn. Graham Green tried to do that years ago—and fizzled, of course. Other socialist countries make more honorable and open deals. ("To America" 222-223)

Interestingly, on October 25, 1974, Vonnegut revealed to Fiene that he was not only able to open a savings account in roubles in Russia, but that he also was "the first American" allowed to do this. Vonnegut adds, "they were petrified by the international copyright agreement, because they thought foreign literature would cost them so much."<sup>397</sup> They are now elated, because writers are charging on the average less than half of what they expected to pay" (*Letters* 220). Wishing to further cultural contacts between the two nations, on October 30, 1974, Vonnegut wrote to his first wife Jane about the "totally crazy idea" of getting "all the rubles earned by American writers

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<sup>397</sup> The Russians were right: because of the new agreement and the implementation of high fees (by Soviet standards), "the number of books and pamphlets translated from foreign languages and published in the USSR has fallen from 2,639 volumes in 1971 to 1,627 in 1975" (Walker 118).

before the new International Copyright Agreements . . . can, if unclaimed, be pooled into a scholarship fund for young American writers who want to visit the USSR” (*Letters* 221-222). In a November 1974 special report for the *American PEN Newsletter*, Vonnegut wrote that, “when I at last arrived in person on this trip [to Moscow], I was paid 2,500 rubles in cash. To give an idea of the scale of this payment: Rita Rait’s old-age pension is 120 rubles a month” (2). Because, prior to the U.S.S.R.’s signing of the Universal Copyright Agreement on May 27, 1973<sup>398</sup> (Levin 144), “publishers and the Writers’ Union voluntarily kept royalty accounts for [American writers] anyway—to be paid in rubles, when and if we should appear . . . for two years after each publication. If unclaimed in that time, they were closed”; as a result, Vonnegut guessed, “Americans must have earned several hundred thousand rubles over the years, and . . . most of the money has gone unclaimed” (2). The clever scheme that Vonnegut encountered in the process of becoming “the first American writer to be ripped off after the new copyright agreement went into effect . . . [and] the first American writer to be [eventually] paid in dollars” (“Two Conversations” 11) indicates the duplicity of the notion that the Soviet apparatus could gain access to the American cultural Other without ever getting its hands dirty with a capitalist mode of exchange.

### **The First Sphere of Paradise**

In effect, the only channels that required no compromise between submission and resistance to the official line were *samizdat* (self-publishing),<sup>399</sup> *tamizdat* (there-publishing) (Goriaeva 10; Spechler 227), or collected *samizdat* published abroad as *tamizdat*, as was the case

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<sup>398</sup> The date that Friedberg gives (January 1, 1974) is incorrect (*Euphoria* 16). For a full account of the events leading to the U.S.S.R. signing the Universal Copyright Convention, see Martin B. Levin’s “Soviet International Copyright – Dream or Nightmare?”

<sup>399</sup> By the early 1980s, it was greatly assisted by the closely controlled and highly valued Xerox machine (see Goriaeva 350 and Raleigh 132).

from roughly 1968 (Goriaeva 351), all illegal, dangerous, but popular, practices.<sup>400</sup> Unlike the vagaries of the official process, “[i]n the blessed times of Samizdat you didn’t care whether your translation would sell or not, the print-run was determined by how many copies your typewriter could produce. Mine produced four” (Akunin, “Confessions” n. pag.). My father recalls,

Of course, books were given for one night. These were photocopies or “electrographic” [copies]—predecessors of xerocopy or blueprinting. This was Solzhenitsyn, Bulgakov, unnamed erotic stories ([shared] in the barracks). Typewriters and electrophotography were under the control of the first (secret) departments and the KGB. Myself I persuaded an operator of an electrophotographic machine for two bottles of cognac to make me two copies of *Master and Margarita*, which I myself cut and bound into a cover using my own old plaid shirt. One of those I traded for a ten-volume collection of Marshak, which even now we have, and the other I gave to my sister when I got from Berezka<sup>401</sup> that same full volume published for [sale] abroad. Where this book is now—I do not have any information.<sup>402</sup> (“Samizdat in your experience.” 4 Mar. 2015)

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<sup>400</sup> According to Gordon Johnson, the menagerie of *-izdats*, “parodying the acronyms of official Soviet publishing houses like ‘Gosizdat,’ ‘Voenizdat,’ and so on” (Komaromi, “Samizdat” 605), was not limited to print: “*Radizdat* refers to a range of broadcast materials, including books, talks and news bulletins that were copied, usually from foreign radio stations, onto tape and circulated. *Magnifitizdat*, derived from the Russian for ‘magnetic tape recorder’, covered music, verse, speeches and talks that were either copies from the radio or based on live recordings. In addition to these taped formats, the term[ ] . . . *kolizdat* . . . refers to publication in quantity. Its usage covers both collections of samizdat material bound together into a single volume and various attempts to enlarge the scale of samizdat publishing by developing subscription-based periodicals” (123).

<sup>401</sup> A store that admitted only foreigners (and the well-connected) and took payment only in hard currency (typically the U.S. dollar).

<sup>402</sup> «Конечно, книги давали на одну ночь. Это были фотокопии или „электрографические“ — предшественники ксероксов или светокония. Это были Солженицын, Булгаков, безымянные эротические истории (в казарме). Пишущие машинки и электрография были под контролем первых (секретных) отделов и КГБ. Сам я уговорил оператора электрографической машины за две бутылки коньяка сделать мне две копии „Мастера и Маргариты“, которые я сам нарезал и переплёл в обложку из своей старой клетчатой рубашки. Одну из них я поменял на десяти томик Маршака, который и сейчас у нас есть, а другую подарил своей сестре, когда достал из берёзки тот самый напечатанный для заграницы полный том. Где эта книга сейчас — никаких сведений не имею».



According to Spechler, in the late 1960s “*samizdat* had become a major industry with an audience of thousands” (225). However, Stelmakh tempers this assessment:

Suetnov, the researcher and bibliographer of *samizdat*, notes that the starting number of copies of an illegal book was about fifteen to twenty. The final number would not exceed two hundred; the monthly spontaneous run could be about 50,000. . . . [Thus, the] one-time *samizdat* audience was about 200,000 readers.<sup>403</sup> Still, in spite of its small number, this was the group of cultural leaders who . . . preserv[ed] the cultural and moral potential of the society. (148)

There also arose the mechanism of *samizdat*—*tamizdat*—*samizdat*, with the writer Andrei Amal’rik being the first contact with the West between 1966 and 1969 (Goriaeva 351) despite the fact that, between 1959 and 1974, reading and disseminating *samizdat* was grounds for arrest (357-358). As Gordon Johnston explains in “What is the History of Samizdat?”, the practice “was prosecuted under Articles 70 and 190-1 of the Criminal Code, with the latter introduced shortly after the Siniavski-Daniel trial. . . . It is significant, too, that Article 190-1 covers dissemination in oral, written, or printed form and makes a distinction between the production and dissemination of material” (12). A. Daniel noted, “[n]o one in the history of Russian oppositional movements wrote as much as dissidents of the *samizdat* period” (qtd. in Komaromi, “Samizdat” 612) and Amal’rik argued that “[n]aturally the régime recognized *samizdat* as potentially more dangerous than the Cultural Opposition” (qtd. in Reddaway 350); for some,

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<sup>403</sup> For a total U.S.S.R. population of 215-265 million people between 1960 and 1980, or “the general reading public comprised [of] about 161.2 million people, about 40-50 million of whom could be called active readers” in the mid-1980s (Stelmakh 149). In all probability, habitual readers made up an even smaller number, but this did not stop everyone from thinking and saying that “‘The Soviet people are the best-read people on earth’ and ‘The U.S.S.R. is a great book power’” (150).

*samizdat* was even an unofficial source of news (Komaromi “Phenomenon” 641).<sup>404</sup> However, like all underground phenomena, the textual production of *samizdat* soon began to reflect the establishment’s own, albeit in a turbid, scored mirror: “the amateur typescript, the deformity of the text, the characteristic mistakes, corrections, fragile paper, and degraded print quality had value [or appeared to have it] because they marked the difference between samizdat and official publications” (“Samizdat” 609). By the 1960s, the *samizdat* movement in the U.S.S.R. had splintered into two competing strains: the more political, commercial “underground literary market” of Moscow, and the more “aesthetic or cultural” *samizdat* of Leningrad (“Phenomenon” 638n21). Moreover, as Johnson reveals, “a large number of samizdat readers were passive in the sense that they did not combine their readership of samizdat with any overt involvement in ‘dissenting’ or ‘oppositional’ activities” (132-133), and while there was value in “the essentially ‘private’ reading of samizdat material . . . [that] provided . . . opportunities for conversations and dialogues . . . that could not easily be discussed openly in workplaces or homes” (133), the medium also problematized the message.

According to Susan C. W. Abbotson, Arthur Miller, in his 1969 book *In Russia*, “observes how the repression of a writer’s work has ironically become ‘a mark of art’s importance, otherwise why would government bother policing it?’” (203). Indeed, in 1973 Anatolii Kuznetsov noted that censorship had become “a convenient means of concealing one’s sterility. Kochetov, for example, published some wretched book and then came along and hinted that it had been ruined by the censorship. In this way many people preserve the illusions that they have talent” (in Belinkova et al. 77). Ann Komaromi explains that

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<sup>404</sup> During the “trial of Sergei Kovalev, primarily for his work with the *Chronicle of Current Events* . . . of 694 discrete items in the relevant materials, only 7 were finally entered into the case by Soviet authorities as libelous, and only 2 details of items from the Chronicle were factually dubious” (Komaromi 641).

[t]he nature of the . . . system complicated the notion of a ‘true’ message and an individual author. . . . originators of samizdat texts testified to the loss of control over a text, once it was released into samizdat circulation. Copyists introduced degrees of remove from the original author . . . Natal’ia Trauberg, who translated texts from English for samizdat, later recalled excising the “redundant” passages from G. K. Chesterton’s texts, for example. (“Material Existence” 604)

The fact that even *samizdat* was edited, bowdlerized, and modified for a variety of reasons ranging from insufficient time, material, references to unfamiliar or untranslated works, and extended commentaries (“Phenomenon” 635), coupled with its practitioners’ attempt to reinforce the “binary oppositions of truth vs. falsehood . . . and dissidents v. state” (and the failure to do so definitively) caused the unwitting exposure of the “epistemic instability, inasmuch as samizdat texts are not automatically invested with authority” (629)—or any texts, in fact. Thus, the identity of the text had to be protected. In 1966, the poet Aleksandr Galich wrote “*Erika* returns four carbons copies, / And that’s all! / . . . And this is sufficient.”<sup>405</sup> Recalling the romantic *salon* and *al’bom* of nineteenth-century Russian nobility, the age-old habit of “writing for the desk drawer” (Friedberg, *Culture* 30) (until better times, when a venue for publication becomes available) often caused *samizdat* to turn inwards, creating private circles, cliques, and coteries that, in turn, attempted to craft a private, secret tongue.

### **We’re No Worse than Horace**

In *Aesop’s Fables*, the philosopher Xanthus tells Aesop to “[b]uy the best, the most wonderful thing in the world!”<sup>406</sup> Aesop serves him “freshly slaughtered”<sup>407</sup> pigs’ tongues,

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<sup>405</sup> «„Эрика“ берёт четыре копии, / Вот и всё! / ...А этого достаточно.” (п. pag.)

<sup>406</sup> «Купи всего самого лучшего, самого прекрасного на свете!» (Gasparov, *Basni* 31)

<sup>407</sup> «свежезаколотых» (32)

explaining to his irate master his choice with a rhetorical question: “And is there in the world anything better and more wonderful than a tongue? Does not the tongue support all philosophy and learning? Without a tongue nothing can be done—not giving, not taking, not buying; order in government, laws, regulations—all this exists only thanks to the tongue.”<sup>408</sup> When Xanthus attempts to outwit Aesop by reasoning that, “[a]s everything that you’re told you turn inside out, here is my order: go to the market and buy there the shoddiest, most worthless thing in the world!”<sup>409</sup> Aesop surprises his master by serving him the exact same thing, this time arguing, “What in the world is worse than the tongue? The tongue brings us quarrels, conspiracies, lies, massacres, envy, feuds, war; can there be anything worse, more contemptible than the tongue?”<sup>410</sup> In the 1860s, writer M. E. Saltykov-Shchedrin considered the fable when he popularized the name “Aesopian language”<sup>411</sup> (Loseff 1) for a phenomenon from the century’s beginning. The idea was simple enough, in theory: a way to communicate with like-minded individuals that would allow one to hide meaning in plain sight. As Brian James Baer indicates in “Literary Translation in the Age of Decembrists,” one of the earliest and most-often quoted examples significant to nineteenth-century Russian *intelligentsia* was Vincent Arnault’s “La Feuille” (1818) that begins with “From the stem that quivered, / A poor leaf has withered, / Where go you? I do not know.”<sup>412</sup> The poem, in conjunction with “[t]he biography of the poet

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<sup>408</sup> «А есть ли что на свете лучше и прекраснее, чем язык? Разве не языком держится вся философия и вся учёность? Без языка ничего нельзя сделать — ни дать, — НИ взять, ни купить; порядок в государстве, законы, постановления — все это существует лишь благодаря языку» (32).

<sup>409</sup> «Так как все, что тебе говорят, ты выворачиваешь наизнанку, то вот тебе мой приказ: ступай на рынок и купи там самого дрянного, самого негодного на свете!» (32).

<sup>410</sup> «Что же на свете хуже языка? Язык нам несёт раздоры, заговоры, обманы, побоища, зависть, распри, войну; разве может быть что-то ещё хуже, ещё презреннее, чем язык?» (33).

<sup>411</sup> I prefer the better translation *Aesopian tongue* because it permits more semantic play: after all, the Russian word *iazyk* means both *language* and *tongue*, but the English word *language* deceptively limits itself to one definition.

<sup>412</sup> «De la tige détachée, / Pauvre feuille desséchée, / Où vas-tu? Je n’en sais rien.» (qtd. in Baer 233) Baer gives the line as *la tige* (the stem), but most other versions specify *ta tige* (your stem).

suggested to contemporary readers . . . a metaphor for political exile” (233), along with “[t]he juxtaposition of the rose and laurel in the final stanzas of the poem . . . [that] evoke the opposition of private and public” (233) as well as a possible reference “to the Feuillants or Club de Feuillants, a moderate political organization in Revolutionary France” (234). Baer argues that Vasilii Zhukovskii, the first Russian translator of the poem in 1818, detected and intensified the metaphor of exile by making the stem (or branch) into a *friendly* one and the leaf into a *lone* one: “From friendly branches separated / Tell me, o leaf alienated, Where goest thou? ‘Don’t know myself.’”<sup>413</sup> Mikhail Lermontov, himself subject to exile, produced another translation in 1841 that even further intensified the theme by emphasizing the words *native* and *persecuted*: “An oak leaf tore off from a branch by the native land given / To steppes rolled away, by the cruel and vicious storm driven;”<sup>414</sup> However, as Baer and Etkind remind us, “In what may be an example of covert irony, discernible by the ‘happy few,’” the nineteenth-century allusions are all but gone in a twentieth-century context (Baer 234); thus, “[t]he leaf as a metaphor for internal exile does not . . . exhaust the interpretive possibilities of this short lyric” (235) and multiple other possibilities remain in the reader’s interpretive domain, populated by a privileged readership.

True enough, in 1812 Russian illiteracy was at 96% (Tossi qtd. in Baer, “Decembrists” 217) and the reading and writing elite comprised of “an interpretive community of highly educated, often bilingual Russians, well-versed in esoterism,<sup>415</sup> who were capable of decoding” oppositional views (213-214); many of them embodied a “double readership” because they could

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<sup>413</sup> «От дружной ветки отлучённый, / Скажи, листок уединённый, Куда летишь? „Не знаю сам;”» (qtd. in Baer 234).

<sup>414</sup> «Дубовый листок оторвался от ветки родимой / И в степь укатился, жестокою бурей гонимый;» (Lermontov n. pag.)

<sup>415</sup> A popular movement that involved membership in “secret and no-so-secret organizations, ranging from freemasonry to pietism” that encouraged “a shared, private idiom” (Baer, “Decembrists” 218-219).

“evaluate the translator’s interventions in the text” and had access to the ST (221).<sup>416</sup> The Decembrists themselves were “a group of elite young Russians who were members of secret political societies” and were often related by blood; they “had been to Western Europe during the war and had . . . hoped to bring freedoms to Russia” (216). The situation in the twentieth century was very different. As Ritva Leppihalme explains in *Culture Bumps*, “[a]llusions require a high degree of biculturalisation of receivers in order to be understood across a cultural barrier” (4); moreover, comprehension is not certain if the necessary intertext is unknown by the receiver (for instance, *Hamlet* for Stoppard’s *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* [8]<sup>417</sup>), or if the necessary rhetorical device (such as ellipsis, metaphor, metonym, allusion, allegory, or satire) is not detected during a “surface” reading (8); finally, contextual and intertextual coherence may be compensated by internal coherence but, even in the hands of a master sender, this would have to be an unavoidable departure from the ST. Clearly, the new breed of *homo sovieticus* that was precluded from proficiency in foreign languages and was physically barred from travel “to Western Europe and to the United States” (Friedberg, *Culture* 66) (or contact with *any* cultural Other) was in an entirely different position, and, while citizens of the U.S.S.R. certainly continued to *attempt* the technique, after all, “this was one of the only games in town” (Parthé 65), the results were rarely effective and never guaranteed.

To a Soviet citizen, national exceptionalism was a matter of routine and, just as Russians have managed to assure themselves that they were the best-read nation in the entire world, they became convinced that, over many generations of implemented sociopolitical controls, they had

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<sup>416</sup> As Baer explains, “[e]vidence of such a reading practice can be seen in the letters sent by the Decembrists and their friends, offering astute comments on one another’s translations, as well as on recently translated literature both into and out of Russian, which demonstrate a firm grasp of both source and target languages” (“Decembrists” 221).

<sup>417</sup> Although, of course, if the source of implicit messages (that is, the intertext) is known, then “the responders were quite competent receivers” (Leppihalme 150). The question, of course, is where and how to obtain this source.

become wily and clever by virtue of being acclimatized from birth to a host of editorial and censorial interjections that made them proficient in decoding “the intricate system of euphemisms and metaphors developed to circumvent the censors” (Friedberg, *Culture* 6). This was, of course, completely untrue. For one thing, it was impossible to maintain the noise-to-signal ratio in the message that could stop being meaningful, “self-destruct” at any moment: “[i]f too obvious, it will not clear the censors; if overly complex, it courts the danger of inaccessibility to all but a handful of readers”; one could also make the fatal mistake of detecting political allegory where there was none (6-7). I would like to reject the commonly-held assertion that “[o]ver the years, Soviet historians, writers, and literary critics have developed an intricate system of allusions and code words that educated readers readily understand” (47). A coherent secret language was impossible in twentieth-century Russia and when it was embraced a little too seriously it, at best, often resulted in wishful thinking that would allow one to “save face” when (at different points in history<sup>418</sup>) confronting the truth of not being a noble descendant (even in spirit) of the romantic Decembrists but of being a slave, facing an undefeatable and inexorable thought-control apparatus (Azhgikhina 36), and, at worst, in paranoia. In “The Game of the Soviet Censor,” Tomas Venclova argues that

during the reign of Nicholas I, it was customary to denounce the Turkish pashas or the Austrian gendarmes who drove their own countries, which were adjacent to Russia, into complete savagery and slavery. Oddly enough, this primitive method

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<sup>418</sup> While it is obvious that correlation does not equal causation, according to Google Ngram Viewer (a tool that charts word and phrase frequency in a corpus of printed sources from 1800 until 2012), although in practice both the English and Russian corpora extend to 2008 or 2009) the phrase *Aesopian language* enters the entire (indexed) English corpus in 1921 (just prior to the creation of Glavlit) and then peaks in 1953 (at the beginning of the Thaw Era), in 1967 (at the beginning of the Stagnation Era—an all-time high), and in 1981 (following contact with the West during the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow). At the same time, the phrase *эзопов язык* emerges in the Russian corpus in 1923 (one year after the creation of Glavlit) and then peaks in 1934 (in the aftermath of the concealed Soviet famine), 1942 (following U.S.S.R.’s entry into WWII), 1975 (following the signing of the 1973 Universal Copyright Convention and other treaties), reaching an all-time high (during the Soviet period) in 1991.

is a favorite even now [1983]. A Soviet writer lambastes Pinochet or a Central American junta, hoping that readers will ‘understand him correctly’” (n. pag.). To me this hope seems not effective at all. True enough, “the censor, too, is human” and may, in fact, be “more sensitive to metaphor than to metonymy” (the former *explicitly* compares two concepts while the latter offers an *implicit* idea), but the censor is not stupid,<sup>419</sup> and there is nothing worse than “if your allusion passes over the head of the ordinary reader but is understood by the KGB (Kuznetsov in Kuznetsov et al. 34). For one thing, Aesopian tongue cannot include an actual *code*, because (by being material evidence), it quickly transports the author from the realm of allusion to the Gulag; as Venclova admits, “[w]hen an acrostic<sup>420</sup> [or a *roman à clef*] is deciphered, it is hard to say with an innocent expression on your face that it was a coincidence” (n. pag.). Worse, yet, what if the reader, in his increased vigilance, becomes the author’s judge, jury, and executioner? A good example of this is the infamous line from Pasternak’s translation of *Faust*, “Stali nuzhno do zarezu” (“Steel is needed desperately”) where the “shrewd” reader may mentally connect the first two words into “Stalin” and then draw a host of conclusions that supposedly illuminate the new meaning of the line in the context of the stanza, in the framework of “the poetics of the Oriental Stalin panegyric,” or with regard to the pun on the leader’s name and the notion of things in life having become (*stali*) better than ever before (Witt, “Lines” 166). The tenuous possibility is certainly *there*, but it ranks very low on the scale of evidence admissible for serious literary analysis. This, as I tell my undergraduate students, is simply bad scholarship (after all, we could begin rearranging letters in words and paragraphs in hope of

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<sup>419</sup> However, the *a priori* assumption of using Aesopian tongue is that one is “more intelligent than the censor” (Baer, “Decembrists” 215); this is both presumptuous and problematic.

<sup>420</sup> Not coincidentally, the use of a hidden political message encoded in acrostics exists in only *two* known Soviet cases: The first is A. Amfiteatrov’s “Etudes” (1917), that spells out “Decidedly nothing can be written about. . .” («Решительно ни о чем писать нельзя...») with the first letter of each word in a nonsensical paragraph, and the second, the poem “An opening in the front line . . .” by Vladimir Lifschitz from 1944 is, as Loseff admits, “the only instance of coding by acrostic in the Soviet period” that he “knows to be authentic” (116).



finding a fortuitous anagrammatic “code,” but we generally do not). It is not *coincidence* that endows a literary critique with force, but rather a detection of *consistent textual patterns and textures*.

No one has written more on the Aesopian tongue than Lev Loseff, particularly in *On the Beneficence of Censorship*. However, it is here, in his definition of Aesopian encoding, that numerous problems begin to emerge: “Imagine the situation . . . when the Author, who fully understands the system of political taboos . . . determines to anticipate the Censor’s intervention . . . with hints and circumlocutions [that] . . . [p]roperly applied . . . will have *an inevitable influence* upon the text as a whole” (Loseff 6; emphasis added). This scheme essentially anticipates an ideal author (or sender), but to say that the majority (let alone the totality) of the ideopolitical machine that I have described can be *known* (let alone “fully understood”!) is absurd: an editor may come into contact with one or two Glavlit or Goskomizdat representatives and a few party functionaries; a writer or translator may have dealings with other writers and translators as part of the organization he works for or as part of the Writers’ Union; certain rumblings, shifts, and patterns could, no doubt, be felt, but the notion that the Soviet “system of political taboos” could be *understood* is wishful thinking at its worst (after all, no one except the censors had access to the “Talmud,” the key to everything, and even this source changed constantly). For argument’s sake, assuming that all these variables *could* be parsed out, the ideal writer would also have to be the ultimate master of encoding his “hints and circumlocutions” (What else would assure Loseff’s “inevitable influence upon the text”?); in turn, the ideal reader (or receiver) would have to have the linguistic capacity, interpretive experience, and intertextual wherewithal to receive and decode the sender’s “textual influence.” Things, however, were rather different away from the world of perfect forms. Approaching the

problem from the sending side, we observe the realm of possible interpretation constantly shrinking: for instance, Kornei Chukovskii proposed interlacing a “dangerous text . . . with entirely well-intentioned phrases” hoping the reader will ignore well-worn formulas (Venclova n. pag.), but the reader can then “misread” the coherent use of clichés and consider the author to be complicit in what he actually attempts to undermine. Mikhail Bulgakov added a rhetorical remove by having the Devil himself appear in *Master and Margarita*, but even the Devil “does not have the right to criticize Leninism . . . [or specific] members of the government” (Venclova n. pag.). Finally, the avant-garde can create such a “complex, surrealistic, or abstract work of art” that its meaning can be “understandable only to the author himself and to those few friends for whom he interprets the work” (Venclova n. pag.), but this defeats the purpose of the entire enterprise, and so we return to talking about the «Pauvre feuille desséchée» that can really mean *anything* without the proper context. In this sense, Finkelstein’s suggestion to look for the *podtekst* (subtext) (in Belinkov et al. “Evading the Censor” 145) is nothing more than a restatement of the commonplace critical practice, one that a reader with sufficient education and experience with close reading and interpretive skills should perform anyway, every time he encounters any text worth reading whatsoever.

The only game one *could* play with certainty was to go ahead with the allegory as-is and then, as in the Soviet joke, when challenged by the authorities, first blame an obvious evil (such as fascism, capitalism, or bourgeois decadence) and then, when finally backed into a corner, counter the accusation with “And whom exactly did *you* have in mind?” However, this approach is no longer Aesopian tongue or even a “conceptual blend”<sup>421</sup> that relies on an audience’s

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<sup>421</sup> In “Allegory, Blending, and Censorship,” Craig Hamilton discusses Sarah Copland’s three blend categories: in a *non-collaborative blend*, the author “runs the blend” and the readers do not have to work hard to observe it (for example, in *Heart of a Dog* or the published version of *The Crucible*); in a *collaborative blend*, the author creates the blend and the readers have to work hard to “run the blend,” (for example, in *Animal Farm*);

presence and complicity to activate the allegory (Hamilton 40); this is good, old rhetorical framing, in its function no different from the introductory *parovoz* whose purpose is known and whose presence is mandatory. Evgenii Shvarts's play *The Dragon*<sup>422</sup> (1942-1944) is an excellent example of a transparent allegory of Stalinism. Shvarts's diary reveals that in 1944 the play, previously highly praised, was suddenly censured in S. Borodin's article "A Harmful Fairytale"<sup>423</sup> published in *Literatura i iskusstvo*, banned, and archived by Repertkom (14). Someone had caught on. The tongue was not so Aesopian, after all, and when Loseff uses Shvarts for a case study, he does not address a simple question: What good does Aesopian tongue do if its code can be so easily cracked? All of Loseff's other examples fall into the same two categories: either the clever Aesopian tongue he describes was detected by the *apparat* expressly designed for such purpose and not allowed to pass, or it is much too obvious to be considered Aesopian at all. For instance, Loseff provides examples of political subtexts from *Eugene Onegin* (25), Mayakovsky's "Mexico" (27), and Yevtushenko's "Corrida" (1967); however, one wonders how totally ignorant and unimaginative a reader (or a listener of Aleksandr Dulov's popular reworking of the poem into his songs "Publika" and "Torrero") must be to not have the "keys to the code for the initiated reader" to determine "that 'Spain' in Yevtushenko's individual Aesopian code regularly stands for 'Russia'" (29) with lines such as "I'm the public / . . . / and I, / staying so clean and calm, / my eyes used to hammer in to the head / nails into Christ's wide open palms"<sup>424</sup> or the invocation "Torero, my boy, be yourself — / for

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finally, in a *collaborative reader-reflexive blend*, the author creates the blend which generates self-reflexivity for the audience, (for example, in the performed version of *The Crucible*) (38). Nonetheless, there still remain multiple possible interpretations of the texts Hamilton provides.

<sup>422</sup> «Дракон»

<sup>423</sup> «Вредная сказка»

<sup>424</sup> «„Я публика, / . . . / и я, / оставаясь чиста, / глазами вбивала до шляпочки / гвоздочки в ладони Христа.”» (Yevtushenko n. pag.)

honour is what matters. / Don't dedicate, torero, fights / to government spectators!"<sup>425</sup> How much more obvious could the twin indictment of the murderous assent of the populace and its bloodthirsty rulers be? As a spontaneous experiment, I read the two excerpts from Yevtushenko's "Corrida" to my fiancée (who was born in post-Soviet Ukraine, is quite well read, but has never read the poem in question). I surprised her by calling in the middle of the night, read the poem, and asked her to give me her first, immediate impression of what the poem was *about*. Her answer was "the Soviet government" (Viber interview. 20 Feb. 2015).

Loseff gives another example from Andrei Voznesenskii's 1967 poem "Shame": "It's shameful, / When in Greece they have introduced the censor / And all the papers look all one and the same now. // It's shameful, / When all Vietnam in their game is a bet chip / Lies, lies are shameful"<sup>426</sup> as evidence of "a protest against Soviet censorship and against Soviet foreign policy." Sure enough, but would not one expect a twist or two from a poet often censured for his writing? Would not a known associate of Pasternak be automatically suspected of being up to no good? Loseff forgets that reading a work in its historical moment and in hindsight are not the same thing, and by insisting on not only a dominant but a *single* possible reading, he effectively excludes any other hermeneutic means of understanding Voznesenskii's poem or any of its other features. When Loseff discusses science fiction and parables (66-73) he focuses on the work of the Strugatskii brothers, delineating what stands for what in their novels. While it is certainly wonderful to read about all of his examples of the Strugatskii brothers (sci-fi writers akin to Vonnegut) hoodwinking the censor, Loseff uncomfortably side-steps a number of interesting

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<sup>425</sup> «„Тореро, мальчик, будь собой – / ведь честь всего дороже. / Не посвящай, тореро, бой / правительственной ложе!» (Yevtushenko n. pag.)

<sup>426</sup> «Постыдно, / Когда в Греции введена цензура / И все газеты похожи одна на другую. // Постыдно, / Когда Вьетнамом играют, как фишкой, / Лгать, лгать постыдно.» (Voznesenskii 54).

facts: in *Hard to Be a God*<sup>427</sup> (1963), “Don Rebiia” had to be renamed to “Don Reba” (on account of sounding too much like *Beria*) (Boris Strugatskii, “Interv’iu” n. pag.); *Monday Begins on Saturday*<sup>428</sup> (1965) included a number of “necessary” edits, such as the negotiation with Glavlit for the removal of the name of the “minister of government security” Maliuta Skuratov<sup>429</sup> or the disgraced automotive ZIM factory mentioned in a doggerel (Boris Strugatskii, *Kommentarii* n. pag.); *Tale of the Troika*<sup>430</sup> (1968) was published in a shortened form in *Angara* which was then summarily banned, removed from libraries with the editor reprimanded and fired and the novel not published again until 1989 (Boris Strugatskii, *Kommentarii* n. pag.; Arbitman n. pag.); finally, *Roadside Picnic*,<sup>431</sup> (1971) was serialized in *Avrora* but then published in extremely bowdlerized form in 1980, and finally (based on the periodical version) in 1984 (Boris Strugatskii, *Kommentarii* n. pag.). Undoubtedly, the three novels are brilliant works of (rather thinly veiled) satire, but what good did the Aesopian tongue do it if, time and again, the satire was found out and curtailed? Clearly, a more dependable, overt means of self-expression remained necessary.

One particularly interesting offshoot of the Aesopian tongue technique that does not involve unsanctioned publishing, is called *pseudotranslation* (PT), that is, original work masquerading as translation.<sup>432</sup> In the 1930s and 1940s the U.S.S.R. establishment used the real Kazakh bard Dzhabul Dzhabaev as a “pretty face” for the army of Stalin’s writers (such as Pavel Kuznetsov) who produced and published torrents of regime-appropriate literature under his

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<sup>427</sup> «Трудно быть богом»

<sup>428</sup> «Понедельник начинается в субботу»

<sup>429</sup> In the 1500s, the violent and dreadful leader of the Oprichnina (secret police) of Ivan the Terrible

<sup>430</sup> «Сказка о Тройке»

<sup>431</sup> «Пикник на обочине» The novel was the basis for Andrei Tarkovskii’s film *Stalker* (1979).

<sup>432</sup> This concept is not to be confused with Juliane House’s notion of *covert translation*, a text that “enjoy[s] the status of an original ST . . . in the target culture” (qtd. in Gutt 45; see also House, *Past and Present* 65-66).

name, points out Susanna Witt in “Arts of Accommodation” (147, 149). Such “Oriental” translations, called “creative works of the peoples of the U.S.S.R.,”<sup>433</sup> were generously supplied with footnotes and photographs, intended to create the illusion of a nation comprised of a tight-knit group of united and single-minded republics (146);<sup>434</sup> it was an open secret, and by the 1960s the *intelligentsia* was sick of it (Arsenii Tarkovskii<sup>435</sup> famously registered his exasperation with the practice in his poem “The Translator”<sup>436</sup>), but PT did its job. The technique was also useful for sociopolitical opposition. As Carmen Camus Camus reveals in “Pseudo-Translations of the West,” during the Franco regime in Spain, especially from 1946 to 1966,

[p]ublishers, eager to boost their sales, recruited people from outside of the literary field to write, imitating models, especially of the popular *Far West* literature, thus helping to fill the void left by the exodus of Spanish intellectuals. These writers were asked to use pseudonyms to conceal their true identity from the reading public, and this use of a mask both covered up the lack of genuine authors and allowed writers with a dissident ideology to earn a living. (55)

In addition, as Andrea Rizzi points out in “When a Text is Both a Pseudotranslation and Translation,” the practice of a feigned translatorial framework has a long lineage in literary tradition proper as a rhetorical device, all the way from *Don Quijote* (154) to the *Book of Mormon*<sup>437</sup> (155). However, this technique requires a credulous reader who cannot obtain proof of the forgery. In a curious case, on July 19, 1937, Stalin’s Commissar of Defense Lev Meklis

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<sup>433</sup> «Творчество народов СССР»

<sup>434</sup> The reality could not be further from the truth. Friedberg recounts a Soviet joke: “Leninist friendship of nations may be seen in practice when Latvians and Turkmen, Belorussians and Kirgiz, Azeris and Lithuanians, Russians and Tatars all volunteer to help the Georgians beat up Armenians” (*Culture* 43).

<sup>435</sup> The father of the film director Andrei Tarkovskii

<sup>436</sup> «Переводчик»

<sup>437</sup> The religious text from the 1830s, not the 2011 musical

sent a letter to Stalin<sup>438</sup> that told the strange story of the poet Dem'ian Bednyi who brought a poem called "Struggle or Die"<sup>439</sup> to the offices of *Pravda*. The subtitle of the poem stated: "Konrad Rotkempfer. Translation from German" with Bednyi's translator's credit at the end of the poem (478). To Mekhlis, three passages seemed especially strange:

"a fascist paradise. What topic! I walk along all through the thriving fascist tropic,  
where pleasure, sunshine, all in bloom . . ." <sup>440</sup>

"Whom to believe then? A word you throw down out of place, your tail you'll  
soon find marked with salt then." <sup>441</sup>

"Country mine, at crossroads of all matters, Your mighty majesty has been  
transformed to tatters." <sup>442</sup>

After suggesting that Bednyi eliminate the offending lines, the poet offered to publish the poem without the postscript, as a German translation; after Mekhlis did a little more digging, it turned out that no Rotkempfer had ever existed and that Bednyi was the author of the poem, claiming artistic license (478). The very next day Stalin (in a good mood) wrote back to Mekhlis, advising the "newly-born Dante, i.e. Konrad, that is. . . Dem'ian Bednyi" <sup>443</sup> that the poem is mediocre: "As criticism of fascism, it is pale and not original. As criticism of the Soviet regime (don't joke!), it is stupid, albeit transparent"; <sup>444</sup> the magnanimous leader suggested avoiding literary trash and facetiously apologized for his candour to "Dem'ian-Dante." The evening of the

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<sup>438</sup> It was also sent to Molotov and Ezhov. Stalin often took close personal interest in literary activities and debates.

<sup>439</sup> «Борись или умирай» For the full transcript of the poem see Mekhlis (477-479).

<sup>440</sup> «„фашистский рай. Какая тема! Я прохожу среди фашистского эдема, где радость, солнце и цветы . . .»» (Mekhlis 476)

<sup>441</sup> «„Кому же верить? Словечко брякнешь невпопад, тебе на хвост насыплют соли“» (Mekhlis 476)

<sup>442</sup> «„Родина моя, ты у распутья, Твоё величие превращено в лоскутья“» (Mekhlis 476)

<sup>443</sup> «Новоявленному Данте, т.е. Конраду, то бишь. . . Демьяну Бедному». (477)

<sup>444</sup> «Как критика фашизма, она бледна и не оригинальна. Как критика советского строя (не шутите!), она глупа, хотя и прозрачна» (477).

following day, a terrified Bednyi appeared in the *Pravda* editorial offices following an invitation; he played the fool, blamed his lack of understanding on old age, and concluded that it was time to retire to the village; as Mekhlis noted, “[s]omeone apparently had seriously entrapped Dem’ian.”<sup>445</sup> Someone, indeed.

Bednyi’s PT was awkwardly and unsuccessfully concealed. However, because PT by definition is *not known* to be a translation (otherwise it becomes translation proper), the consumption of PT offers no contact whatsoever with its “translator” (let alone the “author”), remaining a viable extension of innovating dissenting self-expression.<sup>446</sup> The beauty of the form, as Gideon Toury demonstrates, is that, “from the point of view of the culture that hosts them, . . . these pseudotranslations (or fictitious translations), are really on a par with genuine translations” (*Descriptive TS* 47), so that the employment of PT amounts “to no less than an act of culture planning” (“Fictitious Translations” 4), whether from the top down (the *-izdats* of the Soviet state) or from the bottom up (the counter-*izdats* of the Soviet counterculture), because “when a text is offered as a translation, it is quite readily accepted *bona fide* as one, no further questions asked” (Toury 5).<sup>447</sup> (Witt argues that the former turns out to be intimately intertwined with the latter [“Lines” 167]). As a result, the possibility (let alone the actual existence) of PT not only “problematizes the distinction between the original and the translation,” but also “shifts the ethics of translation away from questions of trust and fidelity towards conditions of textual reproducibility” (154). When a PT is discovered (or purposefully shown) to be “false” (that is, an original work), the entire house of cards comes tumbling down, because the revelation

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<sup>445</sup> «Демьяна, видимо, кто-то серьёзно опутал» (477)

<sup>446</sup> For instance a Jewish writer could pretend to translate from a non-existent person or a non-existent language in order to get published. This in, fact, is roughly the plot of Feliks Roziner’s *A Certain Finkelmeyer*.

<sup>447</sup> As Rizzi puts it, “[a] PT is a T until it is unveiled as a fraudulent cultural act” (Rizzi 155). What does this say about translation proper?



leaves the reader aware of the dimension of epistemological scam or faked-up alterity *inherent in all translation*. The translation business is geared to keeping this scam from view, for it wants to convince readers that when it markets an author in translation, the translated text will be a truly serviceable stand-in for the original. (Apter, “No Original” 167; emphasis added)

The revelation is essential not only because Soviet readers were precluded from learning foreign languages, had no contact with the West, and no opportunities to compare Russian TTs to STs, but also because it lays bare the rhetorical position of translation that often remains undisputed and unchallenged, particularly in the case of big-name translators, moving us from a “source-oriented position” (Toury, *Descriptive TS* 204), that often ends up concerned with deviation from the ST but not with the *reasons* for these deviations, to a “target-oriented” approach (205) that (while not necessarily precluding a return to the ST), makes its goal to derive and describe the framework of textual relationships in play.

### **The Grand Game**

Vonnegut’s literary goals were fairly straightforward: he states that “I did want to make the Americans in my books talk as Americans really do talk. I wanted to make jokes about our bodies” (*PS* 202); he was motivated by a disdain for censorship: “even when I was in grammar school, I suspected that warnings about words that nice people never used were in fact lessons in how to keep our mouths shut . . . about . . . too many things” (*PS* 203). However, in the context of the Soviet culture producing industry, it is unsurprising that, even after Vonnegut established contact with Rait and their friendship grew, he showed a profound misunderstanding of many of the cat-and-mouse contests required to successfully translate his own works into Russian. Disregarding Rait’s link to the West (Fiene, for one) and her accountability to the editors of

periodicals where his translated novels appeared and the publishing houses that released his books, Vonnegut explained in a 1973 editorial in the *New York Times Book Review* that “[t]ranslators in the U.S.S.R. discover what they think are good books in foreign languages, and then they have to persuade their Government to publish them” (222). As Walker clarified in 1978, this was a somewhat more involved matter, and certainly not one mediated only by the translator and the *apparat*:

A publishing-house considering translation of a foreign work must . . . obtain at least two recommendations for the translation from scholarly institutions or specialists, and secure the agreement of the appropriate chief editorial office in the State Committee for Publishing [Goskomizdat] before submitting details of the work for ‘coordination’ to the State Committee . . . The choice of translators, and of authors to write any notes or introduction to the work, must be approved by a senior editor or the head of an editorial office. (119)

Behind the scenes, the translator also had to coordinate with a literary scholar who would be guaranteed the right to write an introduction or would be obliged to write explanatory notes (Markish n. pag.); to her credit, Rait resented this requirement (“Kanareika” n. pag.), but it still had to be fulfilled.

Vonnegut was also misinformed about the intricacies of Russian profanity and Soviet moral sensibilities when he adds, that,

[L]ike writers for *The Times*, she [Rait] wasn’t allowed to say “F--- you” but she is proud of finding an old Russian expression which was so quaint that it had no status as being officially obscene. Nobody complained about it, and the book was

published as translated. Much to her satisfaction, the quaint expression in the context of Salinger's masterpiece was nothing more or less offensive than, in her opinion, Salinger would have wanted it to be. (224)

Despite the warm words for his friend and translator, Vonnegut was unaware of the fact that this was plainly untrue. The phrase was simply obfuscated in Rait's translation of Salinger:

I saw something that drove me crazy.	But then I saw one thing that enraged
Somebody'd written 'Fuck you' on the	me. Someone wrote an <i>obscenity</i> on
wall. It drove me damn near crazy. . . .	the wall. I just got mad with rage.
(CRe 260)	(CRr 131; emphasis added) <sup>448</sup>

I went down by a different staircase,	I went down by the other stairs and
and I saw another 'Fuck you' on the	again saw an <i>obscenity</i> on the wall. I
wall. I tried to rub it off with my hand	tried to erase it, but this time the
again, but this one was <i>scratched</i> on,	words were scratched with a knife or
with a knife or something. It wouldn't	something else sharp. No way to wipe
come off. It's hopeless, anyway. If	it off. And it's useless. If a person had
you had a million years to do it, you	a million years at his disposal, he still
couldn't rub out even <i>half</i> the 'Fuck	wouldn't be able to erase all <i>obscenity</i>
you' signs in the world. It's	from all the walls in the world. An
impossible. (262)	impossible task. (emphasis added) <sup>449</sup>

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<sup>448</sup> «Но тут я увидел одну штуку, которая меня взбесила. Кто-то написал на стене *похабицину*. Я просто взбесился от злости» (emphasis added).

<sup>449</sup> «Спустился я по другой лестнице и опять увидел на стенке *похабицину*. Попробовал стереть, но на этот раз слова были нацарапаны ножом или ещё чем-то острым. Никак не стереть. Да и бесполезно. Будь у человека хоть миллион лет в распоряжении, все равно ему не стереть всю *похабицину* со всех стен на свете. Невозможное дело» (CRr 132).

(Even Alexandra Borisenko, the staunchest defender of Rait's methods admits that "[o]f course the word *fuck* does not exist in Russian, and those words that do exist Rait-Kovaleva could not have used. But even "Your mother!" would have been here more adequate than an anonymous *obscenity*."<sup>450</sup>) In a 1989 interview with literary critic Charles Reilly, Vonnegut expressed his naïve beliefs:

**CR:** Did they leave in the part about the Russian-midget secret agent [in *CC*]?

**KV:** Oh yes, they were very amused by that.<sup>451</sup> . . .

**KV:** What worries them [the Russians] more than anything is obscenity. I think American "sex madness" frightens them more than anything else.

**CR:** Have they toned down some of your language?

**KV:** I've learned from my translator, Rita Rait, that they have a very limited language in that respect: Russians are rather a Puritanical people and coarse speech is not common to them. Their soldiers aren't as foul-mouthed as our, for example [!]. . . . But to get back to the question, of translating American obscenities: she [Rait] has been obliged to use a form of barnyard speech, the kind you'd find in a collection of folk tales. There are a number of such tales in Russian, very old ones, where casual reference is made to, oh, copulation and excrement and whatever, and she's been obliged to seize upon these archaic words that people know but rarely use. (11-12)

In *Fates Worse than Death* (1991), Vonnegut tells an anecdote about Rait telling "the world's funniest dirty story" (176) and explains that "[t]here are some obscenities in my books, since I

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<sup>450</sup> «Конечно, слова *fuck* по-русски нет, а те слова, которые есть, Райт-Ковалёва не могла использовать. Но даже 'твою мать!' было бы здесь адекватней, чем анонимная 'похабщина'» (Borisenko, "Sélindzher" n. pag.)

<sup>451</sup> This is not true: first of all, Zika is Ukrainian (thus, Soviet but not Russian); second, her background is omitted in Rait's translation.

make Americans, and particularly soldiers, speak as they really speak. The modern Russian equivalents of these words cannot be set in type in the USSR” (180). Vonnegut’s easygoing attitude towards the modification of his novels in translation can only be explained with the rift in the philosophical developments in the U.S.S.R. and the West. In 1967, when Roland Barthes was triumphantly declaring «La mort de l’auteur», the Era of Stagnation had already been in full bloom, and while in Western criticism it eventually became *de rigueur* to argue that, inevitably, “[t]he notion of the death of the author<sup>452</sup> must inevitably lead to the death of the original” so that translation ceases to be a subsidiary activity (Bassnett, “Reappraising” 13), by “turn[ing] into a kind of ‘transformation’” that invalidates the concept of equivalence and annuls the notions of the “original” and “intended meaning” (Snell-Hornby 62). This was unsurprisingly a hard sell in the U.S.S.R. where “the reconstruction of the author’s original intentions” (Baer, “Reader” 333) (that was invalidated by Western literary theory) was still in practice, and where the death of the author was not a figurative, theoretical phenomenon but still a rather literal, commonplace occurrence. The mere idea of removing the author from his pedestal and the text from the Office of Weights and Measures was not a “cause for celebration,” but “a horror through the eyes of the Soviet writer (Komaromi, “Samizdat” 616). Unlike the “all or nothing” approach towards problematic texts in the West in the middle and late twentieth century,<sup>453</sup> in the U.S.S.R. Heller and Vonnegut’s writing had to be painstakingly “pulled” through the Iron Curtain,<sup>454</sup> in

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<sup>452</sup> Let alone poststructuralism and deconstruction which were anathema to the Russian literary *intelligentsia* (Baer 151)

<sup>453</sup> Holman demonstrates that this was not always the case at the beginning of the twentieth century, comparing the 1899 censorship of Tolstoy’s novel in Russia that “surgically” removed anything to do with “moral outrage . . . ideological diversion . . . criticism of the Russian state . . . descriptions . . . of physical relations . . . [and] r[e]ferences to bodily functions” with a parallel American edition—that “expurgated and rew[r]ote” the entire novel by means of “chopping and cutting, reorganizing and reducing, [and] forcing content and form into ideological and structural parameters” (278-279).

<sup>454</sup> For instance, as Gunta Ločmele and Andrejs Veisbergs note in “The Other Polysystem,” “the translation of Kurt Vonnegut’s *Cat’s Cradle* (1963) into Latvian in 1973 was so extensively purged and altered politically, ideologically and linguistically that it was retranslated by the same translator in 2002 and published with a statement on the cover that the new version did not contain any censorial restrictions and is in fact a totally different rendering of the source text” (297). In “Slang and Four-Letter Words,” Ieva Zauberga notes that “the ‘dirtiest’ of Vonnegut’s stories, ‘The Big Space Fuck,’ was translated in much the same way as preceding translations. Interestingly, it has a footnote saying that the word *fuck* cannot be literally translated, as it has no Latvian counterpart and asking the reader to consult an American slang dictionary” (Zauberga 144).

translated and heavily revised, edited forms, following the “better than nothing” principle. Many of the omissions and changes in such translations still often remain invisible to the unilingual Russian reader, but we can no longer consider them slips of the tongue because they ideologically modify the text and therefore must be examined on their own terms.

There is ultimately something regressive in the contradiction between Vonnegut’s principled disdain of restricted self-expression but acquiescence with the replacement of actual obscenity with a (feeble) equivalent. However, for Sherry the switch of one word with another is also perfectly acceptable because she terms the latter a “metalinguistic device [which] calls the reader’s attention to what has been removed, prompting its mental recreation on the part of the reader.” However, does the reader invariably have this ability? Given a theoretical, Platonic space (such as that of the so-called “shrewd Aesopian reader”) the text may be “co-opt[ed] . . . in an active and complex act of reading . . . that reconstructs the intended meaning” (“Something” 755-756), but what if a writer does not reach a “dynamic equilibrium” with the censor? What if the writer confidently adopts the plausible deniability of the “Aesopian mode” (153) but it flies right over all heads? If “even irony can be crushed, domesticated, and used as a condiment” (159), then, as Michelle Woods argues in *Censoring Translation*, the writing becomes complicit and “reductive, utterly contextualized” (39) and the exchange depleted, doubly disingenuous, and “entropic” (40). Coetzee cautions us that “the classic does not belong to an ideal order” or even to an ideology (162); rather, this is the view of the “absolutist reader,” the critic that attempts to get at the “ideal” meaning of a text (161). In order to examine the complicity of the translator with the figure of the censor, it now becomes necessary to reject the single dimension of oppressor-and-oppressed model, and move towards the notions of *twinsip* (118) and *dialectic of violence* (120), a reaction equal and opposite to that of the action initially inflicted upon the translator herself (140), that would then allow the use of textual features and interpositions to

interrogate the extent of *negotiation* between translator and state within the text (Baer et al. 98). It is disappointing that Sherry deprioritizes the need to examine the wholesale operation of the Soviet control apparatus (if only because it is one whole part of the “collaborative” process<sup>455</sup>). For instance, she appears to be unaware of Coetzee’s work.<sup>456</sup> However, his writings on Mandel’shtam and Solzhenitsyn (names that Sherry name-checks but never discusses in full) and on Zbigniew Herbert’s refusal to participate in what Sherry calls the “censorial ‘game’” (733) had already been published seventeen years prior. Similarly, when Sherry argues that “[t]he question for the investigator then becomes: how, where, and with what consequences does censorship emerge from the ‘heterogeneous ensemble’ of practices and relations which constitute any one instance” (732), she ignores Toury’s taxonomy of *norms* that had existed for at least three decades and a half. Although Sherry does ultimately make use of Susanna Witt’s notion of “multi-voicedness” in translation (757) and eventually acknowledges the central role of Soviet censorship organizations such as Glavlit (735-739) and their “partnership” in the censorship process (738), she still somehow manages to dismiss the concept of *vsetsenzura* because it may imply that “the *uncensored* text . . . [is] pure, free expression” (“In Translation” 38) while concluding that “the censor is everywhere” (757). (The text is not even “pure” or “free” in *samizdat*!) Ultimately, it is impossible to examine the speech act negotiated under the duress of censorship without first understanding, on their own terms, the boundaries given to it by the ideopolitical machine of the target language (TL) and, if indeed the “translator, author, and editor

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<sup>455</sup> The opportunity for discussion is there, for instance in the possibility of demonstrating syncretism between state-centric processes and Foucault’s theory of “censorship as a constitutive force in society” or Bourdieu’s “censorship [as] a structural precondition of speech” (734). This choice of theorists is Sherry’s own but she often name-checks and never returns to them again or misreads them.

<sup>456</sup> Sherry argues that “there has been no . . . reassessment of Soviet censorship, which continues to view the phenomenon as “ultimately embedded in a dichotomy of state vs. society” and preserves the “paradigm of repressive violence directed from top to bottom.” (“Better Something” 732). Does not a total source of repression interact with a cultural producer as well as a discrete one?

can be considered co-authors and censors” (732) and, if indeed translations have a Bakhtinian “double-voice[ness]” (Witt, “Lines” 167)—then these boundaries can be located only in the absence of the ST, within the praxis that gives rise to the TT and within in the critical framework that defines the boundaries of the translator’s practice.



### Chapter 3

#### Vorsprung durch Technik: Soviet and Western Schools of Translation

试释是事。<sup>457</sup>

—Yuen Ren Chao

“The Lion-Eating Poet in the Stone Den”

What is translation? On a platter  
A poet’s pale and glaring head,  
A parrot’s screech, a monkey’s chatter,  
And profanation of the dead.

—Vladimir Nabokov

“On Translating ‘Eugene Onegin’”

The thorny question remains: Where does  
the translator or translation theorist get off  
assuming that he or she knows whose face  
needs to be gotten into?

—Douglas Robinson

*What is Translation?*

In his introduction to the 2013 anthology *Russian Writers on Translation*, Brian James Baer bemoans the underrepresentation of Russian translation theory in TS (iii). Indeed, one of the few other popular anthologies comparable in scope to Baer’s and Natalia Olshanskaya’s is A. A. Klyshko’s *Translation—A Means of Mutual Rapprochement Between Peoples*<sup>458</sup> that has last been available (or, I should say, *not available*) from the Moscow publishing house Progress in 1987. I begin with Russian and Soviet schools of translation and proceed to their Western counterparts.

#### The Triumph of the Spirit

Like many nineteenth-century language policies, Russia’s begins with the question of balancing cultural sovereignty and identity with the necessity to communicate and trade with other nations. In the early 1700s, in an attempt to reverse Russia’s cultural and technological backwardness, Tsar Petr I implemented a “policy of forced Westernization” so that, almost overnight, translation suddenly “became an issue of national importance . . . a way for Russians

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<sup>457</sup> “Try to explain this matter.”

<sup>458</sup> «Перевод — средство взаимного сближения народов»

to imagine their place in the world” as a nation and to contemplate their individual identities (Baer, “Introduction” iii). The eighteenth century was marked by a rise in multilingualism among the nobility, and by the 1800s there was a robust trade in cultural products between Europe and the Russian Empire, both formal and unofficial. In 1709, in one of the first Russian edicts that addressed the question of translation, Petr I wrote: “And one must not word from word preserve in translation, but having accurately the sens<sup>459</sup> understood, in one’s own tongue already thus write, as intelligibly as possible,”<sup>460</sup> and in 1724, he mandated the clarity and readability of all translations. The lack of standardization and the addition of Old Church Slavonic to colloquialisms and foreign words often yielded an undesirable hybrid language in the final product (Baer, “Introduction” v). In the pursuit of improving translation, debates about the qualities of the language and the direction it should take continued from the quarters of such luminaries as Mikhail Lomonosov. In the 1800s, the period considered to be “the golden age of Russian translation,” it was not uncommon to “tak[e] liberties<sup>461</sup> with the source text” (Olshanskaya 89). By 1825, nine monarchs had replaced one another, but the Russians could not shake the Great Tsar’s simple but problematic dictum.

Like all Russian literary questions, that of TS begins with the poet Aleksandr Pushkin who famously called translators “the post-horses of civilization.”<sup>462</sup> In his often-quoted 1836 essay titled “On Milton and Chateaubriand’s Translation of *Paradise Lost*,”<sup>463</sup> Pushkin unwittingly lays down the framework for the program that later Soviet TS will co-opt: although

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<sup>459</sup> This cognate of the English word *sense* is a (now archaic) Russian word by way of the Polish *sens* and Latin *sensus* and *sentio*.

<sup>460</sup> «И не надлежит речь от речи хранить в переводе, но точно сенс вразумев, на своём языке уже так писать, как внятнее может быть» (qtd. in Sobolev 308).

<sup>461</sup> Borisenko adds that “sometimes even the name of the original author was omitted; it was normal to replace foreign names with Russian ones, to add and omit passages, to change phrases; English novels were often translated via the mediation of French” (Borisenko, “Fear” 179).

<sup>462</sup> «Почтовые лошади цивилизации»

<sup>463</sup> «О Мильтоне и Шатобриановом переводе „Потерянного рая“»

he does begin by strongly denouncing translations from the previous century whose forewords betray textual modification designed to please both the readers and authors by excising passages that could “offend the educated taste of a French reader,”<sup>464</sup> Pushkin is displeased by the demand for “more faithfulness”<sup>465</sup> on the part of readers who wished to see Dante, Shakespeare, and Cervantes “in their own [foreign] form, in their national dress.”<sup>466</sup> Most anathema to Pushkin is word-for-word translation (formal equivalence), which is Chateaubriand’s biggest sin (36-37); after all, Pushkin argues, just try to translate “Comment vous portez-vous; How do you do” literally—you will surely fail, and, if the Russian language, “empowered by the lexicon of the ancient Greek” (“On Lémontey” 24),<sup>467</sup> does not permit literalism, then in French it surely is an offense of the highest order (“O Mil’tone” 37). Russian, however, appears to be an exception to this rule, because in the very first chapter of his *Evgenii Onegin* (released in “full”<sup>468</sup> in 1837), Pushkin proceeds to insert the French, English, Italian, and Latin words “*Madame*,” “*Monsieur l’Abbé*” (112), “*Talon*” (116), “*entrechat*” (116); “dandy” (112), “roast-beef” (116), “Beef-steaks,” “*Child[e]-Harold*” (112); “*far niente*” (127); and “*vale*” (113) in Latin script, as well as Spanish, German, and English words such as *bolivar* (115), *was ist das* (122), and *spleen* (122, 123) in Cyrillic script, eventually admitting in the text of the poem, “But *pantalons*, *frac*, and *gilet*, / in Russian we do not have yet”:<sup>469</sup> the narrator has consulted the *Academic Dictionary* but could find no better alternatives (119). Moreover, when Tatiana writes her famously lyrical letter to Onegin (153-154), the narrator again facetiously begs his readers’ forgiveness by explaining he must translate the letter *into Russian* because Tatiana did not know Russian well (having not

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<sup>464</sup> «оскорбить образованный вкус французского читателя» (36)

<sup>465</sup> «более верности» (36)

<sup>466</sup> «в собственном виде, в их народной одежде» (36)

<sup>467</sup> Pushkin is nonetheless against Dutch, German, and French insertions (25).

<sup>468</sup> *Sans* the poet’s self-imposed excisions, such as the infamous tenth chapter that Pushkin immolated.

<sup>469</sup> «Но панталоны, фрак, жилет, / всех этих слов на русском нет» (119)

read Russian journals) and wrote in French (150), and anyway, muses the narrator, have not the objects of poetic dedication so often garbled their Russian? (150).

Pushkin's desire to avoid literalism and ambivalence towards foreign insertions was not shared by everyone, and already in 1829 the poet Prince Petr Viazemskii conceptualized two approaches as diametrically-opposed rhetorical standpoints in relation to the ST. In a note on his translation of Benjamin Constant's *Adolphe* (1816), he writes that

[t]here are two types of translations: one is independent, the other is subordinate.

In the first case, the translator, having grasped the original's meaning and spirit, moulds them into his own forms; in the second, he tries to preserve the original forms, obviously to the extent allowed by the rules of his own language. The first type is more advantageous than the second, and yet, out of these two I have chosen the latter. There is also a third kind, which consists of poor translations, but we will not discuss them here. (17)

For Viazemskii, it was not enough to merely convey the *content* (the plot) of a novel; he wanted to understand Russian by testing its abilities in relation to French; in other words, "to *torture* it in my attempt to figure out how close it can get to a foreign language without being mutilated or overstretched in Procrustes's bed" (17; emphasis added). Viazemskii rejected Gallicisms, "but allowed them in concepts and ideas since they represent Europe"; moreover, he critiqued Nikolai Karamzin and Vasilii Zhukovskii for leaving "no trace of the soil or clime of the original's birthplace" (17). Viazemskii effectively advocated the production of a hybrid text that would straddle French, German, English, and Russian cultures, and in a letter to A. I. Gotovtseva wrote that "[s]ome translators are like acrobats who have mastered to perfection the art of losing their proper form and shape. These free translators often become unfree poets" (17).

Although the two *literati* did not know this, they had effectively helped lay the framework for two schools of translation: *vol'nyi* (free) translation, preoccupied with the *transmission of the spirit*, and *bukval'nyi* or *doslovnnyi* (literal) translation, preoccupied with the *transmission of the letter*; all concurrent and subsequent statements until 1917 fall into these two categories. In 1834, Nikolai Gogol' wrote to M. A. Maksimovich about the translation of *Ukrainian Folk Songs* that literalism would create a barrier between the Little and Great Russians, and so local idiom "must go" (30); however, in 1846, while complaining to N. M. Iazykov about the premature piracy of *Dead Souls* into German, Gogol' admitted that a poorly framed translation would send the false impression of the novel being "a portrait of Russia" (30-31). In 1835, the literary critic Vissarion Belinskii criticized the subsidiary position of the translator, as well as the elite, "only the wealthy, especially those living in the two capitals," who could take advantage of translations ("Historical Novel" 33). However, in 1838 he wrote in "A Literary Explanation" that "translations into Russian belong to Russian literature" (31), and in the essay "Russian Literature in 1841" praised Zhukovskii, arguing that, before his work,

Russian poetry was deprived of all content because our young, newly born public could not, with its own amateur performance of the national spirit, produce some kind of panhuman subject matter for poetry: We had to borrow from Europe elements for Russian poetry and transfer them to our land. This gallant deed was accomplished by Zhukovskii. . . . [who] enriched and fertilized [Russian literature] by means of his translations! (31-32)

When reviewing Nikolai Polevoi's translation of *Hamlet*, Belinskii agreed with Pushkin on the harm of faithfulness to literal meaning and insisted "on the equivalence of literary styles in the original and the translation" (Baer, "Introduction" viii); however, Belinskii also differed with

Pushkin on the point of limiting textual content, after all, “[n]ot everything that a man is allowed to read should be read by a girl or a woman” (34). Ultimately, commenting on Nikolai Ketcher’s translation of the collected plays of Shakespeare<sup>470</sup> in 1847, Belinskii reiterated his earlier position on the importance of transmitting the spirit of the work (dynamic equivalence), arguing that Zhukovskii was so successful because “he *assimilated* into Russian literature . . . Schiller and Byron,” in effect making his translations “resemble original works” (37). However, even Zhukovskii’s gifts look questionable when he begins his foreword to his 1849 translation of the *Odyssey* with “You will ask how it occurred to me to begin work on the *Odyssey*, *not knowing Greek*” (12; emphasis added). Using a justification that in the twentieth century Walter Benjamin will term *reine Sprache*, the pure, Platonic language underwriting sacred text, Zhukovskii argues that “[t]ranslation of Homer cannot be likened to translation of anyone else” (13).<sup>471</sup> Thus, on the one hand, he finds himself at liberty to argue that “[y]ou won’t go far in translating Homer . . . if you consider the texture of each line separately” (13) but, on the other hand, he feels no compunction about using a German *podstrochnik*<sup>472</sup> (literal trot):

In Düsseldorf . . . I found a professor . . . who specializes in the exegesis of Homer. He took it upon himself to help me in my ignorance. With his own hand, very clearly and precisely, he copied out for me the entire *Odyssey* in the original; beneath every Greek word he placed a German word, and beneath every German word—the grammatical meaning of the original. In this way I was able to have before me *the entire literal meaning* of the *Odyssey* and had before my eyes the

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<sup>470</sup> Published in 1842 (Baer and Olshanskaya 37n37).

<sup>471</sup> Zhukovskii used the same explanation in 1844 when he discussed translating episodes of *The Mahabharata*: “I wanted to take pleasure in . . . trying to find in my language expressions for *the virginal, prototypical beauty* that fills the Indian story” (13; emphasis added).

<sup>472</sup> As Susanna Witt explains, this had been a common practice: “Aleksandr Sumarokov presumably translated *Hamlet* from a French prose paraphrase . . . Pushkin translated Byron from French versions, and so on” (“Empire” 161).

entire sequence of words; in this *chaotically faithful translation*, inaccessible to the reader, were assembled before me . . . all the building materials; only beauty, proportion, and harmony were lacking. (12; emphasis added)

Precisely because of the paradox of the necessity of the detestable literal meaning, Ivan Turgenev struggled with the idea that preserving the spirit of the work did not necessarily involve outright subjugation of the ST to the norms of the receiving culture and the TL; rather, as he wrote in an 1843 review of F. Miller's translation of *William Tell*, the process had to be organic, even psychological, so that "[t]he translator's personality permeates a true translation, and *his spirit* should be worthy of the *spirit of the poet* he has recreated" (39-40; emphasis added). Considering this to be a high art, Turgenev resented his translators' editorial additions<sup>473</sup> and in 1854 wrote to Sergei Aksakov about the French translation of his *Notes of a Hunter*:<sup>474</sup> "This Mr. Charrière has made God knows what out of me; he has added whole pages, invented things, and has thrown away some parts. It is unbelievable! . . . What a shameless Frenchman; thanks to him, I have now been turned into a clown" (41). In 1868, Turgenev sent a letter to Moritz Hartmann, this time complaining about the German "copy of my novel published in Mitau;<sup>475</sup> such a wooden and pathetic translation was until then unknown to the world" (42). To Turgenev, above everything else, captivating artistic ability rather than mere reproduction was paramount, and in his 1884 review of Mikhail Vronchenko's *Faust*, he asked, "Is there anything that involves more slavish conscientiousness than a daguerreotype?" (40). However, despite Turgenev's avowed declaration of faithfulness to the spirit of the ST, the work also had to read

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<sup>473</sup> However, in her recollections Natalia Ostrovskaia notes that Turgenev proposed to Tolstoi to *remove* all of Tolstoi's various musings and place them near his discussion of war at the end of a prospective French translation of *War and Peace*, which Tolstoi refused (83).

<sup>474</sup> «Записки охотника»

<sup>475</sup> Present-day Jelgava, Latvia

well in Russian, and in a 1859 letter to Afanasii Fet, he argued that “Your poems have been rejected not because they are too *courageous* for the public to relate to them, but because we found them to be weak, dull, and *uncourageous*. I have already mentioned to you your unnecessarily humble and timid attitude towards the original” (41).

Two more nineteenth-century writers must be mentioned: Fedor Dostoyevsky and Afanasii Fet. Dostoevsky, writing in his *Diary of a Writer*<sup>476</sup> in the 1870s, side-steps the entire issue of transmitting the spirit of a given work by arguing that the work of any Russian writer of note, such as Pushkin, Gogol’, and Turgenev, remains altogether inaccessible in translation; paraphrasing Fedor Tiutchev’s famous 1866 quatrain that begins with “With wit you Russia cannot know,”<sup>477</sup> Dostoevsky argues that “everything characteristic, everything of ours that is national predominantly . . . for Europe is unrecognizable”;<sup>478</sup> however, at the same time, “we understand Dickens in Russian, I am certain, almost exactly like the English, even, maybe, with all [his] shadings; even, maybe, love him no less than his countrymen.”<sup>479</sup> In other words (like Schleiermacher, only arguing in the opposite direction), Dostoevsky positions Russians as an exceptional nation with a “gift”<sup>480</sup> that gives them an ability to understand Shakespeare, Byron, Scott, and Dickens better than the Germans (69). On the other hand, Fet, who had been long criticized for literalism in his work (Voinich, “Seredina” 43),<sup>481</sup> mused in the notes to his 1886 translation of the poems of Catullus,

No one gets upset when our connoisseurs disapprove of a typically Russian face

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<sup>476</sup> «Дневник писателя»

<sup>477</sup> «Умом Россию не понять»

<sup>478</sup> «всё характерное, всё наше национальное по преимуществу . . . для Европы неузнаваемо» (69)

<sup>479</sup> «мы на русском языке понимаем Диккенса, я уверен, почти так же, как и англичане, даже, может быть, со всеми оттенками; даже, может быть, любим его не меньше его соотечественников» (69)

<sup>480</sup> «дар» (69)

<sup>481</sup> Despite even receiving “a prestigious Pushkin prize for his translations of Horace” (Baer and Olshanskaya 47)



on a statue of Hermes, or a lack of a velvety touch to its marble, which can only be acquired with the flow of centuries but which can be traced in every single element of the Latin head of Janus. The more original, the more national a poet is, the more difficult it is to translate him. . . . [However, t]he impossibility of reproducing the original effect does not necessarily mean that one should not try to translate or that one should distort it. (48)

Despite having a number of valid arguments on their side, proponents of the *bukval'nyi* (literal) method were clearly in the minority by the end of the nineteenth century.

### **A Taste of the Foreign**

Against the backdrop of the abortive revolution of 1905, translation for the Russian *intelligentsia* temporarily took a backseat to much bigger issues. Nonetheless, in the same year, the writer, translator, and founding member of the Russian Symbolist movement Valerii Briusov quotes from Shelley's *Defense of Poetry* in his essay "Violets in a Crucible"<sup>482</sup>: "Hence the vanity of translation; it were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible that you might discover the formal principles of its color and odor, as seek to transfuse from one language into another the creations of a poet" (Shelley n. pag.; Briusov 186). However, Briusov adds, "rarely can one of the poets withstand the temptation—to throw a violet that strikes one's fancy from foreign fields<sup>483</sup> into one's own crucible."<sup>484</sup> The classics, such as Pushkin, Tiutchev, and Fet, did not translate for those who did not know German, English, or Latin, Briusov argued. Rather, they

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<sup>482</sup> «Фиалки в тигеле»

<sup>483</sup> As Baer notes, the time in which Briusov wrote "was also, not uncoincidentally, a time when many Russian writers could – and did travel; in most cases, they went to Europe, but Gumilev and Briusov went to a number of more 'exotic' locales" ("Introduction" ix).

<sup>484</sup> «редко кто из поэтов в силах устоять пред искушением — бросить понравившуюся ему фиалку чужих полей в свой тигель» (187)

were moved by a “purely artistic task,”<sup>485</sup> a game and a challenge, and it was an honour to become lame after grappling with Dante (187). In his short essay, Briusov takes apart G. Chulkov’s translation (188) of Maurice Maeterlinck’s *Twelve Songs*<sup>486</sup> (1896) and reaches the fairly conventional conclusion that, while any departures from the ST are insignificant, they do considerably affect the entire character of the poem cycle (192). There is, however, a particularly interesting sentence in Briusov’s concluding paragraphs: “A ‘vol’nyi’ [free] translation . . . must be recognized as not that which distances itself from an accurate reproduction of the tableaux of the original . . . but that which *destroys* the particularities of its composition. Often poorly thought-out faithfulness turns out to be betrayal”<sup>487</sup> (emphasis added). In other words, Briusov (like Turgenev) yearns to hybridize translation using the literal; he just does not yet know how to accomplish this. By 1913, he had a better idea. In his essay “Ovid in Russian”<sup>488</sup> Briusov acknowledged the impossibility of demanding that the average reader learn the languages of antiquity (250) and his position on changing the ST becomes as follows: “the task of the translator is to pass on all characteristic peculiarities of the original, *and not to correct it*”<sup>489</sup> (emphasis added) and so in F. Zelinskii’s translation of Ovid’s epistles the judgment “but still this is—’vol’nost’”<sup>490</sup> applied to particular passages reads like a deliberate indictment of taking liberties with the ST; now, even the changes of secondary details are unacceptable to Briusov: “[w]hen discussion comes to the translation of the great poets of Hellas and Rome, it appears to us necessary to pass on not only the thoughts and images of the original, but . . . *all the words, all*

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<sup>485</sup> «чисто художественная задача» (187)

<sup>486</sup> *Douze Chansons*

<sup>487</sup> «„Вольным“ переводом . . . надо признать не тот, который удаляется от точного воспроизведения картин подлинника . . . , но тот, который разрушает особенности её склада. Часто необдуманная верность оказывается предательством» (192).

<sup>488</sup> «Овидий по-русски»

<sup>489</sup> «дело переводчика — передавать все характерные особенности подлинника, а не поправлять его» (253)

<sup>490</sup> «но все же это — „вольность“» (255)

*the expressions, all the turns*; and we firmly believe that such a transmission—is possible”<sup>491</sup>

(emphasis added). Finally, in 1916, Briusov discards *vol'nyi* (free) translation altogether in his essay “A Few Reflections on Translating Horace’s Odes in Russian Verse.” Rejecting the reproduction of the spirit of the ST (dynamic equivalence), Briusov reasons that, “in order to ‘reproduce on the reader in translation the same impression that Horace’s odes produced on his contemporaries,’ it is necessary to change a great deal in them”; however, the extent of freedoms on the translator’s part will make the end result subject to “the personal taste of the translator, and consequently all translations of this kind will inevitably be utterly subjective” (69).

Furthermore, the figure of the “‘modern reader’ is a completely ambiguous notion—what sounds strange and is difficult to understand for one group of readers might seem simple and natural to another” (70), so historical context is also a convenient convention. Briusov praises Fet’s previous translation of Horace disregarding its technical shortcomings, and describes his own new standard: “to make an attempt at rendering Horace’s odes in Russian verse with all possible accuracy”; “No doubt,” he admits, “to understand such a translation demands a certain effort on the part of the reader. But that is not *my* fault; . . . Horace’s poetry belongs to a period completely different from our own. That sphere of ideas, notions, and images whereby Horace’s poetry lives is *alien* to the contemporary Russian reader” (70; emphasis added). In a brief

*Gedankenexperiment*, Briusov suggests that, even if a Russian reader suddenly gained knowledge of Latin, he would understand only individual words and phrases but would still feel alienated and would require “quite a bit of inquiry, to think about many issues, and in many respects, to disavow long-acquired tastes” (71) and it is precisely this interactive, timeless

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<sup>491</sup> «Когда речь идёт о переводе великих поэтов Эллады и Рима, нам кажется необходимым передавать не только мысли и образы подлинника, но . . . все слова, все выражения, все обороты; и мы твёрдо верим, что такая передача — возможна» (257).

translation, which Briusov intended to add to his broad body of work in order to light his readers' way out of Plato's Cave. However, aside from a few odes, this translation never came to be.

From the period of the upheavals connected to the "successful" revolution of 1917, of particular interest is the essay "Art as *Priem*"<sup>492</sup> by the Formalist<sup>493</sup> critic and writer Viktor Shklovskii. Shklovskii draws on the work of the nineteenth-century philosopher and linguist Aleksandr Potebnia and focuses on what Roman Jakobson will later term *intralingual translation* (the "interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language") (Jakobson 114). Beginning with the maxim "[a]rt is thinking with images,"<sup>494</sup> Shklovskii nudges his reader towards the *primum movens* of "the general laws of perception,"<sup>495</sup> arguing that, by "becoming habitual, actions are performed automatically. Thus, for example, all our skills leave for the sphere of the unconsciously-automatic."<sup>496</sup> Shklovskii also establishes a link between text and a sort of *Lebensphilosophie*<sup>497</sup> by quoting a passage from Tolstoy's diary:<sup>498</sup> "if the entire, complex lives of many people pass unconsciously, then it is as if this life had never been."<sup>499</sup> Taking the

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<sup>492</sup> Every single English translation of Shklovskii (commonly titled "Art as Device" or "Art as Technique") is, as I will demonstrate, naturalized in the extreme, shying away from the complicated cultural artefacts, textual examples, and problematic overdetermination that the Russian critic employs in his essay. *Defamiliarization* itself—coined c. 1971 in relation to Russian Formalism—is now an established critical term in the English language and thus quite a familiar term (a more defamiliarizing term would be *estrangedness* [c. 1645], or better yet *estranging* [not really a word in Modern English, although it is used very occasionally in critical writing] because Shklovskii calls many of his own examples *strannye*—strange [65]; cf. Baer's *estrangement* ["Cold War" 179]). This is particularly important to the ironic history of Shklovskii's term which had been published with one letter *n* as a result of a printing error in 1916, thereby defamiliarizing not only the existing word *ostranenie* (a derivative of *strannyi*—strange) but also Shklovskii's entire theory, in relation to his original intention of creating a specific neologism which instead became overdetermined by virtue of common confusion with *otstranenie*—removal (see Shklovskii' *O neskhodstve skhodnogo*).

<sup>493</sup> Here, by *Formalism* I mean the actual literary movement, not the Soviet epithet for "avoidance of social content" (Leighton, *Two Worlds* 66).

<sup>494</sup> «Искусство – это мышление образами» (58)

<sup>495</sup> «в общих законах восприятия» (62)

<sup>496</sup> «становясь привычными, действия делаются автоматическими. Так уходят, например, в среду бессознательно—автоматического все наши навыки» (61)

<sup>497</sup> The eighteenth- and nineteenth-century philosophy according to which the meaning of life is in practical fullness of living, not in theoretical constructs.

<sup>498</sup> The entry from March 1, 1897

<sup>499</sup> «Если целая сложная жизнь многих людей проходит бессознательно, то эта жизнь как бы не была» (62).

universe for granted leads to catastrophe, because “automatization devours things, dress, furniture, wife, and fear of war”<sup>500</sup> and the only salvation that “returns the feeling of life”<sup>501</sup> is art, in a very specific form:

The aim of art is giving the feeling of a thing as a vision, not as recognition; the *priem* of art is the *priem* of the *ostranenie* of things and the *priem* of a laborious form magnifying the difficulty and length of perception, because the perceptive process in art is its own end and must be extended; **art is a means to *perezhit*’ emotionally, to live through the making of a thing**, and that which is made in art is unimportant.<sup>502</sup> (emphasis added)

Here, Shklovskii’s argument comes to a head in an unexpected way: I have left the word *priem* in its Russian form in my translation because the way Shklovskii uses the word is in itself overdetermined in the extreme: the word can variously mean *technique*, but also (as a derivative of *prinimat*’) *reception* or *acceptance* (Dal’ n. pag.) and all three meanings fit the passage semantically. However, most common translations, such as the one in David H. Richter’s 2007 edition, flatten the polysemic term to *technique* or *device*, ironically familiarizing Shklovskii’s seminal treatise on defamiliarization. The same goes for *perezhit*’, which (as a derivative of *perezhivat*’) can mean *experience emotionally*, *live through (a given time period)*, or even *outlive (someone or something)* (Dal’ n. pag.). Richter keeps just one interpretation, fudging the phrase

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<sup>500</sup> «Автоматизация съедает вещи, платье, мебель, жену и страх войны» (62).

<sup>501</sup> «вернуть ощущение жизни» (63)

<sup>502</sup> «Целью искусства является дать ощущение вещи как видение, а не как узнавание; приёмом искусства является приём „остранения” вещей и приём затруднённой формы, увеличивающий трудность и долготу восприятия, так как воспринимательный процесс в искусстве самоцелен и должен быть продлён; искусство есть способ пережить делание вещи, а сделанное в искусстве не важно» (62).

bolded above in the circular statement “[a]rt is a way of experiencing the artfulness of an object” (778).

Clearly, reception greatly problematizes *ostranenie* itself, demonstrating that its application not only has a fine gradient but also greatly depends on a reading by a sensitive and intelligent reader. Shklovskii proves to be precisely such a reader when he returns to Tolstoy to provide examples of the different ways in which “things can be withdrawn from the automatism of perception.”<sup>503</sup> The first is

not calling a thing by its name, but describing it as if seen for the first time, the occasion [of encountering the thing]—as if occurring for the first time . . . he uses in the description of the thing not the accepted names for its parts, but calls them in such a way that corresponding parts in different things are called.<sup>504</sup>

As an example, Shklovskii chooses a passage from Tolstoy’s article “Shameful.”<sup>505</sup> In it, Tolstoy gives pause to the reader by first describing the practice of flogging and then adding “And why, namely, this stupid, savage means of causing pain, and not some other: pricking shoulders with needles or some other place on the body, squeezing in a vice arms or legs, or something similar?”<sup>506</sup> This passage, Shklovskii explains, is “typical as Tolstoy’s method for reaching the conscience.”<sup>507</sup> The next example, where a further removal of perception is accomplished by letting (an eventually killed) horse that is amusingly fixated on the material utility of the human

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<sup>503</sup> «Вывод вещи из автоматизма восприятия» (63)

<sup>504</sup> «не называ[я] вещь её именем, а описывает её как в первый раз виденную, а случай — как в первый раз происшедший, . . . он употребляет в описании вещи не те названия её частей, которые приняты, а называет их так, как называются соответственные части в других вещах» (64).

<sup>505</sup> «Стыдно»

<sup>506</sup> «И почему именно этот глупый, дикий приём причинения боли, а не какой-нибудь другой: колоть иглами плечи или какое-либо другое место тела, сжимать в тиски руки или ноги или ещё что-нибудь подобное?» (63).

<sup>507</sup> «типичен как способ Толстого добираться до совести» (63)

body narrate the short story “Kholstomer,” exhibits the kind of black humour that could have been crafted by Heller or Vonnegut:

The walking-in-the-world, eating and drinking body of Serpukhovskii was put away into the earth. . . . Neither his skin, nor the meat, nor the bones were useful for anything. . . . To anyone he was long useless, to everyone long ago he was a burden, but still the dead, burying the dead, found it necessary to dress this, at once rotting, bloated body in a good uniform, in good boots, to put him into a new good coffin, with new tassels on the four corners, then put this new coffin into another, lead one, and drive him to Moscow and there dig up lingering human bones and precisely there hide this rotting, teeming with worms body in a new uniform and shined boots, and cover it all with earth.<sup>508</sup>

Unlike Aesopian language, the point here is not to *conceal* information, but rather to *reveal* it in an unexpected way by means of “the creation of a ‘vision’ rather than of ‘recognition,’”<sup>509</sup> in this case, a vision created simply by giving the narrative over to the normally-mute Other. On the most basic level, for Shklovskii “ostranenie exists almost everywhere there is an image”;<sup>510</sup> however, like Brecht’s *alienation effect*<sup>511</sup> (67), it must not become a canonized formula, or it would lose its force (71). Thus, the praxis of *ostranenie* extends all the way from Tolstoy’s

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<sup>508</sup> «Ходившее по свету, евшее и пившее тело Серпуховского убрали в землю . . . Ни кожа, ни мясо, ни кости его никуда негодились. . . . Никому уж он давно был не нужен, всем уж давно он был в тягость, но всё-таки мёртвые, хоронящие мёртвых, нашли нужным одеть это, тотчас же загнившее, пухлое тело в хороший мундир, в хорошие сапоги, уложить в новый хороший гроб, с новыми кисточками на четырёх углах, потом положить этот новый гроб в другой, свинцовый, и свезти его в Москву и там раскопать давнишние людские кости и именно туда спрятать это гниющее, кишашее червями тело в новом мундире и вычищенных сапогах и засыпать всё землёю» (65).

<sup>509</sup> «создание особого восприятия предмета, создание „виденья” его, а не „узнавания”» (67)

<sup>510</sup> «остранение есть почти везде, где есть образ» (67)

<sup>511</sup> „Verfremdungseffekt” Brecht argues that the effort of “transforming [one]self as completely as possible into another type of person” exhausts the actor’s art (131). Tally notes that this is most apparent in Vonnegut’s *BC*, where “the many drawings and casual observations . . . operate like a Brechtian *Verfremdungseffekt*, a defamiliarization or estrangement effect” (92).

scandalous description of religious paraphernalia (that was taken by the majority of his readers as blasphemy [66-67]), to “the erotic riddle-euphemism[s]” such as Knut Hamsun’s *Hunger*, where “[t]wo white miracles could be glimpsed from behind her shirt,”<sup>512</sup> to “the depiction of genitalia in the form of the lock and key . . . bow and arrows . . . a ring and marlinspike”<sup>513</sup> by D. Sadovnikov, even to the traditional *bylina* (oral epic) (68) in which historical facts are conflated with fantastical details. Shklovskii also discusses Pushkin’s use of colloquialisms for “halting attention”<sup>514</sup> that mimics the same way Russian words would be interjected into the French dialogue of his contemporaries (70), or the notion that “now [in 1917] . . . literature began to show a love for dialects . . . and barbarisms” (70-71).<sup>515</sup> The methods are varied, but the point is the same: becoming (and remaining) an active participant in the “game of unrecognition”<sup>516</sup> that requires calling things by their own names.

### ***Dom is Where the Heart Is***

In the same year when Briusov first began his journey towards the Other, the rabble-rouser Vladimir Ul’ianov had published in *Novaia zhizn’* the article “Party Organization and Party Literature,”<sup>517</sup> a brief polemic that would be extremely amusing if it were not so extremely depressing. In it, the tyrant-to-be outlines the program for literature that reaches out not for *the foreign* or *strange* that enlightens the self but for the ideologically *desirable*. First, Lenin notes hopefully that “[t]he distinction between illegal and legal press . . . is beginning to disappear”<sup>518</sup> (his own movement was still not fully entrenched). Next, he indicts the “[a]ccursed time of

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<sup>512</sup> «Два белых чуда виднелись у неё из-за рубашки» (69)

<sup>513</sup> A tool used in marine rope work

<sup>514</sup> «остановки внимания» (71)

<sup>515</sup> «Сейчас . . . литература начала проявлять любовь к диалектам . . . и варваризмам» (71)

<sup>516</sup> «игре в неузнавание» (70)

<sup>517</sup> «Партийная организация и партийная литература»

<sup>518</sup> «различие между нелегальной и легальной печатью . . . начинает исчезать» (2)



Aesopian speeches, of literary servility, slavish language, ideological serfdom!”<sup>519</sup> His revolution is not yet complete, and the key to its success is the *partiinnost’* (party-mindedness) that must permeate all forms of literature (2). Curiously anticipating Shklovskii’s later complaints about the post-revolutionary *status quo* of, Lenin affirms that,

There is no argument, the literary task least of all gives in to mechanical alignment, leveling, the domination of the majority over the minority. There is no argument, in this task unconditionally necessary is the provision of a vastness of personal initiative, individual inclinations, a vastness of thought and imagination, form and content.<sup>520</sup>

But (and this is the biggest *but* of the entire Soviet history) every aspect of cultural production, from writers to newspapers, publishing houses, warehouses, shops, reading rooms, and libraries must become accountable to the party tasked with fulfilling the will of the proletariat (3). In other words, literature can be free within the parameters of the party (in other words, not free at all). Lenin pre-empts any objections from “some sort of *intelligent*, an ardent supporter of freedom”<sup>521</sup> (emphasis added), not ready to hand over the “questions of science, philosophy, [and] aesthetics,”<sup>522</sup> or his individuality to workers, with “Calm yourselves, gentlemen!”<sup>523</sup> After all, this is just a matter of *party* literature, and the party is a “voluntary union.”<sup>524</sup> In the party, “[e]veryone is free to write and say anything he wishes, without the smallest restriction”<sup>525</sup> (but,

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<sup>519</sup> «Проклятая пора эзоповских речей, литературного холопства, рабьего языка, идейного крепостничества!» (2)

<sup>520</sup> «Спору нет, литературное дело менее всего поддаётся механическому равнению, нивелированию, господству большинства над меньшинством. Спору нет, в этом деле безусловно необходимо обеспечение большего простора личной инициативе, индивидуальным склонностям, простору мысли и фантазии, форме и содержанию» (3).

<sup>521</sup> «какой-нибудь интеллигент, пылкий сторонник свободы» (3)

<sup>522</sup> «вопросы науки, философии, эстетики» (3)

<sup>523</sup> «Успокойтесь, господа!» (3)

<sup>524</sup> «добровольный союз» (3)

<sup>525</sup> «Каждый волен писать и говорить все, что ему угодно, без малейших ограничений» (3).

of course, any members that express anti-party sentiments will be expelled; after all, “[t]o live in society and to be free from society is impossible”<sup>526</sup>). How better this arrangement is than the hypocritical absolute bourgeois freedom! How different it is from the “rule of money”<sup>527</sup> and the demands of the publisher and readers hungry for pornography and prostitution! (Where have we heard this already?) Instead, Lenin proposes

free literature, fertilizing the final word of revolutionary thought of humanity with experience and lively work of the socialist proletariat, creating a permanent interaction between the experience of the past (scientific socialism, having completed the development of socialism from its primitive, utopian forms) and the experience of the present (the current struggle of worker comrades).<sup>528</sup>

*The final word of revolutionary thought.* Let this paradox sink in for a moment. What Lenin in effect suggests is that his new literature does not intend to occupy itself with any *real, current issues*, such as those of the “overfull heroine”<sup>529</sup> or the “bored and suffering from obesity ‘top ten thousand’”<sup>530</sup> (Lenin himself would have to admit that the revolution is far from complete [2]; these figures still exist); rather, the past is to be *rejected*, and the permanently moving target of revolutionary success<sup>531</sup> is instead to be brought into focus. Enter socialist realism, stage left.

Although the term itself was not properly coined until 1934,<sup>532</sup> Lenin’s doctrine for party literature set the tone for its precepts as soon as the 1917 revolution took place. One of the first

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<sup>526</sup> «Жить в обществе и быть свободным от общества нельзя» (3).

<sup>527</sup> «власти денег» (3)

<sup>528</sup> «свободная литература, оплодотворяющая последнее слово революционной мысли человечества опытом и живой работой социалистического пролетариата, создающая постоянное взаимодействие между опытом прошлого (научный социализм, завершивший развитие социализма от его примитивных, утопических форм) и опытом настоящего (настоящая борьба товарищей рабочих)» (3-4)

<sup>529</sup> «пресыщенной героине» (3)

<sup>530</sup> «скучающим и страдающим от ожирения „верхним десяти тысячам“» (3)

<sup>531</sup> After all, who knows when revolution will actually triumph? Classless literature is possible only in a socialist, classless society (3).

<sup>532</sup> Previously, various terms such as *new realism*, *the new realist school*, *tendentious realism*, *monumental realism*, and *proletarian realism* had floated about (Egorova 166). Hingley explains that “[t]he earliest traced mention of Socialist Realism is in a speech of 20 May 1932 by Ivan Gronskey, Chairman of the Organizing Committee of the Union of Writers, then in process of formation. As defined by the Union’s first statutes, of 1934, Socialist Realism is ‘the basic method of Soviet imaginative literature and literary criticism,’ and ‘demands from the artist a truthful, historically concrete depiction of reality in its revolutionary development’” (198).

gargantuan projects of the new regime was the establishment by Maksim Gorkii of Vsemirnaia literatura in 1919. The express purpose of the publishing house was the release of translations of all the best works of world fiction from the eighteenth century to the present.<sup>533</sup> Before the publisher was eventually subsumed into Lengiz under the shadow of Stalin in 1924, it managed to release a sizable number of volumes. However, more importantly, it set the parameters for all translations to come, in two respects: First, Gorkii outlined the didactic nature of the requisite textual apparatus:

The series of books will be given the character of a popular scholarly publication and is intended for readers who wish to study the history of literary creation during the interim between the two revolutions; the books will be accompanied by forewords, biographies of the authors, studies of the historical epoch which produced this or that school, group, or book, commentaries of an historical-literary character, and bibliographical notes. (“World Literature” 66)

Second, and most importantly, in the same year<sup>534</sup> Kornei Chukovskii will publish a “thin brochure” titled *Principles of Artistic Translation*<sup>535</sup> expressly designed for the in-house use of the translators of Gorkii’s publishing house (*High Art* 440).<sup>536</sup> Although the brochure will be supplemented with articles by F. D. Batiushkov<sup>537</sup> and N. Gumilev and republished in 1920, it

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<sup>533</sup> Gorkii also wanted to show up would-be Western socialists dubious of the Soviet project. In a 1919 letter to Lenin, Gorkii writes that “[a]ny day now we shall finish printing the list of books intended for publication by the publishing house World Literature. I think it would not be a bad idea to translate these lists into all European languages and send them out . . . so that the proletariat of the West, as well as various ‘Wellses’ and ‘Scheidemanns,’ might see for themselves that the Russian proletariat is far from barbarian, and in fact understands internationalism far more broadly than they, the cultured people” (67).

<sup>534</sup> Leighton incorrectly cites the year and the title (*Two Worlds* 8).

<sup>535</sup> «Принципы художественного перевода»

<sup>536</sup> Hereinafter, I refer to the 2008 edition.

<sup>537</sup> Batiushkov proposed the term *adekvatnyi* (adequate) translation (Azov 26) that will be appropriated by A. A. Smirnov (Azov 26; Voinich, “Seredina” 42); the term refers to “proportionate, equal, and correspondent to the original . . . [but] not literally and precisely equivalent to the original, for it is based on the realization that adequacy requires imaginative recreations that achieve an equivalent effect” (Leighton, *Two Worlds* 66).

will be Chukovskii's article, greatly expanded *sans* his coauthors' involvement,<sup>538</sup> that will be added alongside linguist Andrei Fedorov's<sup>539</sup> work and released again in 1930 as *Techniques and Objectives of Artistic Translation*.<sup>540</sup> By 1936, Chukovskii's work will grow even further, pushing out Fedorov's, and Academia will republish it again.

Despite the *de jure* codification of the goals of production and publication of literature and of the principles of literary translation, all was not well in the workers' paradise. In 1929, the poet Osip Mandel'shtam published "Torrents of Hackwork," where he identified two issues with the *status quo*: First, "[w]e do not have to pay royalties when publishing foreign books, and [thus] the amount of money paid to translators and editors is so insignificant . . . that it becomes much cheaper to publish them than to publish original literature" (81). Second, "[t]he attentive reader will notice that almost all foreign writers, from Anatole France to the latest cheap novelist, speak the same awkward Russian in translation" (81). Those who attempted to rectify the latter issue were not entirely sure of what approach to take, in effect rehashing the nineteenth-century debate. On the one hand, when the poet Marina Tsvetaeva commented in 1933 on Zhukovskii's translation of Goethe's *The Elf-King*,<sup>541</sup> she argued that "I realize that it is a thankless task to give a literal, forced prosaic translation, and yet I have found it necessary to do so" (106), concluding that "[t]hey are equally brilliant and yet completely different, these two *Forest Kings*" (108). On the other hand, although the poet and translator Mikhail Lozinskii admitted in 1935 that "[t]he substance of poetry is the word" (87), he differentiated between "[r]econstructive translation . . . when the translator . . . pours someone else's wine into his own

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<sup>538</sup> Batiushkov died in 1920, Gumilev in 1921 (Azov 15).

<sup>539</sup> Smirnov's *adekvatnyi* translation was repurposed as *polnotsennyi* (full-valued) translation by A. V. Fedorov (Azov 26); the term refers to translation that "discriminate[s] between the essential and the inessential, with a view toward the whole and the relationships between the parts and the whole . . . [which avoids] distort[ing] . . . the individual character of the original" (*Two Worlds* 67).

<sup>540</sup> «Приёмы и задачи художественного перевода»

<sup>541</sup> „Der Erlkönig“

wine skin” and “[r]ecreative translation, which reproduces both the form and content of the original with all possible completeness and accuracy” (88) and, rejecting the latter category, advocated dynamic equivalence (88). As Susanna Witt details in “Arts of Accommodation,” the argument was far from settled<sup>542</sup> and it came to a head in 1936 with a series of debates at the First All-Union Conference of Translators in Moscow, where literary and theatrical critic Iogann Al’tman indicted *naturalizm* (“imports . . . of . . . unnecessary words”), *formalizm* (“content . . . distorted” for the sake of aesthetics), *impressionizm* (a “translator . . . guided by inspiration”), and exotic stylization and “superficial embellishment” (qtd. in Witt 167), above all disdaining literal translation (169). In contrast, the literary critic and translator Aleksandr Smirnov “attempt[ed] to advance a literalist translation philosophy” by arguing that “[e]very literary translation . . . is an ideological appropriation of the original and thereby also of that historical class culture, which gave birth to the original” (170). In fact, Smirnov sets the nineteenth-century practice of *vol’nyi* (free) translation (further subdivided into *uproshchaiushchii* [simplifying] and *uluchshaiushchii* [improving] varieties) apart from the twentieth-century practice of *tochnyi* (accurate) translation (170); he adds that, while a translation should not be halting and should not read as a translation, literal translation enriches language by allowing “barbarisms” to slip in and thereby help the language evolve (172). Lozinskii too had refined his earlier position by separating *perestraivaiushchii* (reorganizing) translation, which is “domesticating, oriented towards the norms of the target culture” from *vossozdaiushchii* (recreative) translation which “reproduces with greatest possible fullness and accuracy the form and content of the original”

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<sup>542</sup> In this regard Leighton is incorrect when he argues that “[i]n the 1930s, . . . the so called literalists . . . almost dominated the art” (*Two Worlds* 9). Quite often, he confuses cause with effect: just because “literary translation has been [ostensibly] accorded [largely negative] national attention in the Soviet Union,” hardly means that the recognition of its usefulness was guaranteed by such attention; in fact, Leighton takes the “far” and “quick” progress of the Soviet translation school for granted (18).

(17). Although both critics advocated dynamic equivalence, their wish to represent the foreign that “gravitat[ed] towards Goethe’s and Schleiermacher’s romantic principles of ‘taking the reader abroad’” (178) proved to be unpopular.

In the same year, Chukovskii’s *The Art of Translation*<sup>543</sup> evolved from *Principles of Artistic Translation* and laid down the new law of *tochnyi* (accurate) translation. The chapter devoted to the concept reinforces the dichotomy from the outset when one of its two epigraphs paraphrases the classical seventeenth-century concept of *les belles infidèles* where “[t]ranslation is like a woman: if she is beautiful, she is unfaithful; if she is faithful, she is not beautiful”<sup>544</sup> (309). For his fodder Chukovskii selects the polyglot Irinarkh Vvedenskii’s translation of Dickens that he calls “such an (almost fistic) dealing with the English writer.”<sup>545</sup> First, Vvedenskii shows a poor knowledge of English and Russian (313). Second, although he is the only translator capable of bringing Russians closer to Dickens’s art, he in Chukovskii’s estimation understood neither the writer’s words nor the writer himself (313). Chukovskii praises some aspects of Vvedenskii who “did not give us . . . [Dickens’s] literal expressions”;<sup>546</sup> however, Vvedenskii also dresses himself up as Dickens and uses *otsebiatina* (an invention from the self) to convey the English author (313), belonging in the category of *vol’nyi* (free) translation (315). For Chukovskii, some of these inventions are ingenuous (and a pity to omit), even to the extent that “in the translation of Vvedenskii Dickens is more Dickens than the original.”<sup>547</sup> (This turn of phrase also sounds familiar.) Chukovskii criticizes the use of foreign words without a sufficient explanatory apparatus (324), surprisingly rejects dynamic equivalence

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<sup>543</sup> «Искусство перевода»

<sup>544</sup> «Перевод — что женщина: если она красива, она неверна; если верна — некрасива» (309).

<sup>545</sup> «такая (почти кулачная) расправа с английским писателем» (309).

<sup>546</sup> «не дал нам его буквальных выражений» (313)

<sup>547</sup> «в переводе Введенского Диккенс более Диккенс, чем в подлиннике» (313)

(he terms it the “creative recreation of the author”<sup>548</sup>), and insists on meticulous comparison of the TT with the ST (316) to ensure total accuracy. Nonetheless, even with all his errors, Vvedenskii remains preferable to later translators of Dickens<sup>549</sup> precisely because he is not the “[t]he worst translator—a bukvalist, deaf and blind to the intonations of the original.”<sup>550</sup> It is also interesting that, while Chukovskii notes the “lawless liberties”<sup>551</sup> of the translator, he has no scruples about mentioning that, in an editorial position, he himself had “corrected . . . about<sup>552</sup> *three thousand mistakes* and threw out about *nine hundred otsebiatin*” for a new edition of Dickens (a “lawful” liberty, I suppose). In 1941, Goslitizdat<sup>553</sup> published Chukovskii’s treatise as *High Art*,<sup>554</sup> the form which the Bible of the Soviet translator will take from now on. However, still not everyone was happy with this new direction. In a 1942 letter to A. O. Naumova, Pasternak wrote, “I completely reject the contemporary approach to translation. Translations by Lozinskii, Radlova, Marshak, and Chukovskii are alien to me, they seem artificial, lacking in depth and soul” (100). In a 1953 letter to N. V. Ugrimova he explained that in his translation of *Faust* he “wanted the Russian text to flow, move, or rush as the original does: Music or words can be understood only while in movement” (103). In 1950, the poet and translator Georgii Shengeli complained at a translators’ meeting that a process inattentive to the ST in practice abandons textual content: “to not bring half of [Byron’s] *Don Juan* to the Russian reader—this is a crime.”<sup>555</sup> It also did not help matters that, by the end of Stalin’s era, Chukovskii’s ever-

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<sup>548</sup> «художественное воссоздание писателя» (316)

<sup>549</sup> V. Rantsova, M. P. Voloshinova, and N. Auerbakh (Chukovskii, *Iskusstvo* 313)

<sup>550</sup> «Самый худший переводчик — буквалист, глухой и слепой к интонациям подлинника» (314)

<sup>551</sup> «беззаконные вольности» (315)

<sup>552</sup> «исправил . . . около *трёх тысяч ошибок* и выбросил около *девятисот отсебятин*» (314)

<sup>553</sup> In 1930, the literary department of Gosizdat merged with the publisher Zemlia i fabrika as GIKhL. In 1934, it was renamed to Goslitizdat. In 1937, Goslitizdat merged with Academia. In 1963, it was renamed to KhL and a branch was opened in Leningrad (Karaichentseva n. pag.).

<sup>554</sup> «Высокое искусство»

<sup>555</sup> «не донести половину „Дон Жуана“ до русского читателя — это преступление» (186)

developing *tochnyi* (accurate) translation had to coexist with a confusing outcropping of other translation methods that actually *did not differ* from Chukovskii's or from each other in practice (only in their ideological rhetoric). These methods were Batiushkov and Smirnov's *adekvatnyi* (adequate) translation, Fedorov's *polnotsennyi* (full-valued) translation, and P. M. Toper's *vernyi* (faithful) translation that Toper attempted to reconcile the two in 1952 (Toper 234, 239-240, 246; Azov 89, 102). Ultimately, *all* approaches to translation in the U.S.S.R. amounted to the same idea: the ST is stable and coherent and its spirit must be conveyed in an equivalent TT. Enter realistic translation, stage right.

### **The Dissident Letter**

In the best socialist traditions that often took a biblical turn, every upheaval required for the current world to be thoroughly destroyed and a new world to be created. There, a person “[w]ho was a naught — he will be all!”<sup>556</sup> proclaimed A. Ia. Kots's 1937 translation of *L'internationale*. Unfortunately (following Lomonosov's Law of Conservation of Matter), this principle also presupposed that he who was (and had) all would have to become (and have) nothing. In the 1930s, the translator and critic Ivan Kashkin studied North American authors, but the frequent replacement of his supervisors who kept introducing changes into his work precluded him from ever defending his dissertation (Azov 88). Nonetheless, Kashkin continued to teach translation and eventually surrounded himself with a coterie of (mostly female) students (88) who came to be known as the *kashkintsy* (Azov 4; Markish n. pag.) and eventually dominated the Soviet translation industry in 1960s. In a December 1, 1951 article titled “On the

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<sup>556</sup> «КТО БЫЛ НИКЕМ — ТОТ СТАНЕТ ВСЕМ!»



Language of Translation,”<sup>557</sup> published in *LG*<sup>558</sup> Kashkin chose as his targets two *bukvalisty*: the writer, poet, and translator of prose Evgenii Lann<sup>559</sup> and the critic, poet, and translator of poetry Georgii Shengeli. In addition to demonstrating the eventual direction of Soviet TS, this affair, the subject of Andrei Azov’s 2013 book *The Defeated Bukvalisty*,<sup>560</sup> amply demonstrated that, by the 1950s, the term *bukvalist* (literalist) became a useful euphemism (but, in truth, an epithet [Witt, “Accommodation” 160]) for virtually any undesirable way of thinking. By the middle of the twentieth century, it was added to the growing menagerie that already included *modernist*, *naturalist*, *formalist*,<sup>561</sup> *impressionist* (Azov 44, 89); *eklektik*, *empirik*, *dekadent* (300n72); *kontrol’*, *kosmopolit*, and *piatyi punkt*. It is not an accident that Kashkin was empowered to constantly use the words *formalizm* and *bukvalizm* in his attacks (116),<sup>562</sup> and it did not help the case of either author that Lann (a Jew [Markish n. pag.]) had already been labelled a bourgeois *kosmopolit* in 1947 (Azov 58, 110) or that both writers had “suspiciously un-Russian last names.”<sup>563</sup> In actuality, before Kashkin published his article, neither Lann nor Shengeli were *bukvalisty* proper;<sup>564</sup> the former advocated a *precision of style*, the latter *precision of meaning* and, going over Chukovskii’s 1919 program for *Vsemirnaia literatura*, Azov discovers that

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<sup>557</sup> «О языке перевода»

<sup>558</sup> Kashkin published similar critiques as far back as the 1930s, but they had never been so biting and polemical.

<sup>559</sup> The pseudonym of Evgenii Lozman (Azov 54). Kashkin (like Chukovskii) had already critiqued both Vvedenskii and Lann in a 1936 article in *Literaturnyi kritik* (110).

<sup>560</sup> «Поверженные буквалисты» I am grateful to Alexandra Borisenko for forwarding my request to Andrei Azov, who in turn kindly sent me a copy of his work-in-progress (then under a working title *Ot chuzhogo — k svoemu*). While the 2012 version contains a larger number of essays from Soviet translation experts (specifically, I. A. Kashkin and E. E. Levontin), the final 2013 edition provides a much more thorough overall analysis.

<sup>561</sup> Already by the 1930s the terms became so ill-defined that the surrealist poet Daniil Kharms refused to use the terms at a session of the Soviet Writers’ Union on April 3, 1936 (Azov 36).

<sup>562</sup> Thus, Friedberg’s assessment of Kashkin as a “moderate” (“In the U.S.S.R” 524) is incorrect.

<sup>563</sup> «подозрительно нерусские фамилии» (Perel’muter qtd. in Azov 158)

<sup>564</sup> However, Kashkin’s indictment was so effective that this impression remains in Western critical thinking to this day: Witt, for instance, considers the two “representatives” of the *bukvalisty* (“Accommodation” 160).

Lann's 1939 essay on translation of Dickens offers surprisingly similar standpoints on almost every aspect of translation (60-62).

Kashkin uses the "conventional character . . . [of the] 'Soviet reader,' of the desires and needs of whom the critic knows all ahead of time"<sup>565</sup> to censure both authors for an "expressionless language of translation, polluted with foreign words and copying foreign syntax";<sup>566</sup> although Kashkin gives many examples of poor translations whose language he contrasts with the preferable "pure" language,<sup>567</sup> he singles out the two writers by name (110). Lann immediately wrote a reply, but never published it.<sup>568</sup> In it, he acerbically states that a translator who usurps the author's position naturally cannot afford to treat the ST carefully; neither can a translator be a coauthor (176). Rejecting dynamic equivalence, Lann differentiates between the psychology of the ST and that of the TT (Lann 176) and argues that the permission to dictate how Dickens or Swift should write or speak in Russian gives the translator an undeserved licence to distort the ST (176) (this "standing-in" *may* be permissible but it is simply too often beyond most translators' abilities [181]). There must be a total respect for the ST (181), and the reader has the right to demand a *tochnyi* (accurate)<sup>569</sup> text free from the translator's arbitrary decisions; the author will answer for any idiosyncrasies which make up his own style

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<sup>565</sup> «условный персонаж . . . „советский читатель“, о желаниях и потребностях которого критик заранее всё знает» (Azov 116)

<sup>566</sup> «невывразительный, засорённый иностранными словами и копирующий иностранный синтаксис . . . язык перевода» (Azov 110)

<sup>567</sup> This concept is unrelated to Walter Benjamin's concept of *reine Sprache* (pure language).

<sup>568</sup> Azov reproduces an archival copy in an appendix, where he notes that the document is made public for the very first time (12).

<sup>569</sup> Lann does mince his words in an attempt to clear his own name and rebuff Kashkin in one fell swoop when he states that his accuser juggles words: rather than discuss the advantages of *tochnyi* (accurate) and *tvorcheskii* (creative) translation, he substitutes *bukval'nyi* for *tochnyi*, expecting the readers not to notice. However, Lann has done the same thing by virtue of substituting "a vocabulary alien to his language" with *bukval'nyi*. As Azov points out, while (in Venuti's terms) Lann can be easily categorized as a supporter of "foreignizing" translation (87), Shengeli's approach is much more complex, because the *ostranenie* that occurs in his work results "not from his desire to convey the foreignness of the original, but from the attempt to fit the entire meaning of the original into the verse form of translation" («не от его желания передать иностранность оригинала, а от попытки уложить весь смысл оригинала в стихотворную форму перевода») (87).

anyway (181). Finally, only “in some cases the translator must make sacrifices, resorting to a vocabulary alien to his language.”<sup>570</sup> Meanwhile, Kashkin had in 1952 published a second article, in *Inostrannye iazyki v shkole*, where he reiterated the earlier positions from his 1936 critique of Lann’s translation of Dickens.<sup>571</sup> The arguments are all generally the same, except now the main thrust is political because Kashkin frames Lann as a servant of the “English imperialist bourgeoisie.”<sup>572</sup> Kashkin also cherry-picks and conveniently takes Lann’s quotations out of context (Azov 116) and then delivers the final *coup de grâce*: the association of Lann with the pseudo-linguistic theories of the disgraced Nikolai Marr (116, 119). Although Lann continued to work as a translator and editor, Kashkin’s (and others’) attacks had destroyed his career as a writer and critic (122).

The trouble for Shengeli began when his friend Ezra Levontin gave a talk at the Translators’ Section meeting about the former’s translation of Byron’s *Don Juan* in March 1948 (127). Levontin’s vague assessment of the work in the talk and the subsequent article in *Sovetskaia kniga* left an ideological opening: the translation distorted the character of the legendary Russian military leader Aleksandr Suvorov (127).<sup>573</sup> Azov’s examination of the draft of Kashkin’s notes demonstrates his preparations to rebuff both Levontin and Shengeli (130). At the March 1950 meeting of the Translators’ Section, the former editor of Detgiz, one Egorova, attacked Shengeli for misrepresenting Suvorov; when someone asked about the ST, she exclaimed “I don’t care about the original!”<sup>574</sup> Shengeli responded, comparing the disputed stanzas with the ST and insisted that any mockery of the Russian Army or of Suvorov had

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<sup>570</sup> «В некоторых случаях переводчик должен и[д]ти на жертвы, прибегая к чуждой своему языку лексике» (179).

<sup>571</sup> Like Chukovskii, Kashkin also critiques Vvedenskii’s translation (Azov 110).

<sup>572</sup> «английской империалистической буржуазии» (Azov 116)

<sup>573</sup> The problematic passages concerned only a few stanzas.

<sup>574</sup> «Мне нет дела до оригинала!» (Azov 132)

already existed in the ST (133); like Chukovskii and Lann, he insisted that *tochnost'* (accuracy) is not *bukvalizm* (literalism) (40); however, Shengeli knew which way the wind was blowing and at the end of his speech declared that he was done with all his major translation projects and, in the absence of friendly discourse, he was resigning from the Translators' Section (132)—but to no avail. In February 1952, Kashkin summarized and published his criticism in *NM*, in a short review of the Byron collection (90), and in December 1952, in another *NM* article, he dealt the *coup de grâce* to the second translator in an article titled “Tradition and Imitation”<sup>575</sup> (135), where he indicted Shengeli's difficult syntax, foreign borrowings, neologisms, and the formal features of his poetry and, once again, the distortion of Suvorov's figure (134). As Azov notes, “to this charge—the most severe, the most terrible, the most dangerous politically—is allocated around one-quarter, if not one-third of the article.”<sup>576</sup> Shengeli's fate was sealed when Chukovskii wrote in *High Art* that the translator is a “representative of the ‘pernicious theory of bukvalizm’”<sup>577</sup> and when others, including Lidia Chukovskaia (Chukovskii's daughter) and Vasilii Betaki, followed suit (73).

Not only Shengeli but also the critic Mikhail Gasparov had considered Kashkin's articles to be outright denunciations, and in the same year Shengeli wrote a response titled “American-Style Criticism”<sup>578</sup> on one hundred typewritten pages that he had the foresight and good sense to never publish.<sup>579</sup> However, in 1952, Shengeli has (almost) nothing left to lose, and so (even if for a moment) he felt that he must attempt to destroy Kashkin by any means necessary. Kashkin's own weapons had to be turned against him, and so the nightmarish polemic brings out the worst

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<sup>575</sup> «Традиция и эпигонство»

<sup>576</sup> «Этому обвинению — самому тяжёлому, самому страшному, политически самому опасному — отводится около четверти, если не треть статьи» (Azov 134)

<sup>577</sup> «представителе „зловредной теории буквализма“» (73)

<sup>578</sup> «Критика по-американски»

<sup>579</sup> Azov reproduces an archival copy in an appendix.

in Shengeli (I now warn the weak of heart!) and provides an object lesson in Stalin-era Soviet rhetoric. One of Shengeli's first statements ("Kritika" 201) mirrors the acknowledgement on which he insists during the Translators' Section meeting: he had been translating for thirty-five years, but he has never translated Joyce, Dos Passos, or Eliot ("Vystuplenie" 184)—but Kashkin has! Even worse, the subject of Kashkin's dissertation was Hemingway ("Kritika" 200).<sup>580</sup> Kashkin is a "propagandist of Anglo-American decadents, heading an entire group—that, however, knows English well (some of its members have lived for long periods in America)."<sup>581</sup> Kashkin's writing is "critical hermaphroditism and perversion of truth . . . and cannot be tolerated in the Soviet press. The gullibility and myopia of the editorial board of *Novyi mir* are astounding."<sup>582</sup> Pushkin is lucky that he is not alive, otherwise he would get it from Kashkin for "littering the language,"<sup>583</sup> and should we disdain foreign words that are already in every dictionary? (218) Should the language be "sterilized"? (221) Has Kashkin forgotten Engels's formula about conveying "Strong German . . . with strong English"? (227)<sup>584</sup> Has Kashkin really never read Lenin's *Materialism and Empiriocriticism*?<sup>585</sup> (237). Byron is against all war; he is a humanist against all demagoguery (248), and so (here the capital letters belong to Shengeli),

THE TEXT OF THE PRINTED STANZAS HAS REMAINED

UNTOUCHED<sup>586</sup> . . . Kashkin IS CREATING FOR ME DIRECT POLITICAL

SLANDER punishable not only by social opinion, but by criminal law. NO, IT IS

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<sup>580</sup> Near the very end, Shengeli calls Kashkin "doctor of Hemingwayan sciences" («докторе хемингуэевских наук») (271).

<sup>581</sup> «Кашкин, пропагандист англо-американских декадентов, во главе целой группы, — правда, хорошо знающей английский язык (некоторые её члены жила в Америке)» (191).

<sup>582</sup> «критический гермафродитизм и извращение истины . . . не могут быть терпимы в советской прессе. Доверчивость и близорукость редакции „Нового мира“ поразительны» (194)

<sup>583</sup> «засорение языка» (218)

<sup>584</sup> «Сильный немецкий язык . . . сильным английским» (227; trans. Shengeli)

<sup>585</sup> «Материализм и эмпириокритицизм»

<sup>586</sup> «ТЕКСТ НАПЕЧАТАННЫХ СТРОФ ОСТАЛСЯ НЕПРИКОСНОВЕН» (244)

HE, KASHKHIN . . . [WHO] HELPS BOURGEOIS ENGLAND TO RIP OUT THE FANGS AND CLAWS FROM THE LION-BYRON<sup>587</sup> . . . [and his article is a] SEASONED LITTLE SPECIMEN OF “AMERICAN-STYLE CRITICISM,” HAVING ITS GOAL NOT THE ESTABLISHMENT, BUT THE PERVERSION OF TRUTH<sup>588</sup>

True enough, one does not often see an experienced, professional man of letters reduced to a cornered animal, so it is to Shengeli’s great credit that this lengthy, harrowing diatribe was never printed. However, the entire affair, from beginning to end meant two important things: First, because neither Lann nor Shengeli’s rebuttals had ever been published in their own time, “[i]t was [tacitly] believed that they had nothing to say in their defense.”<sup>589</sup> Second, not only had the *bukvalisty* lost their second round, but the incident created the impression that the main questions of translation were reasonably resolved (Azov 87) once and for all.<sup>590</sup>

### **In Soviet Russia, Art Creates Man**

In truth, nothing had been settled in 1953; in fact, things were up in the air: Stalin died and was replaced by Khrushchev; the Thaw Era had begun; and Kashkin had to quickly and definitively outline, consolidate, and reinforce his position that, in the interim, gained two new names: *realisticheskii* (realistic) translation and its *khudozhestvennyi* (artistic) counterpart.

Kashkin outlines the symbiosis of the two concepts in a 1954 article titled “Questions of

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<sup>587</sup> «Кашкин ВОЗВОДИТ НА МЕНЯ ПРЯМУЮ ПОЛИТИЧЕСКУЮ КЛЕВЕТУ караемую не только общественным мнением, но и уголовным законом. НЕТ, ЭТО ОН, КАШКИН . . . ПОМОГАЕТ БУРЖУАЗНОЙ АНГЛИИ ВЫРЫВАТЬ КЛЫКИ И КОГТИ У ЛЬВА-БАЙРОНА» (271)

<sup>588</sup> «ЗРЕЛЫЙ ОБРАЗЧИК «КРИТИКИ ПО АМЕРИКАНСКИ», ИМЕЮЩЕЙ ЦЕЛЬЮ НЕ УСТАНОВЛЕНИЕ, А ИЗВРАЩЕНИЕ ИСТИНЫ» (214)

<sup>589</sup> «Считалось, что им нечего было сказать в своё оправдание» (Azov 108)

<sup>590</sup> Azov and Borisenko argue that this impression has lasted until present day. Indeed, Leighton takes this notion at face value (*Two Worlds* 17).

translation”<sup>591</sup> where his familiar targets and the new contenders (linguists [338] and “ethnographers and archaizers” [357]) only further underscore the urgency of his desire to conclusively divide and defeat all his enemies. Kashkin compliments Lermontov on suppressing his individuality in his consecutive retranslations of Byron (331-332) and reminds his readers of Gogol’s admirable advice to Zhukovskii: the translator must be like a transparent glass that appears to not even exist (332-333). The problem, Kashkin explains, is that the modern critic must consider “not only the degree of the transparency of the glass, but also the angle at which the translator viewed the original.”<sup>592</sup> This angle must foremost be *realistic*:

in its truthfulness, in its historical concreteness . . . [lies] the best guarantee of faithful transmission of the original . . . Our Soviet *khudozhestvennyi* [artistic] translation is not at all “the craft of the photographer,”<sup>593</sup> but a creative<sup>594</sup> *osvoenie*,<sup>595</sup> a branch of the art of socialist realism. To translate truthfully, without distortions, without disproportionate underlining of separate details, without the aesthete’s relish.<sup>596</sup>

Kashkin’s reasoning is that, in the opposite case, only a *naturalist* could translate Zola (333), and one would have to be a *dekadent* to translate a *dekadent* poet (334). However, *realisticheskii* (realistic) translation can manage to translate even the “confusing, torn asunder conglomerate”<sup>597</sup>

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<sup>591</sup> «Вопросы перевода»

<sup>592</sup> «не только степень прозрачности стекла, но и угол, под которым переводчик рассматривал оригинала» (333)

<sup>593</sup> cf. Turgenev’s comments regarding the daguerreotype

<sup>594</sup> Here, Kashkin reclaims the word *tvorcheskii* in order to create a distinction between *vol’nyi* and *khudozhestvennyi* translation.

<sup>595</sup> The word can mean both *mastery* and *assimilation*.

<sup>596</sup> «В реалистическом методе, в его правдивости, в его исторической конкретности — лучшая гарантия верной передачи подлинника . . . Наш советский художественный перевод вовсе не “ремесло фотографа”, а творческое освоение, отрасль искусства социалистического реализма. Переводить правдиво, без искажений, без непропорционального подчёркивания отдельных деталей, без эстетского смакования» (333).

<sup>597</sup> «сумбурный, раздёрванный конгломерат» (334)

of *Tristram Shandy* (334). Ultimately, stylistic and individual qualities must be preserved and the author (whether he is Shakespeare, Dickens, Burns, Omar Khayyám, or Dzhambul [!]) must sound in translation as if he himself wrote in Russian (340); modernized expressions of any kind are to be avoided (343). Sure enough, Kashkin adds, even the nineteenth century has admirable examples: Lermontov's take on Goethe's "Over all the summits. . .",<sup>598</sup> Aleksei Tolstoi's *The Bride of Corinth*,<sup>599</sup> and Aleksandr Blok's Heine.<sup>600</sup> However, these are happy accidents without an underlying theory which remains under construction (341), but even Gorkii approved of *realizm* (341), so it should be pursued. Kashkin's practical suggestions often contradict each other: a translation must reflect historical context (342, 343) but it cannot reflect every little detail (343); the reality of a foreign nation or culture must be conveyed (345) but the translator must avoid *chuzheiazychie* (foreign-tonguedness) at all cost; Tolstoi (348, 356) and Turgenev (348) are permitted to generously mix Russian with French or German to mimic foreign accents and "broken" language but Marshak allows one to hear a Scotsman, a Latvian, or an Armenian without resorting to a *bukval'nyi* (literal) copying of any kind (349); furthermore, the store of common words from U.S.S.R. republics that have become entrenched in Russian, such as *saklia*, *aul*, *maidan*,<sup>601</sup> and *aryk*, must be carefully preserved and replenished (352) while colloquialisms and "colourful" expressions must be avoided (355), after all, Kashkin has the gall to add, "the matter is not of some list of forbidden words."<sup>602</sup> Simply put, whatever aids Kashkin's case is *kosher*; everything else is to be discarded and disavowed. Moreover, the fact that Kashkin

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<sup>598</sup> „Über allen Gipfeln“

<sup>599</sup> „Die Braut von Corinth“

<sup>600</sup> In effect, Kashkin attempt to give broader legitimacy to his own theory by co-opting pre-revolutionary writers that operated according to completely different ideological principles.

<sup>601</sup> Some sixty years later, a certain Russian autocrat would beg to differ on this point.

<sup>602</sup> «дело не в каком-то списке запрещённых слов» (355)



considered *realisticheskii* translation to be a provisional working term that could be replaced at will complicated any concrete opposition to it (Azov 90).

In his 1955 article “In the Struggle for Realistic Translation,”<sup>603</sup> Kashkin downplays his earlier complaint about the absence of theory and encourages Soviet literature to be proud of the “*great achievements* of khudozhestvennyi translation”<sup>604</sup> (emphasis added) that apparently have transpired during the previous year. Interestingly, Kashkin’s first target is the continuing issue of the “[r]emovals, additions, changes”<sup>605</sup> in translations that are lagging behind the new norm. Taken at face value, the critique sounds quite reasonable; however, considering the Cerberus of Voenizdat, Glavlit, Goskomizdat and myriad other agencies (that, needless to say, Kashkin cannot acknowledge even *en passant*) his article is disingenuous and misleading when he blames editors (120), translators, TS critics (121) (and *bukval’nyi* and *vol’nyi* translations [122], for good measure) without explaining what precisely caused the commission of their sins. The solution he offers, once more, is the panacea of *khudozhestvennyi* (artistic) translation. The old adage *traduttori traditori* no longer stands (140) and for the Soviet translator, armed with historical materialism and used to the struggles of contradictions (139), the *realisticheskii* method remains the most appropriate weapon (124-125). Other methods of translation must be discarded and thus, *adekvatnyi* (adequate) and *polnotsennyi* (full-valued) methods must also be deprecated (148, 152) (by implication, *vernyi* (faithful) translation, as well). Because the *realisticheskii* method already includes (127) and improves (148) upon the precepts of *tochnyi* (accurate) translation, this in effect leaves Kashkin’s theory as the only valid one. However, as the Czech literary scholar Jiří Levý explains, the replacement of a bevy of terms with a new one did little

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<sup>603</sup> «В борьбе за реалистический перевод»

<sup>604</sup> «большими достижениями художественного перевода»

<sup>605</sup> «Выпуски, прибавки, изменения»

except deprive *realisticheskii* (realistic) translation of any concrete meaning whatsoever (Azov 102). Still, for Kashkin the idea of “life reflected in art”<sup>606</sup> remained at stake. (Of course, Kashkin says nothing about what one should do when the ST does not reflect reality in the first place [Azov 99].) Here, once again, it is easy to be deceived by Kashkin’s rhetoric, because by “life” he does not mean *things as they are* (or even *things as one perceives them to be*); he means *things as they ought to be*, or, in his own words, the “ideo-semantic truth”<sup>607</sup> of a work of “revolutionary development”<sup>608</sup> that can reflect only the “Marxist-Leninist worldview”<sup>609</sup> predicated on socialist realism (Friedberg, *History* 103) that, in turn, serves “the education of a new harmoniously developed man” (Shneidman 8-9). Needless to say, this development cannot be aimed in just *any* direction; it must be “progressively directed”<sup>610</sup> (that is, aimed in *one* direction—but we have already heard this fifty years prior [140], when the revolution had seemed oh-so-close). Thus (forgetting all of his theory’s supposed successes), Kashkin concludes that the entire field of translation is retarded not only by the absence of proper theory (163) but also by the “contrived theorizing”<sup>611</sup> of ideological enemies. Checkmate.

Kashkin’s rhetoric machine was rolling full steam ahead and now there was no turning back. In effect, socialist realism in Kashkin’s hands became, as Vasilii Aksenov put it, another “system of censorship” (in Friedberg et al. 81). Friedberg explains that

Soviet writers occasionally raised objections to Kashkin’s doctrine; but these were always timid and ultimately ineffective.<sup>612</sup> Of necessity, their strictures were

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<sup>606</sup> «жизнь, отражённая в искусстве» (126)

<sup>607</sup> «идейно-смысловой правды» (127 et passim)

<sup>608</sup> «революционном развитии» (132)

<sup>609</sup> «марксистско-ленинским мировоззрением» (139)

<sup>610</sup> «прогрессивно направленном» (133)

<sup>611</sup> «надуманное теоретизирование» (164)

<sup>612</sup> Hingley explains that, most often, “[p]recluded from denouncing the creed in so many words, its opponents have tended to call for more ‘sincerity’ and for an improvement in ‘artistic quality’” (203).

directed only at the less politicized aspects of his teaching . . . [and] never confronted the most dangerous implication of Socialist Realism, namely, the sanctioning of ideological censorship of non-Soviet texts to the point of premeditated distortion. (*History* 105)

Fellow travellers and sycophants were all that remained. In a 1955 essay titled “On Translation of an Image with an Image,”<sup>613</sup> L. N. Sobolev denounces *chuzheiazychie* (foreign-tonguedness) (266-267), criticizes *bukvalizm*,<sup>614</sup> *formalizm* (270), and *naturalizm* (301-302), lauds socialist realism (274), and even digs up Petr I’s dictum about the primacy of *sens* (308). Sobolev’s sudden recollection of the past is not a coincidence. In the same year, A. Leites published “Khudozhestvennyi Translation as a Phenomenon of Native Literature,”<sup>615</sup> where he emphasizes the genius of Zhukovskii (97), other writers and critics of the nineteenth century such as Pushkin, (who by now retroactively became a proponent of the method [102]) and Nikolai Dobroliubov (112). Leites pledges allegiance to the method by affirming that it supersedes all those that came before it (112) and as proof positive criticizes Briusov’s “stillborn”<sup>616</sup> rendering of “Over all the summits. . .” At this point, I will spare my reader unnecessary repetition and briefly summarize all that follows: In 1956, Samuil Marshak reiterates the non-photographic nature of *khudozhestvennyi* (artistic) translation in “The Art of the Poetic Portrait”<sup>617</sup> (135). In 1958, Fedorov apologises for the linguistic slant of the first edition of his *Introduction to the Theory of Translation: Linguistic Problems*<sup>618</sup> (3-4), but argues the importance of linguistics to the establishment of complex equivalence between concepts (5) and defends against opponents who

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<sup>613</sup> «О переводе образа образом»

<sup>614</sup> Like Kashkin, he never explains from *what* precisely creative images are formed, if the translator, per Kashkin, does not translate specific *words* (Azov 99).

<sup>615</sup> «Художественный перевод как явление родной литературы»

<sup>616</sup> «мёртворождённого» (116)

<sup>617</sup> «Искусство поэтического портрета»

<sup>618</sup> «Введение в теорию перевода. Лингвистические проблемы.»

equate the linguistic approach with *formalizm* and “naïve translatorial bukvalizm.”<sup>619</sup> In 1959, in “Of Accuracy and Faithfulness,”<sup>620</sup> V. V. Levik rehabilitates Chukovskii’s *tochnyi* (accurate) translation (358) using the curious phrase “even if it is flight with weights on the legs”<sup>621</sup> and pines for a new Stanislavsky to teach translators a “creative attitude to the original.”<sup>622</sup> In the same year, Tvardovskii comments on Marshak’s translations, noting that “[w]hen poetry is marked as a translation, it to some extent always alienates the reader. It means that the translation we are dealing with is only one possible version of a poetic work” (121). However, in 1962 Marshak returns to his earlier positions by writing in “The Poetry of Translation” that “aspiring to literal accuracy can often lead to translational gobbledygook, to violence against one’s own language, to the loss of the poetic value of that which is being translated” (93), and by condemning “both sinful faithfulness and . . . criminal freedom” (94). In 1963, V. Ivanov’s *On the Nature of Socialist Realism*<sup>623</sup> helps cement the *status quo* and codify Kashkin’s program (especially in light of *realizm*’s “blurry, indeterminate”<sup>624</sup> nature). To accomplish this, Ivanov summarizes every single previous argument (107), co-opting the Russian nineteenth-century thinkers by reaffirming that *realizm* is the expression of desirable social conditions (108), co-opting most genres such as allegory, grotesque, and symbolism (109), co-opting foreign realist writers friendly to the U.S.S.R. such as Dreiser, Hemingway, Remarque, Neruda, Nezval, and Aragon (who, sure enough, experimented with *modernizm* but eventually came to their senses

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<sup>619</sup> «наивным переводческим буквализмом» (5)

<sup>620</sup> «О точности и верности» (360)

<sup>621</sup> «пусть это полёт с гирями на ногах» (360) Through cosmic telepathy the phrase finds its way almost verbatim into Vonnegut’s “Harrison Bergeron” only two years later.

<sup>622</sup> «творческое отношение к оригиналу» (360)

<sup>623</sup> «О сущности социалистического реализма»

<sup>624</sup> «расплывчатое, неопределимое» In “Soviet Culture of the Mid-1980s,” Alexander Gershkovich recalls “a recent visit to the Soviet Union I had an opportunity to interview over a dozen prominent Soviet writers and literary scholars with the purpose of clarifying the essence of the theoretical notion of socialist realism. To my amazement and dismay I received no two identical replies” (12).

[113], as should the homegrown *stiliagi* (hipsters) [122]; after all, *modernizm* was not automatically accepted by the Western bourgeoisie, either [115]). Finally, Ivanov digs up the lingering bones of Engels (108) and Lenin (133), and brings out Khrushchev (111-112) in a good uniform, in good boots, and precisely there hides these rotting movements teeming with epithets such as *naturalizm*, “fotografizm” (120), “crawling art,”<sup>625</sup> “(false) abstraction” (120, 130), *modernizm*, *formalizm*, and “deformation” (120), and covers it all with earth. The very next year, not long before V/T, Brukhnov, and Rait will pick up their pens to begin their translations of Heller and Vonnegut, Brezhnev came to power bringing the Thaw Era to an end.

### **Through a Glass Darkly**

At this point it is necessary to pause in order to explain how misunderstood the unnecessarily-complex genealogy of Soviet translation systems created from the 1917 revolution to the mid-twentieth century became. At the time, a few lone voices, such as Gasparov’s, identified the “strangeness” in Kashkin’s criticism (qtd. in Azov 90), and I would have preferred to write that hindsight is a wonderful thing and that observers of Kashkin’s calisthenics became wise to them at least in retrospect. Alas, this is not the case. Despite the fact that *khudozhestvennyi* (artistic) and *realisticheskii* (realistic) translation introduced no substantially new literary theory or approach but simply put a more finely-honed point on existing ideological rhetoric, the concepts proved much more resilient than their predecessors. As late as 1991, Leighton recognized that “artistic translation is a *Weltanschauung* as well as a method” (*Two Worlds* 68), but failed to detect the symbiotic relationship between the two precepts, writing “[t]he method known as artistic translation is considered the crowning achievement of the Soviet school. Less well accepted is a method called realist translation to denote its basis in Marxist-

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<sup>625</sup> «искусство ползучее» (Martiros Sar’ian qtd. in V. Ivanov 130)

Leninist theory” (13).<sup>626</sup> It is disappointing that Leighton carelessly explains that “realist translation . . . is *defined* as adequate, full-valued, faithful, and artistically equivalent to its original” (72; emphasis added) without also clarifying the complex struggle that had countersigned the subsuming of all of the latter into the former, or that he takes at face value the idea that Kashkin’s method advocates “reflect[ing] the reality presented by the text” (73). However, this is ultimately unsurprising because only too often Leighton quite consciously conflates translators’ and TS theorists’ awards and accolades with their actual achievements, especially when he (like Skorobogatov and Sherry) uses qualitative descriptors such as “pioneers,” “taught a whole generation,” “known for” (9), “frequently praised,” “cited for,” “received the Lenin Prize,” “valued for,” “considered an excellent translator,” “highly rated,” “admired for,” “remarkable,” “superb,” “major,” and “favourite” (10). On the one hand, Leighton’s occasional admission of “contradictions between theory and practice” (20) does not excuse him from fawning over Soviet literary methods while quietly sweeping its socialist aspects under the rug. On the other hand, Azov’s painstakingly researched and thorough book ends in the 1960s, and, although Alexandra Borisenko picks up the baton by examining the repercussions of the fight with *bukvalizm* in post-Soviet Russian TS, there remains a gap that almost precisely corresponds to the Era of Stagnation.

Ivan Kashkin’s meteoric rise to popularity in TS studies was cut short by his death in 1963 which allowed Chukovskii’s work to fill the remaining power vacuum. *High Art* was reprinted in 1964 (441) (and then again in 1966,<sup>627</sup> 1968, 1969, and 1988<sup>628</sup>); however it had

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<sup>626</sup> When Leighton eventually considers Gachechiladze’s revision of Kashkin (74-75), he contradicts himself by conceding that “there would seem to be no difference” between the two methods (74).

<sup>627</sup> Leighton translated the 1966 edition into English in 1984 (Shuttleworth and Cowie 205; Azov 101).

<sup>628</sup> In the twenty-first century, according to Ozon.ru, the book was reprinted at least in 2001, 2008, 2011, and 2014, and the “bestseller” (Borisenko, “Fear” 180) will probably continue to be reprinted indefinitely.

utterly nothing new to add to what was said before. Time stood still. Nothing happened. Every new theory, such as Iakov Retsker's "categories of correspondence and transformation" in 1974 (Fawcett 27),<sup>629</sup> Vilen Komissarov's expansion on the former's concept of *ëkvivalentnyi* (equivalent) translation in 1980, or P. I. Kopanev's *sobstvenno* translation (proper) in 1986<sup>630</sup> was a dull rehash of an old one. Every theoretical application to an old debate (such as Lorie v. V/T's C22 in T. A. Kazakova [1986]) yielded no new conclusions. Soviet TS scholars slowly began to gain access to the writings of their Western counterparts,<sup>631</sup> but did not seem to be able to procure sources newer than those written in the 1960s no thanks to the *spetskhran* (storage for prohibited items). In the worst-case scenarios, theorists would regress completely to earlier positions of either (like Solomon Apt and Levon Mkrtchian in 1987) quoting Petr I (Apt 16), lauding Zhukovskii (Mkrtchian 196), and denouncing *bukvalizm* (191), or (like Nikolai Liubimov in 1988) citing Pushkin and Chateaubriand and (6) praising *khudozhestvennyi* translation (5), a day late and a ruble short. There were only two significant events in Era of Stagnation Soviet TS. The first was Mikhail Gasparov's 1971 article "Briusov and Bukvalizm" in which he attempted to suggest that the literal approach was not a luxury but a means of transport, "not a swear word, but a scientific concept,"<sup>632</sup> by re-examining Briusov's turn-of-the-century translation of the Aeneid (90) and following Briusov's critical evolution (92). This takes a lot of footwork that we have already seen in Zverev's criticism: Gasparov must argue that

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<sup>629</sup> Aleksandr Shveitser later termed them *analogy* and *adequacy* (Fawcett 27).

<sup>630</sup> Like Kashkin's method (although with significantly less success), Kopanev's attempts to subsume all that comes before: *tochnyi*, *vernyi*, *adekvatnyi*, *polnotsennyi*, *realisticheskii*, and *funktional'nyi* (another word for *ëkvivalentnyi*) translation (34).

<sup>631</sup> Komissarov's *Lingvistika perevoda* (1980) makes reference to Eugene Nida's *Linguistics and Ethnology in Translation Problems* (1945) (162) and *Toward a Science of Translation* (1964) (106) and Jakobson's *Linguistics and Poetics* (1960) (160) and "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation" (1966) (158). Shveitser's *Tekst i perevod* (1988) makes reference to Jakobson's two versions of "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation" (1959 and 1966) (161).

<sup>632</sup> «не бранное слово, а научное понятие» (112)

Briusov values “semantic accuracy”<sup>633</sup> but also cares about the “social motives”<sup>634</sup> of a translation; from “Violets in a Crucible” in 1905 to “Ovid in Russian” in 1913 we trace the movement towards the careful preservation of the ST and it is a pity that the later Briusov sought *bukvalizm* (literalism) while the early Briusov sought a “golden mean.”<sup>635</sup> What is one to do? *Vol’nyi* (free) translation does violence to the style of the ST; *bukval’nyi* (literal) translation does violence to the reader’s tastes (102) in its attempt to achieve the “distancing effect.”<sup>636</sup> Thus, *both methods are necessary*, not a “golden mean,” but “precisely two types of translation simultaneously and with equal rights,”<sup>637</sup> because different readers require different translations (111) and a translation that would satisfy everyone is impossible (112). It is not surprising in the least that no one accepted Gasparov’s reasoning and his examples from Briusov’s work were seen as “riddles and ridicule”<sup>638</sup> belied by the existence of Briusov’s own “faithful” and “beautiful” translations (Mkrtchian 196). Thus, despite my great respect for both Gasparov and Azov, I find it very difficult to accept the notion of the historical “pendulum that swings between the giving culture and taking culture, orientation on what is foreign and orientation on what is one’s own,”<sup>639</sup> as far as Russia is concerned. I truly wish it were so, but the *bukvalisty* always remained a dissident minority in the U.S.S.R., and as Azov himself states, only too many critics, authors, and translators were eventually “written down”<sup>640</sup> as *bukvalisty* in the historical record (see Table 4) despite their actual work and convictions. The loss by the *bukvalisty* of their third and final round under the Soviet rule (and subsequent persecution at present) demonstrates that

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<sup>633</sup> «семантическая точность» (98)

<sup>634</sup> «социальной, мотивировке» (99)

<sup>635</sup> «золотой середины» (103)

<sup>636</sup> «эффекте отдалённости» (106)

<sup>637</sup> «именно оба типа перевода одновременно и на равных правах» (108)

<sup>638</sup> «насмешки и загадки» (Mkrtchian 109)

<sup>639</sup> «маятника, который качается между дающей культурой и берущей культурой, ориентацией на чужое и ориентацией на своё» (Azov 11)

<sup>640</sup> «записали»



**Table 4** Schools of Russian and Soviet Translation and Representation of Reality

Cause		transmission of the equivalent letter	transmission of the equivalent spirit	
Effect		showing things as they are	showing things as I imagine them to be	showing things as they ought to be
Translation Methods		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>bukval'nyi</i> or <i>doslovnyi</i> (literal)</li> <li>• <i>podstrochnik</i> (interlinear trot)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>vol'nyi</i> (free)</li> <li>• <i>perestraivaiushchii</i> (reorganizing)</li> <li>• <i>uproshchaiushchii</i> (simplifying)</li> <li>• <i>uluchshaiushchii</i> (improving)</li> <li>• <i>tvorcheskii</i> (creative)</li> <li>• adaptation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>tochnyi</i> (accurate)</li> <li>• <i>vossozdaiushchii</i> (recreative)</li> <li>• <i>adekvatnyi</i> (adequate)</li> <li>• <i>polnotsennyi</i> (full-valued)</li> <li>• <i>vernyi</i> (faithful)</li> <li>• <i>khudozhestvennyi</i> (artistic)</li> <li>• <i>realisticheskii</i> (realistic)</li> <li>• <i>ekvivalentnyi</i> (equivalent)</li> <li>• <i>funktsional'nyi</i> (functional)</li> <li>• <i>sobstvenno</i> (proper)</li> </ul>
Major and Alleged Proponents and Practitioners	1800s-1917	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Viazemskii</li> <li>• Fet</li> <li>• Briusov</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pushkin</li> <li>• Gogol'</li> <li>• Belinskii</li> <li>• Zhukovskii</li> <li>• Turgenev</li> <li>• Dostoevsky</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Pushkin<sup>**</sup>)</li> <li>• (Gogol'<sup>**</sup>)</li> <li>• (Belinskii<sup>**</sup>)</li> <li>• (Zhukovskii<sup>**</sup>)</li> <li>• (Turgenev<sup>**</sup>)</li> <li>• (Dostoevsky<sup>**</sup>)</li> <li>• Lenin<sup>*</sup></li> </ul>
	1917-1991	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shklovskii<sup>*</sup></li> <li>• Mandel'shtam</li> <li>• Tsvetaeva</li> <li>• (Rantsova<sup>**</sup>)</li> <li>• (Voloshinova<sup>**</sup>)</li> <li>• (Auerbakh<sup>**</sup>)</li> <li>• (Lann<sup>**</sup>)</li> <li>• (Krivtsova<sup>**</sup>)</li> <li>• (Shengeli<sup>**</sup>)</li> <li>• (Gasparov<sup>**</sup>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vvedenskii</li> <li>• Rantsova</li> <li>• Voloshinova</li> <li>• Auerbakh</li> <li>• Lann</li> <li>• Krivtsova</li> <li>• Shengeli</li> <li>• Pasternak</li> <li>• Gasparov</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gorkii</li> <li>• Batiushkov</li> <li>• Smirnov</li> <li>• Fedorov</li> <li>• Chukovskii</li> <li>• Lozinskii</li> <li>• Marshak</li> <li>• Radlova</li> <li>• Toper</li> <li>• Kashkin<sup>*</sup></li> <li>• Chukovskaia</li> <li>• Betaki</li> <li>• Sobolev</li> <li>• Leites</li> <li>• Levik</li> <li>• Ivanov<sup>*</sup></li> <li>• Gachechiladze</li> <li>• Retsker</li> <li>• Komissarov</li> <li>• Kopanev</li> </ul>
Soviet Position on Movements		negative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>formalizm</i></li> <li>• <i>naturalizm</i></li> <li>• <i>fotografizm</i></li> <li>• <i>iskusstvo polzuchee</i> (crawling art)</li> </ul>	negative: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>modernizm</i></li> <li>• <i>impressionizm</i></li> <li>• “(false) abstraction”</li> <li>• “deformation”</li> </ul>	positive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• accuracy without slavish reproduction</li> <li>• depiction of positive social and cultural aspects</li> <li>• <i>realizm</i> (socialist realism)</li> </ul>

\* A supporter from an ideological rather than purely literary standpoint

\*\* Retroactively labeled a supporter by the Soviet regime

the consistent fear and loathing of the foreign cultivated at best by institutionalized ignorance and at worst by institutionalized xenophobia, racism, and nationalistic exceptionalism was a simple fact of life in the U.S.S.R. However, refusal to encounter the Other was still not the worst thing.

The second TS event of the Era of Stagnation was Givi Gachechiladze's 1964 correction of Kashkin: First, *realisticheskii* (realistic) translation must become the *de jure* mode of Soviet translation (Azov 104). Second, and most importantly, instead of *reflecting* socialist reality (let the following sink in!) the text now *embodies* it because it has been created in the immutable context of its own time (Friedberg, *History* 105), so any translation is simply a reflection of that embodiment (Gachechiladze 127; Azov 104). Gachechiladze wrote and published on this notion well into the 1980s, and this, in conjunction with censorship, closed borders (international travel an "unachievable dream," segregation of foreign visitors a grim reality), media blockades, and jamming of radio signals such as that of Voice of America (Schmemmann n. pag.), had, in effect, caused generations of Russians to put their faith in translated fiction. "For many Soviet readers works of foreign literature served as a window onto a semi-forbidden world" (Baer "Intelligentsia" 152). As writer and journalist Andrei Matveev recalls, "[w]e looked in . . . [these books] for freedom . . . we looked in them for that individual freedom of which we ourselves were deprived . . . we dreamed of it, we desired one thing—for this damn government to leave us alone . . . but this was impossible, o, impossible."<sup>641</sup> However, about the object of this desire, about the centre of that other world and the U.S.S.R.'s worst (but also most worthy) adversary, the U.S. ("In the U.S.S.R." 520), "the average Russian," as Mikhail Iossel admits,

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<sup>641</sup> «Мы искали в них свободу, . . . мы искали в них ту индивидуальную свободу, которой сами были лишены . . . мы мечтали о ней, мы желали одного — чтобы это долбаное государство отстало от нас, . . . но это было невозможно, о, невозможно» (n. pag.)

“kn[ew] everything—and nothing” (“Introduction” xiii). Because translated American literature sold out in hours and was not kept in print (Friedberg, “In the U.S.S.R” 531), was impossible to procure, and was looked down upon by officialdom, its content became even more intensely desirable (Friedberg, “Authors and Readers” 267) for “the Soviet people [who] had deeply held surrealistic perceptions about the world” (Azhgikhina 26). Paradoxically, as Nadezhda Azhgikhina explains in “Censorship in Russia: Old and New Faces,” even “[j]ournalists and writers had no idea what real life was like in the West, and imagined it as a paradise: they failed to perceive that the Western system demanded hard work and professional solidarity and that, along with freedom, came many boring, old-fashioned responsibilities” (26). Thus, “foreign fiction was regarded in most cases as *documentary evidence* on life outside the Soviet Union” (Friedberg, “Authors and Readers” 268; emphasis added), even causing readers to resent additions or changes to this “reality” (Borisenko, “Fear” 184); they had “no doubts as to the veracity of the foreign authors” (270). After all, where did they get their information? In school, at the age of 15, “Russians learn a history of the United States tailored to the tenets of Marxist ideology and the needs of the state” (the Revolutionary War, slavery, class struggle, the triumph of the hateful bourgeoisie) and “[t]he denigration of the American system is relentlessly pursued in the press and on television” (Schmemmann n. pag.). In 1973, A. N. Nikolyukin’s *Anti-Culture: America’s Literature of Mass Circulation* argued that “America’s good writers, those published in the U.S.S.R., are not really representative of American culture. The real America is a cultural wasteland, and what most Americans read is ‘anti-culture,’ concoctions reeking of pornography, violence, and glorification of capitalism” (Friedberg, “In the U.S.S.R.” 523). In 1975, Stanislav Kondrashov acted as a “social diagnostician” of America’s ills in *A Rendezvous with*

*California*<sup>642</sup> (Starr 116-117). The ironically-titled *Pravda* (*Truth*) regularly published articles like “A Society Without a Future” (Starr 109) in 1976,<sup>643</sup> and in 1977 Frederick S. Starr wrote in “The Russian View of America” that “Gennadii Vasiliev of *Pravda* recently reported from Washington that under the American system of free enterprise it is quite normal for babies to be sold like commodities” (Starr 115). American slang was known only in the actual “underground” (such as it was) and Soviet literary critics “regard[ed] American literature as a single indivisible body of writing” (Friedberg, “In the U.S.S.R.” 53).

Gachechiladze got what he worked for, because by 1976 “American literature continue[d] to be regarded by and large as a faithful mirror of social reality, and literary characters continue[d] to be viewed as mouthpieces for social ideas” (550). Even in 1985, Serge Schmemmann wrote in “How We See Each Other” that the Russians’ “images were a pastiche of a land glimpsed dimly from a distance – romantic vistas and homeless people, dazzling culture and broad highways, demonstrators and jazz” (n. pag.). These Soviet people, shuttered, stupefied, deceived had almost without exception “believed in what they read in foreign translations” (Friedberg, “Authors and Readers” 273), believed a fairytale offered to them on a little plate with a blue border. In the 1940s, “the truth” was acted out by Fenimore Cooper and Mark Twain (Osipova 108), Jack London and Anatole France; in the 1950s it was Louis Aragon and Howard Fast (until they stopped being convenient or refused to toe the line) (Friedberg, “Authors and Readers” 275); in the 1960s, it was Hemingway, who was elevated to a “cult figure” (Osipova 109), Salinger (Starr 111), and Heller (Osipova 108); and in the 1970s and 1980s it was

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<sup>642</sup> «Свидание с Калифорнией»

<sup>643</sup> June 15, 1976 I personally do not actually have to be convinced of the veracity of this *status quo* because, growing up in the U.S.S.R. in the late 1980s, I distinctly remember an illustrated children’s book from the 1970s that cheerfully told me (among many other things) that the air in the U.S. is so polluted that the capitalists have erected booths to sell air! I wonder now, whether it was just a creative reworking of Aleksandr Beliaev’s science fiction novel *Prodavets vozdukh* (1929).

Steinbeck and Wilder, Bradbury (Iossel n. pag.), Asimov, Vidal (Schmemmann n. pag.), and Vonnegut (Osipova 108). In Russian fairytales there is a common trope: the strongman hero Ilia Muromets often gets three choices written on a large stone standing at a crossroads. Usually, two of the choices are quite deadly or inconvenient (lose your life, lose your horse) so he always chooses the most logical one, the least of all evils. During the Soviet period (and especially during the Era of Stagnation) translators also had three choices: the outdated *vol'nyi* (free) translation, the radical *bukval'nyi* (literal) translation that would never get past an editor's desk, and the *tochnyi-khudozhestvennyi-realisticheskii* translation.<sup>644</sup> Any work of literature published officially in the U.S.S.R. from the 1950s to the late 1980s saw the translator inevitably make the one possible logical choice: like a Renaissance courtier, to put on a mask of rhetorical *sprezzatura* and brashly exclaim (while artfully holding the finger in his pocket for the *apparat*): “Look how artfully I pretend to be natural!”<sup>645</sup>

### **Slouching Towards the Other**

The development of Western TS took root just next door, in nineteenth-century Germany. In 1813, the poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and the philosopher Friedrich Schleiermacher advanced two similar theories of translation. Although the latter is now quoted as often (if not more often) than Pushkin's opinion on Chateaubriand, Goethe's conception came first, so it is worth mentioning the original formulation included in his funerary oration “To the Brotherly Memory of Wieland”.<sup>646</sup>

There are two maxims in translation: one requires that the author of a foreign

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<sup>644</sup> In fact, Leighton identifies Rait as an adept of *khudozhestvennyi* translation and the Chukovskii school (*Two Worlds* 413).

<sup>645</sup> I borrow this expression from Ernest B. Gilman (97).

<sup>646</sup> „Zum brüderlichen Andenken Wielands“

nation be brought across to us in such a way that we can look on him as ours; the other requires that we should go . . . [across] to what is foreign and adapt ourselves to its conditions, its use of language, its peculiarities. The advantages of both are sufficiently known to educated people through perfect examples. Our friend, who looked for the middle way in this, too, tried to reconcile both, but as a man of feeling and taste he preferred the first maxim when in doubt. (qtd. in Lefevere, *Tradition* 39)

In its essence, the idea underlying Goethe's dichotomy expresses the desire to "make the German language into a cosmopolitan centre<sup>647</sup> for Europe and the world" (Lefevere 46) by adopting the best that other cultures have to offer. Schleiermacher immediately caught on and four months later (Venuti, *Invisibility* 118) expressed his amendment in the lecture "On the Different Methods of Translating."<sup>648</sup> First, he sets up the dichotomy that initiates the translation effort:

Paraphrase sets out to overcome the irrationality of languages, but only in a mechanical way. . . . [It] treats the elements of the two languages as though they were mathematical signs that can be reduced to the same value by means of addition and subtraction . . . Imitation, on the other hand, surrenders to the irrationality of languages; . . . [but] for the sake of preserving the unity of the impression made by the work, its identity is sacrificed. (48)

Responding to Goethe's notion of "three epochs<sup>649</sup> of translation," Schleiermacher suggests a choice between no more than two courses of practical action:

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<sup>647</sup> In *The German Tradition* translation scholar André Lefevere notes that "[i]ronically, in the twentieth century the languages that vied to fulfill this goal were English and Russian, not German" (46).

<sup>648</sup> „Über die verschiedenen Methoden des Übersetzens“

<sup>649</sup> "The first ["prosaic" epoch] acquaints us with foreign countries on our own terms . . . A second ["parodistic"] epoch follows in which [the translator] really only tries to appropriate foreign content and to reproduce it in his own sense, even though he tries to transport himself into foreign situations. . . . [in] the third epoch, . . . the highest and the final one . . . the aim is to make the original identical with the translation, so that one would not be valued instead of the other, but in the other's stead" (qtd. in Lefevere, *German Tradition* 35-36).

Either the translator leaves the writer in peace as much as possible and moves the reader toward him; or he leaves the reader in peace as much as possible and moves the writer toward him. . . . beside these two methods there can exist no third one that might serve some particular end. (49)

The problem, Schleiermacher argues, is not only one of approximation, because “the more precisely the translation adheres to the turns and figures of the original, the more foreign it will seem to its reader” (53), but also one of negative reception, because such a translation would entail a risk of being “considered ungainly for striving to adhere so closely to the foreign tongue as his own language allows, and . . . [of] being criticized . . . for having failed to exercise his mother tongue in the sorts of gymnastics native to it, instead accustoming it to alien, unnatural contortions” (53). In addition, Schleiermacher responds to the poet and translator August Wilhelm Schlegel’s<sup>650</sup> notion of the invisible author (Lefevere, *Tradition* 66) who arises if one takes the path of least resistance, “which, wishing to spare its reader all exertion and toil, sets out to summon the foreign author as if by magic into his immediate presence and to show the work as it would be had the author himself written it originally in the reader’s tongue” (55).

Schleiermacher carefully considers the historical aspects of language, the pragmatic issues of a translation that tends towards the alien, and the inherent limitations of certain types of languages, and concludes that, if a translator is unwilling to “bend the language of his translation” away from the normative, he is forced to either lamely paraphrase the ST or to totally “transform his man’s entire wisdom and knowledge” (60). Schleiermacher eliminates the possibility of a “golden mean” and decisively rejects the Platonic notion of a translation that reflects a perfect reality, asserting that “an indispensable requirement . . . is a disposition of the language that not

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<sup>650</sup> Venuti argues that Schlegel’s “versions of Shakespeare’s plays exemplified the foreignizing method” (“Identities” 188).

only departs from the quotidian<sup>651</sup> but lets one perceive that it was not left to develop freely but rather was bent to a foreign likeness” (53). In other words, the successful translation should encourage *direct* contact with the foreign, adhere to the elements of the SL, and surprise and unsettle the reader.

Twentieth-century Western translation theories and practices did not immediately embrace Goethe and Schleiermacher. However, unlike the fear and categorical rejections of anything different, literal, or strange in the U.S.S.R., the West experienced a much fuller range of theories and approaches to translation. As Lawrence Venuti explains in the introduction to the third edition of his *Translation Studies Reader*, the history of TS<sup>652</sup>

can . . . be imagined as a set of changing relationships between the relative autonomy of the translated text and two other categories: *equivalence* and *function*. Equivalence has been understood as “accuracy,” “adequacy,” “correctness,” “correspondence,” “fidelity,” or “identity” . . . Function has been understood as the potentiality of the translated text to release diverse effects, beginning with the communication of information and the production of a response comparable to the one produced by the source text in its own culture. (“Emerging Field” 5)

In the twentieth century, not long after Briusov and Shklovskii wrote about the benefits of literality and *ostranenie*, and Lenin and Chukovskii each had their say about the evils of the

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<sup>651</sup> See also Paul De Man’s “‘Conclusions’ on Walter Benjamin’s ‘The Task of the Translator’” (28).

<sup>652</sup> The history of *Western* TS, I should emphasize. Jeremy Munday argues that “[m]uch of what might be considered to be the canon of Translation Studies . . . is dominated by Western writing and Western authors, not all of whom are primarily translators” (“Political Concepts” 43). Indeed, the first edition of Venuti’s anthology included a list of 38 “names and locations” of the theorists (2-3), of them 34 Western European and North American. The third edition of Venuti’s anthology contains the work of 31 critics, 27 of them Western European and North American. This list is absent from the third edition and Venuti names but carefully excludes from either anthology his own critics, such as Anthony Pym, Douglas Robinson, Maria Tymoczko, and Munday.



foreign and the figurativeness of socialist realism, one of the first and most significant positions on translation was formulated by the philosopher Walter Benjamin, who begins “The Task of The Translator” (1923)<sup>653</sup> by arguing that “[i]n the appreciation of a work of art or an art form, consideration of the receiver never proves fruitful” (69). For Benjamin, like for Pushkin, “[a]ny translation that aims to convey something reduces the status of the literary work to information and in so doing transgresses its ‘essential quality’” (Andrew Benjamin 89). Here, Benjamin comes “closest . . . to sounding like a proponent of New Criticism, suggesting that the aesthetic moment occurs in a vacuum (Conley 10-11). Although Benjamin does admit that “the original undergoes a change” (73) in the process of translation, he returns to the Platonic mode (Andrew Benjamin 10; Eco n. pag.) when he argues that meaning can “emerge as pure language [*reine Sprache*] from the harmony of all the various modes of intention” (74). In “Translation as Simulacrum” John Johnston argues that this notion

remains troubling . . . [because] it designates a language of pure meaning and univocity unobscured by the mediation of any particular language . . . [and] takes on a mythic dimension . . . [while claiming] that the essential nature of language . . . only becomes visible in and through differences in particular languages. (45-46)

Ultimately, Benjamin not only fails to provide a model of translation (47), but also offers a vague and extremely self-contradictory framework. For instance, he rejects formal equivalence, the “[f]idelity in the translation of individual words” but, while admitting that “the unrestrained license of bad translators” provides a richness of meaning but hinders language and literature, also rejects dynamic equivalence, arguing translation should “refrain from wanting to

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<sup>653</sup> „Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers“ The essay was not translated into English until 1968.

communicate something, from rendering the sense” (78). Benjamin argues that “[a] literal rendering of the syntax completely demolishes the theory of reproduction of meaning and is a direct threat to comprehensibility” (78); however he, like Gogol’, contends that “[a] real translation is transparent . . . it does not cover the original . . . but allows the pure language . . . to shine upon the original” while also insisting that the way to achieve such transparency is “above all, by a literal rendering of the syntax which proves words rather than sentences to be the primary element of the translator” (79). Far from being a syncretic combination of two approaches, Benjamin’s essay advocates both mediated and unmediated contact with the foreign, proving to be a confused juxtaposition of contrary ideas in dire need of correction.

In the period roughly corresponding to the Thaw Era and the time of Kashkin and Chukovskii, two scholars offered coherent amendments to Benjamin’s standpoint. Roman Jakobson, a linguist from the school of Russian Formalism (and Shklovskii’s friend and colleague) advocated a *structural* approach to translation studies. In “On Linguistic Aspects of Translation” (1959), Jakobson defines three different types of translation: “1 Intralingual translation or *rewording* [which is] an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language. 2 Interlingual translation or *translation proper* [which is] an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language. [and] 3. Intersemiotic translation or *transmutation* [which is] an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems” (114). Although Jakobson recognizes the importance of all three types of translation, he argues that, because interlingual translation is “not for separate code-units but for entire messages . . . translation involves two equivalent messages in two different codes” (114). However, despite considering the difficult task of “remain[ing] faithful to the original” (116), Jakobson shows flexibility when he states that “[a]ll cognitive experience . . . is conveyable in

any existing language. Whenever there is deficiency, terminology may be qualified and amplified by loan-words or loan-translations, neologisms or semantic shifts, and finally, by circumlocutions” (115). As Baer explains in “Translation Theory and Cold War Politics,” Jakobson recognized that ultimately “complete semantic equivalence . . . is impossible” and at most a synonymy (or *equivalence in difference*) could be achieved (174). In contrast, the linguist and biblical scholar Eugene Nida identifies in “The Principles of Correspondence” (1964) a “traditional” dichotomy between “free or paraphrastic translations . . . [and] close or literal ones,” suggesting that a gradient exists between the two extremes (126). He then constructs a dichotomy using terminology that has become canonical: *formal equivalence* that prioritizes meaning, regardless of any clarifying interruptions, and *dynamic equivalence*<sup>654</sup> that is concerned with the notion that “the relationship between receptor and message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message” (129); thus, for example, “demon-possessed” should become “mentally distressed” in a present-day (1969) translation (Nida and Taber, *Theory and Practice* 13), and the introduction of “absent, if not foreign” cultural ideas should be avoided to maintain historical accuracy (134).<sup>655</sup> Although, like Schleiermacher, Nida insists that “a translation acceptable in one period is often quite unacceptable at a later time” (“Correspondence” 131), he concedes that, depending on circumstances, “either a ‘formal’ or a ‘primarily dynamic’” equivalent should be employed (129), nonetheless reaching the conclusion that “[a] translation of dynamic equivalence aims at *complete naturalness of expression*” (129; emphasis added) and is therefore preferable. Nida praises Luther’s New Testament that “suppress[es . . .] Greek or Hebrew terms which had no acceptable equivalent in German” (“Western World” 15) and, unlike Jakobson, remains

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<sup>654</sup> Later, *functional equivalence*

<sup>655</sup> This presupposes the problematic notion that both text and history are stable and immutable.

extremely averse to false friends, borrowings, cognates, anachronisms, “crude vulgarities” (137), slang (138), and “translationese” (language that “sounds” translated) (*Theory and Practice* 13). Although Nida admits that not absolutely everything can be “‘naturalized’ by the process of translating” (“Correspondence” 137), he sides with critics like Max Beerbohm (who critiques translations of plays that [like Brecht’s] make their audiences “acutely conscious that their work is a translation” [qtd. in Nida 132]), J. B. Phillips (who claims that “[t]he test of a real translation is that it should not read like translation at all” [qtd. in Nida 133]), G. A. Black, and J. H. Frere (who finally recommends “pure, impalpable, and *invisible*” translation that “bears no obvious trace of foreign origin”) (136; emphasis added).

### **Trial by Pale Fire**

Undoubtedly, the most unforgiving test of both theories took place during the infamous *Evgenii Onegin* affair in 1964-1966.<sup>656</sup> It is not a coincidence that the subject of the extreme debate, Pushkin’s eponymous narrative poem, is from 1833: not only is *EO* “the supreme work of Russian literature of all time” (Friedberg, *History* 85) to a Russian tantamount to poetry itself (Bayley n. pag.), but the work’s historical proximity to nineteenth-century Russian and German translation theories also implied that the successful reception of linked method and practice would definitively vindicate a new translation. In 1963, the scholar and translator Walter Arndt released his translation of *EO*. It adhered to the *Onegin stanza* (Pushkin’s specific meter, scansion, and rhyme scheme) and read quite fluently, occasionally providing glosses in the form of footnotes. In 1964, Nabokov offered his own translation. The poem itself took an extremely literal approach with no glosses, but the commentary, notes, and index attached in separate volumes were roughly three times longer than the length of the work itself.

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<sup>656</sup> The cultural event was of such great magnitude that another did not arise until the Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (P/V) *Voina i mir* affair in 2007-2008.

**Walter Arndt (1963/1992)**

“Now that he is in grave condition,  
 My uncle, decorous old dunce,<sup>657</sup>  
 Has won respectful recognition;  
 And done the perfect thing for once.  
 His action be a guide to others;  
 But what a bore, I ask you, brothers,  
 To tend a patient night and day  
 And venture not a step away:  
 Is there hypocrisy more glaring  
 Than to amuse one all but dead,  
 Shake up the pillow for his head,  
 Dose him with melancholy bearing,  
 And think behind a public sigh:  
 ‘Deuce take you, step on it and die!’”

**Vladimir Nabokov (1964/1975)**

“My uncle has most honest principles:  
 when taken ill in earnest,  
 he has made one respect him  
 and nothing better could invent.  
 To others his example is a lesson;  
 but, good God, what a bore  
 to sit by a sick man both day and night,  
 without moving a step away!  
 What base perfidiousness  
 the half-alive one to amuse,  
 adjust for him the pillows,  
 sadly present the medicine,  
 sigh—and think inwardly  
 when *will* the devil take you?”

The concurrent offering of two different versions of the classical poem was not unique, *per se*. In fact, in “English Versions of Pushkin’s *Eugene Onegin*,” Peter M. Lee documents forty-three full and partial translation attempts (none alike) that span one hundred and thirty years, beginning with Henry Spalding in 1881 and ending with Mary Hobson in 2011 (Lee n. pag.; Kosova n. pag); rather, the total furor of the ensuing polemics in the *New York Review of Books* makes the two translations memorable. Nabokov had anticipated the debate as far back as 1955, when in “Problems of Translation” he condemned “the reviewer of the ‘translation,’ who . . . praises as

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<sup>657</sup> [Arndt’s footnote] The original here alludes neatly but untranslatably to the well-known introductory line of one of Ivan Krylov’s fables: “An ass of most respectable convictions . . .” (32n2).

‘readable’ an imitation only because the drudge or the rhym[e]ster has substituted easy platitudes for the breathtaking intricacies of the text” (71). Unlike Nida, Nabokov refused to see *EO* as a “local or historical” phenomenon (72) and (as a result of his total distaste of socialist realism) resisted “the human-interest angle in the discussion of literary works” (80).<sup>658</sup> Ultimately, Nabokov insisted that “the term ‘literal translation’ is tautological since anything but that is not truly a translation but an imitation, an adaptation, or a parody” (77).

Nabokov’s attack of Arndt in “On Translating Pushkin Pounding the Clavichord” (1964) was exacting and merciless, indicting everything from the translator’s inattention to detail to his poor knowledge of Russian, English, and a dozen categories of *otsebiatina* (an invention from the self) (n. pag.). Arndt, taken aback by Nabokov’s “disingenuous literal-mindedness” responded, defending his translation and reminding Nabokov of his own three stanzas of *EO* published in *Russian Review* in 1945 that “obviously contain just such enforced liberties and padding as those which their writer so abominates in others” (n. pag.).<sup>659</sup> To make things worse, in addition to a variety of other voices, the student of socialism, social critic, and Nabokov’s longtime friend (until the bitter end of the debate) Edmund Wilson came to Arndt’s defense in 1965, pointing out Nabokov’s “sado-masochistic Dostoevskian tendencies so acutely noted by Sartre—he seeks to torture both the reader and himself by flattening Pushkin out and denying to his own powers the scope of their full play” (“Pushkin and Nabokov” n. pag.). Wilson criticized Nabokov’s addition of “rare and unfamiliar words” such as “*rememorating, producement, curvate, habitude, rummers, familistic, gloam, dit, shippon, and scrab,*” his use of “Russianisms”

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<sup>658</sup> However, Nabokov still placed Pushkin in a historical context by arguing that the poet barely knew any German or English and by discussing the French authors who have influenced the poet the most (76).

<sup>659</sup> Demonstrating that *EO* was his own “sacred text,” Nabokov had in fact “cheerfully [R]ussianized both [*Colas Breugnon* and *Alice in Wonderland*], trawling dictionaries for suitable archaic equivalents” (Coates 377). As Friedberg reminds us, “[i]n 1923 at the age of only twenty-four, . . . [Nabokov] published . . . a prime example of what . . . [he] was to denounce and ridicule forty years later. It was, to put it mildly, quite cavalier in its treatment of the original” (*History* 86).

and his personal “drama” reflected in the text (n. pag.).<sup>660</sup> While the content of these extensive and extremely unpleasant attacks and parries (reminiscent in terms of their viciousness of the Kashkin v. Lann/Shengeli debates that never were) have been analyzed to death, I should add that there was more to Nabokov’s method than an opposition to contemporary Western translation practices. For one thing, Nabokov fundamentally aimed to recreate and repeat something akin to Briusov’s *oeuvre*, the only difference being that Briusov’s *Aeneid* remained unpublished until 1933, after his death (Gasparov, “Briusov” 99, 118). However, Nabokov’s scurrilous position had an even deeper design. As Leighton points out, “Nabokov was not a hack. . . [and] his literal translation was opposed to everything that Pushkin believed . . . and to everything the Soviet school took from Pushkin” (*Two Worlds* 181). As a result,

Nabokov’s project defiantly rejected the Soviet-adopted method . . . and assumed an elitist, uncompromising attitude toward the understanding and interpretation of a text . . . The notes accompanying the translation seek to render the whole of the text without losing any shade of meaning or allusion. The Soviet approach to translation contrasts with this: texts were shaped . . . by introductions, criticism, and notes that pointed towards the correct reading. (Burnett and Lygo 25)

As a good American, Nabokov took his anti-Soviet position very seriously. He did not criticize “American government politics” (Conley 9), frequently disagreed with Wilson on the subject of the Vietnam War (10), and even, as Baer explains, broke his relations with Jakobson after the latter’s visit to Moscow in 1956 because the scholar’s “‘little trips to totalitarian countries’ . . . convinced him that the Harvard linguist was a foreign agent” (Baer, “Cold War” 182). This

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<sup>660</sup> In “Nabokov’s Pushkin and Nabokov’s Nabokov,” Clarence Brown builds a persuasive case that this drama has been reflected in Nabokov’s *Pale Fire* (1962) that (along with his other novels) can be read as a complex parallel to Nabokov’s construction and defense of his translation of *EO* (285).

position was paradoxical, because “Jakobson, a founder of Russian Formalism, would become associated in Nabokov’s mind with the crude politicization of literature and art that marked Cold War culture both in the USSR and in the United States” (183); however, Nabokov’s own “defense of ‘literariness’ is a fine example of the Formalist approach to literary studies . . . which by this time had become anathema in the USSR” (184).

In 1966, wishing to kill a dozen birds with one stone, Nabokov “replied to all his massed assailants at once in the verbal equivalent of falling upon them like a tower” (Brown 281): he rejected Anthony Burgess’s “arty translations” (“To My Critics” 80), debunked Wilson’s criticism of odd word choices (85),<sup>661</sup> railed against the practice of interpreting a literary work (88), and called himself “an eclectic democrat . . . whatever suits me, goes” (84). As Tim Conley argues in the 2014 article “*Eugene Onegin* the Cold War Monument,” the “incendiary quarrel” between Nabokov and Wilson can be “instructively read . . . as a political event, stage-managed for public consumption, an ideologically-loaded allegory” (1). Not only was the Bollingen Foundation (involved in the production of the *EO* translations) “an American-funded, American-run, and American-based institution with a European name [that] chose Pound [for his 1949 poetry prize] out of concern that too many American writers were leftists and revolutionaries” (3), but also Nabokov himself

attract[ed] the attention of members of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, whose secretary was Nabokov’s own cousin, the composer Nicolas Nabokov. In the course of the Cold War and the Congress’s struggle to disseminate anti-

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<sup>661</sup> Strangely, Nabokov is against the inclusion of Russian words as-is. In his criticism of the “Victorian modesty,” he picks out the phrase “I am *beremenna*,” arguing that “the translator thought that ‘I am pregnant’ might shock some pure soul” (*Versions* 5). Nabokov does not consider that including a strange, unexplicated word might draw more attention to it and leave it semantically overdetermined, demonstrating the contradiction of hoping to produce a “faithful and complete” text without expecting the reader to journey into an “estranged” world.



communist ideals, the cultural capital attributed to those Eastern European and particularly Russian literary works and writers who stood outside or apart from, if not in direct opposition to, Soviet politics and ideology steadily climbed. (4)

While the *NYREV* was an equal-opportunity denouncer of imperialism and communism (9), both *Dissent* and *Encounter*, where Nabokov in a surprising chess move placed his reply to Wilson (who began his response with “I don’t know why he chooses to do it in *Encounter* rather than in the *New York Review of Books*, where the controversy . . . has hitherto been conducted” [92]) were in fact “instrument[s] of the CIA, a founded and carefully monitored mouthpiece for anti-Communist propaganda” (Conley 7-8). However, there was no conspiracy and the CIA’s backing was “one of the worst-kept secrets in intellectual circles by 1965-6” (9), fitting well with the organization’s sponsorship of printing of Patricia Blake’s *Half-Way to the Moon*, Pasternak’s *Doctor Zhivago*, and even Chekhov’s works (4). The partisan position of the Nabokov-Wilson debate is further corroborated by Chukovskii’s article, “Onegin in a Foreign Land,”<sup>662</sup> where Chukovskii calls Wilson “the most influential critic of America,”<sup>663</sup> criticizes Nabokov’s 1,100-page-long commentary, and identifies the various strange personal insertions that Nabokov adds into his notes (n. pag.). The affair demonstrated the importance of translation to literary and political cultural production and proved that “the theory and practice of translation” are not only mediated by linguistic or semantic theories but are also always “ideologically charged” (Conley 11), *ex definitione*.

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<sup>662</sup> «Онегин на чужбине» Chukovskii began writing the article sometime in the 1960s but it was published only posthumously in 1988 in *Druzhba narodov* and thereafter as an addendum to *Vysokoe iskusstvo* reprinted in Chukovskii’s collected works. (See also volume 3 of his *Sobranie sochinenii*.)

<sup>663</sup> «самый влиятельный критик Америки» (n. pag.)

## The New Wave

In the period corresponding to the Era of Stagnation, the tide began to turn against textual examination limited to the TT. In the 1970s, there was an attempt to return to Russian Formalist frameworks (Munday, *Translation Studies* 165), most notably by the cultural scholar Itamar Even-Zohar who developed *polysystem theory* in which “semiotic phenomena . . . should be regarded as systems rather than conglomerates of disparate elements” (288), systems that reveal the centre and the peripheries of “canonized and non-canonized culture” (295-296) and the differences between official and dissident texts. As Edwin Gentzler explains in “Polysystem Theory and Translation Studies,” the original Formalist conjecture was “that it could distinguish ‘literariness’ through a concept of defamiliarization . . . dependent upon the assumption that it could also define that which was familiar” (112). If one could establish the requisite contextual and intertextual anchor points, one could determine whether a “foreign text is too radical, too estranging” (119) and whether its translation will be rejected by the receiving culture or become “victorious” and “function as primary literature” (as *covert translation*), enriching both the SL and the TL (119). For the literary critic George Steiner, this process was not one of negotiation but of conquest. Steiner studied the phenomenology of translation and attempted to return to Schleiermacher in “The Hermeneutic Motion” (1975), describing the process of translation in his “fourfold” translatorial motion: the “investment of belief” that assures one of the necessity and possibility to translate a particular work in a particular way in the first place (186); the “dissective . . . decipherment” during which the translator breaks apart the ST in order to understand it and “invades, extracts, and brings” its essence home (187); the strategy the translator chooses, ranging from familiarization to Nabokov’s brand of “permanent strangeness and marginality” (188), and, finally, the imbalance between the ST and TT that results from the “cognitive” violence of invasion of the ST by “taking away from ‘the other’ and by adding . . . to

our own” (188-189). In *Introducing Translation Studies*, Jeremy Munday explains that this process, responding to Benjamin, functions as a “sacramental intake” of the foreign text that allows it to “infect” the user who will in turn compensate with a specific strategy that results in a loss for the ST and a gain for the TT that nonetheless bears a “residue” that enhances the ST during the act of translation (245-247). In other words, the theory assumes that “[g]ood translators resist the temptation to smooth out the resistant elements of the original” (Eysteinsson and Weissbort 397). For Steiner, translation is violence; however, “[t]he work translated is [also] enhanced” by claiming it has found something new or overdetermined to emphasize in the original (189).<sup>664</sup> He advocates a fluidity that allows an “authentic” translation to either “fall short” of the ST, but still gesture towards it, or to find unrealized “potentialities” in the ST and thus “surpass” it (190).<sup>665</sup> Although Steiner believes that “[t]he ideal [is] never accomplished . . . No such perfect ‘double’ exists,” he ultimately maintains that “fidelity” is unrelated to “literalism or any technical device for rendering ‘spirit’” and argues that only through an *attempted* parity with the ST can a translation reach its ethical mandate (190).<sup>666</sup>

In 1977, the linguist and translation scholar Julianne House argued in “A Model for Translation Quality Assessment”<sup>667</sup> that, although “[t]he essence of translation lies in the preservation of meaning” (25) that, in turn, has three aspects,<sup>668</sup> the definition of an *adequate translation* is “the replacement of a text in the . . . [SL] by a semantically and pragmatically

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<sup>664</sup> See also Walter Benjamin on the transformation of the mother tongue (73).

<sup>665</sup> This concept is not unlike the notion of “afterlife in works of art” (71) that Benjamin explores in “The Task of the Translator.” Paul De Man adds to this the sense that all hermeneutic activities “critical philosophy, literary theory, history . . . kill the original, by discovering that the original was already dead” (24).

<sup>666</sup> However, Steiner’s notion of the possibility of restitution, that the debt to the Other can ever be repaid in kind and *in full*, remains problematic.

<sup>667</sup> House will go on to revise the standards continuously until present time (2015), ultimately rejecting all but those predicated on equivalence (*Past and Present* 13).

<sup>668</sup> the *semantic*—the relationship between linguistic units to referents (25), the *pragmatic*—the relationship between linguistic units and its user (27), and the *textual*—the combination of linguistic components into “a cohesive whole” (28-29)

equivalent text in . . . [TL]” (29-30). House’s model attempted to expand Nida’s framework by adding to the concept of *dynamic equivalence* the notion of disregarding the intentions of both the author and the translator and a focus entirely on linguistically empirical “textual function” (30). However, this approach failed to locate the sites where actual textual production took place or their conditions. However, at roughly the same time, the translation scholar Gideon Toury advocated a *descriptive* (rather than prescriptive) understanding of the translation process, qualifying it much more pragmatically by discussing the concept of *translation norms* in “The Nature and Role of Norms in Translation” (1978). For Toury, translation activities are, first and foremost, a matter of “cultural significance” (198) dependent on “inter subjective” *norms* that lie at the centre of a scale that has absolute *rules* and “extreme *idiosyncrasies*” at its two extremes (199). An *initial norm* (for instance, a *textual-linguistic* norm [203]) allows a work to be selected for translation (200-201); a *preliminary norm* determines the translation policy affecting a work and the “directness of translation” from a certain language; and an *operational norm* determines the steps involved in the process of the translation itself (202). Norms are concurrent and competing, and they can be *previous*, *mainstream*, and *new* (in this regard, like Schleiermacher and Nida, Toury believes in the existence of “trendy,” “old-fashioned,” and “progressive” translations [205]). Seeking a departure from an insular approach which establishes the interaction between the ST and TT in a hermeneutical vacuum, Toury rejects “any traditional concept of equivalence” and asserts that “it is norms that determine the (type and extent of) equivalence manifested by actual translations” (204). Thus, instead of attempting to derive ““true-to-life accounts” of how a particular translation came to be, he recommends the establishment of descriptive *explanatory hypotheses* (203) that take into account such considerations as whether cultural regularities reveal a translator’s failure “to adhere to

sanctioned practices” (200), and the essential difference between the *adequacy* of translation (that is, adherence to norms in the ST) and its *acceptability* (that is, adherence to norms in the target culture) (201). Practically, translation norms can be *textual*, pertaining to the translated text *per se*, or *extratextual*, “semi-theoretical or critical formulations, such as prescriptive ‘theories’ of translation, statements made by translators, editors, publishers . . . critical appraisals of individual translations, or the activity of a translator or ‘school’ of translators” (207). Most importantly, “[n]ormative pronouncements” reveal traces of “propaganda and persuasion . . . [or] a deliberate desire to mislead and deceive,” as well as goals that run contrary to “declarations of intent” on the part of the translator (207). Toury’s approach definitively demonstrated that not only political but also historical and cultural values were essential to the process of producing creative translations. However, in the 1970s, Hans J. Vermeer responded to Toury’s notion of norms, by introducing *skopos*, “the Greek word for ‘aim’ or ‘purpose’” to describe the “functional adequacy” of the goals of translation (Munday, *Translation Studies* 122). Vermeer collected his findings in “Skopos and Commission in Translational Action” (1989), where he argued that, whereas the ST is “oriented towards, and . . . bound to, the source culture,” the TT “is oriented towards the target culture, and it is this which ultimately defines its adequacy” (222-223). While Vermeer admits that the *skopos* of the TT and ST may be the same, he rejects the notion of “transcoding . . . retrospectively oriented towards the source text” (223) while allowing the hypothetical “marked” translation that “express[es] source-culture features by target-culture means” (231). As Mary Snell-Hornby explains in *The Turns of Translation Studies*, the notion of “‘faithfulness to the original,’ equivalence in fact, was subordinated to . . . *skopos*” (Hönig trans. and qtd. in Snell-Hornby 51) that was eventually replaced with *function* (52). However, despite

identifying “five broad translation types,”<sup>669</sup> and differentiating between *Translationsskopos* (“the translator’s intended purpose”) and the *Translatskopos* (“the function of the translation as seen in the receiving culture”), Vermeer privileged *intratextual coherence* (its ability to be understood by the reader) over *intertextual coherence* (“fidelity to the source text”) (Snell-Hornby 54) demonstrating the limitations of *skopos* which in its extreme form can resemble “the notorious example of a conference interpreter who asks the audience to laugh because the speaker has just told a joke she had been unable to translate for her delegates” (Chiaro 21).

Approaching the period of *Perestroika*, Western TS theorists turned away from the notion of *fidelity*. The linguist and anthropologist William Frawley wrote in “Prolegomenon to a Theory of Translation” (1984) that, because translation is, in its essence, “the reduction of coded input into another code” (160), it is a “third code which arises out of the bilateral consideration of the matrix and target code” and then establishes itself as a new, valid code (168-169). As a result, because it is impossible to tell whether the ST is “the matrix or the target code” (172-173), “notions of good and bad (and fidelity)” must be abandoned altogether (173). Instead, a translation ought to be evaluated as a *moderate innovation* that “adheres closely to either the matrix code or the target code” (173-174) or a *radical innovation* that “occur[s] when the third code begins to ‘break away’ from both the matrix and target codes” by “disregard[ing] fidelity for the sake of saying something new and internally coherent” (174). The Romance critic Philip Lewis took this notion further by responding to Steiner’s concerns in “The Measure of Translation Effects” (1985), arguing that a good translation should be a double interpretation, faithful both to the language/message of the ST and to the message-orienting cast of its own

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<sup>669</sup> the *interlinear version* (word-for-word translation) (Snell-Hornby 52-53), the *grammar translation* (syntactically-correct, sentence level translation without context), the *documentary* or “scholarly” (source-oriented) translation, the *communicative* or “instrumental” (target-oriented) translation, and the *adaptive* or “modifying” translation (where the ST is “raw material”) (53)

language. . . . an adequate translation would be always already two interpretations, a double interpretation requiring, so to speak, a double writing” (268). However, because of the impossibility of such a “mutually exclusive” gesture, Lewis concludes that the “abnormal, odd-sounding constructions,” the violence, the abuses, done to the ST, must be preserved in the translation (279). Moreover, he sees danger in the notion of faithfulness because its impossibility suggests a risk of a “weak, servile translation” that causes one “to opt for what domesticates or familiarizes a message at the expense of whatever might upset or force or abuse language or thought, might seek after the unthought or unthinkable in the unsaid or unsayable” (270). Lewis favours the opposite: a “strong, forceful translation that values experimentation, tampers with usage [and] seeks to match the polyvalencies or plurivocities or expressive stresses of the original by producing its own” (270). In fact, Lewis is so confident in the value of the creative element of the translator’s task that he accepts that “the abusive work of the translation will be oriented by specific nubs in the original, by points or passages that are in some sense forced, that stand out as clusters of textual energy” (271). Lewis also responds to Toury’s notion of *extratextual norms* by tackling the possibility that the “indictive/corrective operation” of commentary “makes it all the more essential for the commentary to supplement [the text] strongly with its own performance, to enact its own abuses, to regenerate the textual energy lost in translation” (282-283). In the same year, in “Translation and the Trials of the Foreign,” Antoine Berman argued that “[t]ranslation is the ‘trial of the foreign’” that reveals the ST’s “most original kernel, its most deeply buried, most self-same, but equally the most ‘distant’ from itself” (284). Referring to Foucault’s differentiation between equivalent translations that “translations [that] hurl one language against another . . . to use the translated language to derail the translating language” (qtd. in Berman 285), Berman notes that “textual deformation” that

often occurs in “ethnocentric, annexationist translations and hypertextual translations (pastiche, imitation, adaptation, free rewriting)” (286) and identifies “twelve [deforming] tendencies”<sup>670</sup> of translation, concluding that the desire to “produce a ‘clear’ and ‘elegant’ text (even if the original does not possess these qualities) . . . assumes the Platonic figure of translating” (296-297) that remains inaccessible. As a result of the evolution of Western TS in the 1980s, the interpenetrations of the translation process ceased to be monogamous, and the pairs that have previously helped characterize the process (the author and translator, the translator and editor, the editor and censor, the censor and the State, and so on) have been supplanted and complicated by a cultural saturnalia involving the SL text (no longer merely an “original”) and the TL text (no longer merely a “translation”).

### **The Gospel According to Venuti**

In the twentieth century, Western TS saw a very free form of oscillation: roughly from the 1920s to the early 1970s, the field was dominated by the tenets of faithfulness, familiarity, and fluency (advocated by those wishing to transmit the *equivalent spirit* of a text) who received occasional rebuffs from proponents of purposeful distortion, strangeness, and clumsiness (advocated by those wishing to transmit the text’s *equivalent letter*). However, the *cultural turn* of TS in the 1980s (Bandia 54) radically changed the direction of critical debate because a third group emerged, believing in disruption in translation but rejecting equivalence and semantic invariance. A unified theory was necessary to bring together a new paradigm in translation norms and praxis and it was at this point that the translator and theorist Lawrence Venuti took up

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<sup>670</sup> *rationalization*—“pass[ing] from the concrete to the abstract” (288-289), *clarification*—a “movement from polysemy to monosemy” (289), *expansion*—becoming “longer than the original . . . without augment[ation]” (290), *ennoblement*—“poetization” and “rhetorization” (290)—and its opposite *popularization* (291), *qualitative impoverishment*—denuding a word of its “sonorous richness” (291), *destruction of rhythms*, *destruction of networks of signification* (292), *destruction of linguistic patternings* (293), *destruction of vernacular networks* (294), *destruction of idioms*, and *effacement of superimposition of images* (295)



the sceptre from his forebears with “The Translator’s Invisibility” (1986). Like Lewis, Venuti ties the idea of “resembl[ing], but nonetheless transform[ing], the original” to the hope “to describe—rather than prescribe—the practice of translation”; like Toury, he considers “the social context” (197) in which the translated text has been produced; like Frawley and Berman he rejects “facile notions of linguistic equivalence or sameness between original and translation” (181) as well as Nida’s “transcendental” text.<sup>671</sup> Venuti acknowledges Steiner’s assertion in *After Babel* that, “[i]n its natural form, the translation exceeds the original” (Steiner 277) and raises a great slew of practical issues: the interjection of a footnote that can naturalize an already-foreign element (Venuti 184), the clever use of dialect that can change “the political line” (205) of a passage (for instance by allying the oppressed with their oppressors), and the *visibility*<sup>672</sup> of the “translator’s hand” that can be achieved by means of an intertextual borrowing, such as an archaism from the King James Bible (197-198). At the heart of Venuti’s argument is the “pressing need for a demystification of the practice of translation” (181) that he addresses by interrogating the *invisibility of the translator* which informs “reader response to translations . . . [and] the criterion by which they are produced and evaluated” (179). The problem at hand is one of fluency:

On the one hand, readers usually respond to the translation of a foreign text . . . as if the text had been originally written in their language, as if it were not in fact a translation; on the other hand, a translation is judged acceptable . . . when it reads fluently, when the absence of any awkward phrasings, unidiomatic constructions

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<sup>671</sup> According to Venuti, “[t]he concept of the transcendental subject defines the author as the ultimate signified of the text and privileges the reader as the absolute arbiter of that signified; and . . . both the author and reader removed from the historical conjuncture in which the activity occurs” (“Invisibility” 188).

<sup>672</sup> In this case, *visibility* must be stressed because statements such as “[t]ranslated texts are polysemic owing to their intertextual nature” (Sherry, “Rewriting” 12) take for granted the “miraculous” powers of the intertext which performs its function only if the allusions and borrowings in play actually *stand out* from the text at large. However, the presence and function of intertexts also problematizes Venuti’s notion of “informed readership.”

or confused meanings gives the appearance that the translation reflects the foreign author's personality or intention or the essential meaning of the original text. . . . both attitudes completely efface the translator's crucial intervention in the text: the more "successful" the translation, the more invisible the translator, and the more visible the author or meaning of the original text (179)

The translator must possess a visibility, an "opacity" (190), not due "to the absence of meaning, but [due] to the release of multiple meanings specific to English . . . [that] Jean-Jacques Lecercle describes . . . as the 'remainder'"<sup>673</sup> that impedes the transparent use of language. The translator must not disappear from the textual, aesthetic, and socioeconomic "fronts" (181), and the "transcendental subject" of the author must not become underwritten by the "capitalist mode of production" that ordinarily gives rise to a vicious circle: the "consumability and individualism"<sup>674</sup> of a fluent text gains favour in the marketplace and allows it to reach the level of a canonized "bestseller," which, in turn, "motivates the translation of similar kinds of foreign texts" that leads to a demand for even greater fluency. and so forth (188). To counteract fluency, Venuti offers a new term, *resistancy*, and concludes that "[t]he translation must . . . 'sound foreign' to the reader but [also] ha[ve] an opaque quality that prevents it from seeming a transparent window on the author or the original text" (190); he also defines *decentering* as the result of being "unable to identify with either the subject of the enunciation . . . or the subject of the enounced" (193) as a result of contradictions that cause the text to "emerge[ ] as the uneasy tension of heterogeneous elements" (196).

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<sup>673</sup> Koskinen draws a parallel between Lecercle's *remainder* and Derrida's notions of *trace* and *supplementarity* (*Ambivalence* 53).

<sup>674</sup> Venuti refers to Nicos Poulantzas definition of "bourgeois individualism," a structure in which subjects are declared to be free, equal, and autonomous, but, by the virtue of that same freedom, become beholden to systems of contractual labour, private property, competition, and exchange (188). In "Domestication," Venuti also argues that "[f]luency produces an individualistic illusion, in which the text is assumed to originate fundamentally with the author, to be authorial self-expression, free of cultural and social determinations" (213).

Venuti worked to finesse the definition of the dichotomy over the next two decades. In “Genealogies of Translation Theory: Schleiermacher” (1991), he returns to the German philosopher and defines the concepts of *domestication* and *foreignization*, arguing strongly in favour of the latter. Venuti rejects Lefevere’s approval of dynamic equivalence (“an egregious euphemism for the domesticating translation method and the cultural imperialism it conceals” [150]) and instead follows Berman (by way of Emmanuel Levinas) by arguing that “[t]he ethical translation manifests an *autre, étrangère nouveauté*, but only within the discursive formation in the target-language culture” (127-128). Venuti cautions his readers that “discursive peculiarities designed to imitate a foreign text” (a disingenuous “blackface”) make all translations inherently ethnocentric (130).<sup>675</sup> It becomes necessary to “take sides in cultural political divisions to redirect . . . [and] develop foreignizing discourses that oppose the discourses of domestication in the target language” (147). It becomes possible to make “[f]oreignizing translation . . . serve an ideology of autonomy in a geocultural politics by seeking to redress the grossly unequal cultural exchanges between . . . hegemonic nations” (148). In “Translation as Cultural Politics: Regimes of Domestication in English” (1993), Venuti explains the dangers of domestication in even greater detail by inviting us to “attend[ ] to the material effects of . . . the power of translation to (re)constitute and cheapen foreign texts, to trivialize and exclude foreign cultures, and thus potentially to figure in racial discrimination and ethnic violence, international political confrontations, terrorism, [and] war” (208). Venuti demonstrates that domestication in English-language translations has been a common strategy since at least the seventeenth century (210-211), becoming “firmly entrenched as a canon” by the nineteenth (212). The established practice

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<sup>675</sup> In “Domestication,” Venuti argues that “[t]he ethnocentric violence performed by domesticating translation rested on a double fidelity, to the source-language text as well as to the target-language culture . . . clearly impossible and knowingly duplicitous, accompanied by the rationale that a gain in domestic intelligibility and cultural force outweighed the loss suffered by the foreign text and culture” (212).

“advocated a fluent strategy . . . [in which] the absence of any syntactical or lexical peculiarities produces the illusionistic effect of transparency, [and] the appearance that the translation reflects the foreign writer’s intention” (212). Venuti also returns to Nida, arguing that the linguist’s “advocacy of domesticating translation is explicitly grounded on a transcendental concept of humanity as an essence that remains unchanged over time and space” and that Nida’s concept of dynamic equivalence “links the translator to the missionary” (216). Because “fluency entail[s] a linguistic homogenization” (213), Venuti also rejects the notion of universality: “foreignization . . . assumes a concept of human subjectivity . . . very different from the humanist assumptions underlying domestication” (217). Echoing Steiner’s concerns from two decades earlier, Venuti discusses the “violence of translation” and defines it as “an imperialist appropriation of foreign cultures for domestic agendas, cultural, economic, [and] political” (209); he revisits Lewis by recommending “abusive fidelity” as a strategy of resistancy (217). Ultimately, Venuti concludes that “domestication . . . [is] simply inaccurate translation[ ]. Canons of accuracy and fidelity are always locally defined, specific to different cultural formations at different historical moments,” resulting in either insufficient domestication, or domestication that requires an omission of part of the original text (211) which, in its worst form, leads to censorship as a result of assuming that one’s values are universal (214). In *The Scandals of Translation* (1998), Venuti problematizes common translation models by arguing that all translation is “fundamentally ethnocentric,” never “communication between equals” because its function is assimilation, “the inscription of a foreign text with domestic intelligibilities and interests”; as a result, he concludes that “[g]ood translation is demystifying: it manifests in its own language the foreignness of the foreign texts” (11). Venuti also returns to the politics of Schleiermacher (who desires for translation to bolster the culture and nation and foster national

exceptionalism) and advocates a *minoritizing* translation that “is ‘never to acquire the majority,’ never to erect a new standard or to establish a new canon, but rather to promote cultural innovation as well as the understanding of cultural difference” (11). *Minoritizing* translation also recuperates the “remainder” by “cultivating a heterogeneous discourse . . . [and] opening up the standard dialect and literary canons to what is foreign to themselves, to the substandard and marginal” without “regionalizing” or “ghettoizing” the foreign text by limiting it to a small community of linguistic users (11) (a good example of this is Quebec during the 1960s and 1970s, where canonical European works were translated and performed in *joual*, the working class dialect that “create[d] a national Quebecois theater” [11] and “deterritorialized” [123] Canada’s major/minor language schema in the process).

In “Genealogies of Translation Theory: Jerome” (2010), Venuti identifies the values that underwrite the persistence of domestication by going back to the works of the first-century priest and translator St. Jerome and categorizing the prevalent models into two categories:

In the *instrumental model* translation conveys an *unchanging essence* inherent in or produced by the source text, so that even if assimilated to the receiving language and culture that essence is transmitted intact. . . . In the *hermeneutic model*, translation conveys one interpretation among other varying possibilities, each of which transforms the source text so as to reflect the receiving language and culture at a particular stage of development, in a specific social situation at a specific social moment. (6; emphasis added)

Venuti argues that the instrumental model remains dominant, because *sense-for-sense* translation (“correspondence with a semantic invariant”) and *word-for-word* translation (“lexical and syntactic correspondence regardless of structural differences between languages”) are both

expressions of the instrumental model, assuming “essential” meaning in the source text (9).

Venuti totally rejects the instrumental model as used by Jerome (26) and Nida (23), as well as Louis Kelly’s notion that the two may be compatible (6), asserting that, despite its subordinate position, the hermeneutic model not only offers “partial and contingent” equivalence (6), but also is “more comprehensive . . . [and] ethical” because it “display[s] the interpretive force of the translator’s verbal choices, . . . [and] avoids the dubious mystification that results . . . from the instrumentalism assumed by any theory that imagines translation as the unmediated reproduction or transfer of an invariant” (24).

Returning to Toury, Venuti suggests the usefulness of Toury’s norms by explaining that interpretive choices can be glimpsed “in a theory through a conceptual category or analytical tool and in practice through a discursive strategy or peritextual device (for example, a preface or textual annotations)” (24), themselves “shaped by publishing practices in different periods . . . and informed by commentary in different institutional sites” (22). Venuti discusses two types of *interpretants* applied by the translator that reveal “the selection of a foreign text and the verbal choices made to render it, [important] even if . . . [they] may never reach the translator’s consciousness” (7):

*Formal interpretants* include a concept of equivalence, such as a semantic correspondence based on dictionary definitions, or a concept of style, a distinctive lexicon and syntax related to a genre or discourse. . . . *Thematic interpretants* are codes: specific values, beliefs, and representations; a discourse in the sense of a relatively coherent body of concepts, problems, and arguments; or a particular interpretation of the source text that has been articulated independently in commentary. (23)

In turn, the application of interpretants involves a destructive decontextualization followed by a “recontextualiz[ation of] the source text, replacing intertextual relations in the source language and culture with . . . relations to the translating language and culture” (23). Responding in “Translation, Intertextuality, Interpretation” (2009) to the ideas raised previously by theorists such as Basil Hatim,<sup>676</sup> Venuti expands the significance of reception, categorizing intertextual relations as “(1) those between the foreign text and other texts . . . (2) those between the foreign text and the translation . . . and (3) those between the translation and other texts,” which reveals an economy of “manifold losses and gains . . . which the foreign text undergoes during the translation process” (158) (and more gains than losses, since the “textual effects” of a translation “exceed a lexicographic equivalence” [162]). In case intertextuality is not preserved in a translated text, the translator must resort to “[peri]textual devices, such as an introductory essay or annotations”; however, while these devices may clarify a cultural significance, they also restrict the readership and reduce the impact they have on the individual reader (195). To recognize the intertext inscribed in the translation, the Venutian reader must not only have “read widely in that language,” but he (in line with Coetzee’s warnings) must also be trained to “avoid any narrow focus on meaning” (171) and to read translations “relatively autonomous[ly] from the foreign text” (158).<sup>677</sup> Finally, in “Ekphrasis, Translation, Critique” (2010), Venuti broadens

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<sup>676</sup> In “Intertextual Intrusions” (1997), Hatim argues that intertextuality has been defined too loosely and returns to Kristeva and Bakhtin’s notions, in the former case that of the *otherness* and *our-own-ness* within speech (3), as well as *double voicing* and *reaccentuation* (37). Hatim then defines intertextual relations as *horizontal* (in relation to other texts) and *vertical* (in relation to textual conventions) (30), and concludes that “text ‘absence’ could well be seen as . . . transparently intended by a text producer” (34). However, Hatim unproductively conflates the notions of contextual cultural realia with the concepts of reference, allusion, and intertextuality in his concept of “socio-textual practices” (41). (Are not all textual practices also inherently social practices?)

<sup>677</sup> In the case of censorship of a translation, this mode is in effect by default. As Coetzee points out, “[t]he censor may cut out what he wishes, but every text has a context: the absence of the censored stays behind not only as a scar on the context but as a mark of the censor’s wish, readily picked out by the eye obsessed with seeing what it wants to see” (130). However, the compounded problem in the Soviet case, as Goriaeva explains is that, “in a country where knowledge of a foreign tongue was considered not only unnecessary but also not always encouraged, few were able to read works by foreign authors in the original (. . . they were practically unavailable), in order to then detect the discrepancy in the translation” («в стране, где знание иностранного языка считалось не только не обязательным, но и не всегда поощряемым, мало кто был способен читать произведения зарубежных авторов в подлиннике (. . . они были практически недоступны), чтобы затем обнаружить несоответствие перевода») (364).

his definition of the inscription of meaning in interpretation by defining *ekphrasis* (the description of a visual medium in a textual/verbal medium) as a form of translation. Using the “decontextualiz[ation of] the visual image” and its subsequent recontextualization and reception as a metaphor, he observes the processes of translation on a macroscopic level (138), concluding with an affirmation of the usefulness of Lewis’s notion of “abusive fidelity” in relation to deriving “the chain of signifiers, . . . syntactic processes . . . discursive structures . . . [and] language mechanisms” that influence “thought and reality formation” (146). Above all, Venuti emphasizes the need “to avoid privileging either the source materials or the second-order creation” which may “turn the critic’s work into an act of self-criticism” (149). While it becomes essential for translators (and their critics) to enter into dynamic contact<sup>678</sup> with the Other, such intercourse must be not only surgically meticulous but also restorative (*Invisibility* 169).

## The Second Coming

Over the past two decades and a half, Venuti has become a “household name” in TS circles. However, despite even the *postmodern turn* in TS the 1990s (Bandia 54), he had a number of staunch detractors. In his *Textbook of Translation* (188), *More Paragraphs on Translation* (1988), and *About Translation* (1991), Peter Newmark expressed doubts about Venuti’s new movement. He follows Nida by distinguishing texts into stable types (*narrative, description, discussion, and dialogue*) and proceeds to “characterize the readership” of the ST and TT as if either text were a stable construct (*Textbook* 13). While Newmark admits that “idiolectal and cultural interference often enriches the translation” (*About Translation* 78), he struggles with the notion of *translationese* (language that “sounds” translated) and wishes to distinguish it from a hypothetical category of *interlanguage* that fuses one’s “own and the

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<sup>678</sup> Unlike Steiner, Venuti disdains the word *violence* “because nationalist thinking tends to be premised on a metaphysical concept of identity as a homogeneous essence, usually given a biological grounding in an ethnicity or race and seen as manifested in a particular language and culture (“Identities” 177).



foreign language” (78). However, Newmark never explains how this can be accomplished and the most he can muster is the suggestion to go as far as possible into the text using literalism, until literalism fails.<sup>679</sup> Newmark is forced to retreat to earlier stages of TS, even to the extent of rejecting terms such as *perestroika* and *glasnost*’ in favour of “restructuring” and “transparency” (79-80). Nida’s “classical definition of translation,” he concludes, “could not be bettered” (34). In 1992, translation scholar Anthony Pym offered the beginning of an opposition more directly aimed at Venuti by arguing in *Translation and Text Transfer* against the possibility that the translator could ever be visible: “[i]n suppressing the I-here-now of its first and second persons, the translational operator attains a neutrality manifestly devoid of concrete correlative” (58); thus, “the discursive person who says ‘I am translating’ cannot be translating at the moment of utterance” (54) and “the proper situation for translators is . . . to be invisible; unlike children, they should be heard but not seen . . . [and] purely written translation requires the same suppression of first-person and second-person positions” (58). In “Schleiermacher and the Problem of *Blendlinge*” (1995), Pym disputes the binarism of the scholar’s translation methods (1) and explains that Schleiermacher’s rhetorical strategy consisted of proposing a German Romantic method of literalism specifically to counteract the naturalizing method of the *belles infidèles* of French Neoclassicism (2, 13) and that, despite his metaphorical constructs, Schleiermacher does not suggest any practical translation methods, thereby remaining open to interpretation (4).<sup>680</sup> As a result (and here Pym in effect attempts to recuperate Newmark), translators “risk going too far, betraying themselves and their language” when pursuing the “foolish” and “naive” translationese (5-6). What more, Pym treats with suspicion André

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<sup>679</sup> Newmark does not define how exactly one would recognize this point.

<sup>680</sup> This is similar to the problem of Benjamin’s “Task of the Translator.”

Lefevere's translation of Schleiermacher:<sup>681</sup> because Lefevere uses "negative metaphors" and he translates Schleiermacher's concept of *Blendlinge* as "bastards"<sup>682</sup> rather than "children of mixed blood" (7, 9) Pym (rather disingenuously) argues that "Venuti unthinkingly reproduces Schleiermacher's exclusion of intercultural communities" (19). Like the conclusions he draws from etymology and alleged mistranslation,<sup>683</sup> Pym fashions from Schleiermacher a villain by committing an association fallacy in the observation that "Hitler prohibited 'domesticating' translation, and did so in rather Schleiermacherian terms, not just to make German a technological *Weltsprache* but also to develop Nazi cultural refinement" (18). Pym reaches a plateau<sup>684</sup> (that he will later share with other *ad hominem* critics of Venuti) in his 1996 review of *The Translator's Invisibility*, where Pym states that *as a person* "Venuti is visible" and that "he is anything but the invisible translator he gets such good mileage from" (165). At his most juvenile, Pym offers as evidence the fact that "Venuti has his name on the copyright to his works. Visibility again"; as an experiment, Pym suggests, "Let's all do plagiarizing translations of him in the year 2000, just to see if we get prosecuted" (170). When he becomes a little more serious, Pym declares that he "[w]as quietly scandalized to find nothing loudly scandalous in the . . . discourse" of Venuti's translation of I. U. Tarchetti's *Passion* (172), admits that "as an Australian I once rendered half a Spanish novel into Australian English (full of 'mates' and 'chooks') but abandoned the project because no one took it seriously" (174), accuses Venuti of cherry-picking his translators and theorists (171-172), and concludes that Venuti's Thomas Mann

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<sup>681</sup> In effect, two English translations of Schleiermacher have been available: Lefevere's translation in *Translating Literature: The German Tradition from Luther to Rosenzweig* (1977) and Susan Bernofsky's translation in Venuti's *The Translation Studies Reader* (2004).

<sup>682</sup> Bernofsky gives it as "mongrels" (53).

<sup>683</sup> It should be added that Pym himself produces unnecessarily extended metaphors (such as "the marriage of mother tongue and fatherland" [10] or the translator-father [12]) and plays with etymology (10-11) to the extent of losing track of his self-appointed task.

<sup>684</sup> Pym's later articles, such as "On History in Formal Conceptualizations of Translation" (2012) generally repeat the same objections.

affair (1995-1996) in the *Times Literary Supplement* points to the fact that Venuti wants nothing more than for “the academics to realize that Lowe-Porter [the critiqued translator] was a living person who might have had legitimate reasons – work conditions, ideologies, and readership – for translating the way she did (173-174). Ironically, this indictment summarized rather well Venuti’s actual goals of the sociocultural function of translation.

In his *Literary Translation in Russia: A Cultural History* (1997), Maurice Friedberg offers a much more serious and thorough response to literalist tendencies in TS by applying them to his own field: First, in the U.S.S.R. “Soviet theoreticians and practitioners of translations were generally unwilling to concede even a limited usefulness to literalist renditions” (89). However, in any national context “few literary translations can fully sustain the illusion that one is reading the original text” (69) because of names, customs, places that on their own create an intrusion. Second, and more importantly (here Friedberg could be responding equally to Briusov, Shklovskii, Nabokov, and Venuti), “literalism is ‘elitist’ . . . [because i]t requires a degree of literary sophistication from both translator and reader (as free renderings do not), to say nothing of solid command of both the . . . [SL] and the . . . [TL] on the part of the translator” (79). Finally, Friedberg calls upon the “the Czech scholar Josef Čermak, who viewed the choice as one between ‘undertranslated’ (*sous-interprétée*) versus ‘overtranslated’ (*sur-interprétée*) works” where an excess of translation in either direction *ceases to be a translation altogether*” (79-80). That same year, another significant critique of Venuti arrived in “Translating the Untranslatable” where Gillian Lane-Mercier argued that “not only is the translator’s presence irreducibly inscribed within the target text, but the process of translation can be seen as an ethical practice that engages, over and above the translator’s semantic responsibility, his or her aesthetic, ideological and political responsibility” (44). Tackling Venuti’s concept of foreignization, Lane-

Mercier describes its implicit dangers: the inadvertent exacerbation of the racism of the ST, as was the case in Louise Belloc's French translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (Lane-Mercier 49); the inadvertent assimilation of a resistant use of a dominant language into a dominant literature, as was (eventually) the case with *joual* (50); the reinforcement of ethnocentrism if the means of foreignization depend on the slang forms of a dominant culture, as was the case in "the use of Parisian slang to translate the *lunfardo* of Buenos Aires" (51); and, finally, the risk of "unauthenticity" (52) and "conservatism and/or radicalism" (53). Lane-Mercier turns to Berman next (although this also requires for her to refute Berman's "elitist" conception of "the inherent untranslatability of literary sociolects"), insisting that only by returning to a practice centred on the ST can Western ethnocentrism be neutralized (51). The ultimate problem, Lane-Mercier argues, is that "the implicit revalidation of [binary, axiological] concepts supposedly de-essentialized by postmodern philosophy . . . contradict[s] the very epistemological foundations of postmodernism" (56). Thus, the translator's invisibility is "simply occulted visibility," domestication is "hidden foreignness" (6), and "equivalence, fidelity, authenticity" must be rejected categorically, "except in certain cases" (56). What are these cases? She never tells.

In the same year, Douglas Robinson offered the most intelligible and pertinent critique of Venuti in *What is Translation?* Turning to Lewis, Robinson begins his argument with the assertion that "abusive translation . . . respects the usages" of neither the ST nor of the TT" (133). Like Gasparov (Azov 8), Robinson argues that abusive translation as a strategy is difficult to control because all translation is in some form abusive (135), and discussion of the concept is complicated further when the term *abuse* is abstracted as a metaphor (167). Venuti, Robinson claims, justifies foreignization "on leftist, materialist grounds," something that even the "left-leaning Benjamin" would not do with his mystical framing of concepts (82). Moreover, Venuti's

reliance on Berman is problematic because of the stilted translation of Berman's essay into English so that foreignization now sounds like "the language of parents lecturing, teachers teaching, ministers preaching . . . the language of authorities imposing an alien set of behavioral norms on a subordinate group" (94). Robinson argues that, from a practical standpoint, he prefers "opaque literalism" to "timid domestication or timid foreignization" that does not strive to achieve its effect full-force (96). Radical literalism creates an unreadable text akin to *Finnegans Wake* (which, Robinson admits, also has a specific use and target audience), but "[d]isturbing domestication of all sorts, from archaized and modernized to overly propagandistic renditions, can be read, enjoyed, and raged at by everybody; . . . remain[ing] the most effective way to unsettle the complacent reader" (96). Robinson gives an example of "radical domestication" using Luther's "Open Letter on Translating"<sup>685</sup> where he humorously allows the pontificating theologian to prefer "Hey, horny Daniel" or even "Dan my man" to "Daniel, you man of desires" (96). (Robinson does not account for the fact that his examples smack of 1960s or 1970s American youth slang that may not have the intended effect on all groups of readers.) Returning to Pym's *ad hominem*, Robinson turns to Venuti, who

as both a speaker and a writer . . . is remarkably fluent, and unconflictedly devoted to fluency. In his introduction to *Rethinking Translation*, for example, he attacked the American Literary Translators Association for insisting that presenters at the annual conference not read their papers, calling it a deprofessionalization of translation studies. (101)

The ensuing examples are strange but not unfamiliar: "when he reads a paper it sounds extremely fluent. His whole being resonates with authority" (102); "Venuti . . . has been waging this battle

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<sup>685</sup> „Sendbrief vom Dolmetschen“

against fluency for over a decade . . . [but] never allows himself the slightest rhetorical heat, the slightest public sign that he is angry or frustrated or fed up” (103).<sup>686</sup> When Robinson returns to serious discussion, he more productively challenges Venuti’s notion of fluency by wondering whether it is only a specific kind of ideal, elitist (109) reader who can detect the unidiomatic or awkward usage that would mark a non-fluent text (107). (Here we hear Briusov’s ghostly “But that is not *my* fault!”) Robinson questions the absence of “radical in-your-face foreignizing” or “aggressively minoritarian foreignizing” in Venuti’s work (106), concluding that foreignization must be replaced with something akin to *unsettling* or *ostranenie* and must be performed full-force. In addition, Robinson points out that domestication and foreignization “are the translator’s heuristic,” useful for organizing the *creation*, but not the *reception* of a translation because (just like with Aesopian tongue) the encoding of either one is not guaranteed to be received (108).<sup>687</sup> Unfortunately for the case of the U.S.S.R., Soviet readers *do* appear to be “worse” than Western readers in Robinson’s terms, precisely because of their disconnection for just about everything, and thus my investigation of the philosophies and ideologies underlying the Soviet preference for dynamic equivalence and opposition to literalism and awkwardness in translation in effect responds to Robinson’s main complaint that Venuti “never interrogates the hegemonic construction of fluency” (109).

Between 1999 and 2008, most concerns and complaints about Venuti’s work fell into the categories established in the previous decade. However, theorists such as Basil Hatim, Kaisa Koskinen, Maria Tymoczko, Tarek Shamma, Snell-Hornby, and Jeremy Munday showed an

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<sup>686</sup> Like in Pym’s case, it is sometimes hard to tell when Robinson expects himself to be taken seriously. I have heard Venuti speak at the University of Calgary in 2014, but I would be remiss if I resorted to using a scholar’s timbre of voice, mannerisms, or composure when commenting on his theories.

<sup>687</sup> However, this notion too can be extended *ad infinitum* to eventually suggest that there are as many “readings” of a text as there are readers. What exacerbates the special case of culturally land-locked Soviet readers is the fact that, without contact with the West, ability to refer to the ST, knowledge of foreign languages, and in the presence of top-down cultural controls, the strange or foreign had the tendency to “jump out” more readily.

admirable tendency to prefer syncretic amendments to past binary categories. In 2011, a conference was held in Joensuu, Finland, which (albeit titled *Domestication and Foreignization in Translation Studies* and ostensibly dedicated to the problem of translating to and from the Russian language) included many papers that directly or indirectly responded to Venuti's writing and the legacy of his terminology (see Table 5). Mikhail Gasparov missed the conference by a mere six years. Still, I would like to think that he and Valerii Briusov could have, as the Russians say, shed a *miserly manly tear* at the sight of all these international TS experts working together towards a new understanding of a syncretism of terms and concepts (relating to their own native tongue) that were previously deemed ideologically undesirable and decisively irreconcilable: Per Ambrosiani used the multitude of translations of *Alice in Wonderland* to identify three distinct types of domestication (95) and four distinct types of foreignization (96), arguing that the terms and their Russian counterparts are probably best “not seen as an equipollent<sup>688</sup> dichotomy but rather as a privative opposition between *marked* ‘foreignization’ and *unmarked* ‘domestication’” (96-97). Koskinen critiqued the fact that “Venuti does not provide any ready-made tool kit for foreignizing strategies” (15) and, citing a recent Finnish M.A. thesis by Jenni Laaksonen on applying “Venutian strategies into practice” (3), reached the conclusion that “foreignizing can only be applied to those elements that are considered foreign in the target culture” (15), reasoning that “it might be more accurate to talk about affinity versus estrangement, familiarity versus strangeness, or naturalness versus unnaturalness, or, in very simple terms, liking versus not liking, that is, affection versus aversion” (17). Muikku-Werner and Esa Penttilä established a *continuum* between foreignizing and domesticating strategies (126) and argued that there is a possible middle ground, as in the case of *shifted direct translation*, “where the translation is more or less word-for-word but where some of the SL-specific cultural elements are replaced by elements that are more familiar in TL culture” (127). Hannu Kemppanen discussed the

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<sup>688</sup> Possessed of equal power

**Table 5** Schools of Western Translation and Representation of Text

Cause	transmission of the letter (metaphrase)		transmission of the equivalent spirit (paraphrase)
Effect	move the reader towards the writer (source-oriented)		move the writer towards the reader (target-oriented)
Translation Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>instrumental model</i></li> <li>• <i>word-for-word</i></li> <li>• <i>formal interpretants</i></li> <li>• <i>formal equivalence</i></li> <li>• <i>equivalence in difference</i> (synonymy)</li> <li>• <i>moderate innovation</i> (closeness)</li> <li>• <i>sous-interprétée</i> (undertranslated)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>hermeneutic model</i></li> <li>• disregard of semantic invariants</li> <li>• <i>thematic interpretants</i></li> <li>• disregard of equivalence</li> <li>• <i>polysystem theory</i></li> <li>• <i>defamiliarization</i></li> <li>• <i>hermeneutic motion</i></li> <li>• <i>descriptive TS</i> (norms)</li> <li>• <i>radical innovation</i></li> <li>• <i>sous-interprétée</i> (undertranslated)</li> <li>• <i>abusiveness</i></li> <li>• <i>visibility</i></li> <li>• <i>resistancy</i></li> <li>• <i>foreignization</i></li> <li>• <i>minoritization</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>instrumental model</i></li> <li>• <i>sense-for-sense</i></li> <li>• <i>formal interpretants</i></li> <li>• <i>reine Sprache</i> (pure language)</li> <li>• <i>dynamic / functional equivalence</i></li> <li>• <i>familiarity</i></li> <li>• <i>adequacy</i> (semantic and pragmatic equivalence)</li> <li>• <i>moderate innovation</i> (freedom)</li> <li>• <i>sur-interprétée</i> (overtranslated)</li> <li>• <i>fidelity</i></li> <li>• <i>invisibility</i></li> <li>• <i>fluency</i></li> <li>• <i>domestication</i></li> <li>• <i>nationalization</i></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goethe</li> <li>• Schleiermacher</li> <li>• Jakobson</li> <li>• Nabokov</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benjamin</li> <li>• Itamar-Zohar</li> <li>• Steiner</li> <li>• Toury</li> <li>• Frawley</li> <li>• Lewis</li> <li>• Berman</li> <li>• Venuti</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St. Jerome</li> <li>• Nida</li> <li>• Arndt</li> <li>• Wilson</li> <li>• House</li> <li>• Vermeer</li> <li>• Lefevere</li> <li>• Newmark</li> <li>• Pym</li> <li>• Friedberg</li> </ul>
Major Proponents			<b>The Syncretists</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lane-Mercier</li> <li>• Robinson</li> <li>• Hatim</li> <li>• Koskinen</li> <li>• Tymoczko</li> <li>• Shamma</li> <li>• Snell-Hornby</li> <li>• Munday</li> <li>• Ambrosiani</li> <li>• Muikku-Werner</li> <li>• Penttilä</li> <li>• Kemppanen</li> </ul>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bellos</li> </ul>



opposition to Venuti's ideas from Tymoczko and Robinson, demonstrating that the concepts of domestication and foreignization have not been adopted into Russian TS despite being essentially suited and applicable for describing the *bukval'nyi-vol'nyi* dichotomy (Azov 8, 95; Voinich, "Seredina" 42). Kemppanen pointed out that "Venuti's views on translation can be seen as a continuation of the scholarly discussion of free vs. literal translation" (50), but explained that the post-Soviet notion of "the golden mean" described variously by different critics (59) and the overriding ideal of Platonic translation precludes practical syncretism (59-60) and continues to pathologize the literal translation strategy as "abnormal" (58).

### **The Task of the Critic of the Translator**

The very complex and fruitful evolution of Western TS has given the translation critic innumerable tools and strategies. However, which should he choose? How should he apply his selection? How should he read a translation? To answer these practical questions, I compiled a list of "ten commandments" that I have gathered over the course of my critical reading:

1. *"Don't read just for meaning, but for language too; appreciate the formal features of the translation"* (Venuti, *Everything* 108). Be attentive to "the productive process of transformation" in the surprising, jarring, or even upsetting passages where "language noticeably skips a beat," and the translator appears to us, "as a social agent in conflict," and derive the "interpretive choice [that] enabl[es] us to see the cultural determinations" that shape the text ("Invisibility" 202).
2. *"Don't expect translations to be written only in the current standard dialect; be open to linguistic variations"* (*Everything* 109).
3. *"Don't overlook connotations and cultural references; read them as another, pertinent layer of significance"* (110).
4. *"Don't skip an introductory essay written by a translator; read it first, as a statement of the interpretation that guides the translation and contributes to what is unique about it"* (112).

5. “Don’t take one translation as representative of an entire foreign literature; compare it to translations of other works from the same language” (112). Perform “a detailed comparison between the original text and the translation . . . or between two translations of the same original” (“Invisibility” 197); however, “focus not on the ideal (and conventionally constructed) correlation between the source and target text but on translators’ strategies, cultural contexts, and the actual reception process in diachronic and synchronic perspective” (Semenenko 233).
6. Do be careful when positioning yourself as an “arbiter over . . . exegetical traditions” (“Jerome” 19).
7. Do perform a “sensitive” reading of the ST (“Invisibility” 206). Produce “an account of phenomena occurring in translations as *translational* features rather than mere blunders; that is, an account using ‘positive’ rather than ‘negative’ terms” (Toury, *Descriptive TS* 206).
8. Do pay close attention “to those noticeable discrepancies that have hitherto been regarded simply as defects: to logical flaws in the choices of words” (Venuti, “Invisibility” 198), to *translationese* or the use of “unidiomatic language in a translation” (“Schleiermacher” 150), to substitution that domesticates (Muikku-Werner and Penttilä 120), to calques that foreignize (127, 133), to “conspicuous differences” (Venuti, “Domestication” 218), to omissions, and to the *shifts* and *strategies*<sup>689</sup> that are in play.
9. Do perform a “comparative analysis of ideologized translation.”<sup>690</sup>
10. Do differentiate “binary” errors from “manipulative choices” (Malmkjær, “Censorship” 144); “it is always possible, in theory, that the translator was obeying some norm or principle, however eccentric, or had some reason, however peculiar, guiding their choice” (142).

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<sup>689</sup> *Shifts* are the specific interpretants (Venuti “Intertextuality” 141) within the text; they stand in contrast to the *strategies*, the overall approach to the text (van Poucke 140).

<sup>690</sup> «сравнительный анализ идеологизированного перевода» (Goriaeva 364)

**Chapter 4**  
**If Not by Washing, Then By Rolling:**  
**Translational Choice in Vonnegut and Heller Texts**

All history was a palimpsest, scraped clean and reinscribed exactly as often as necessary. . . . But this was concrete evidence; it was a fragment of the abolished past, like a fossil bone which turns up in the wrong stratum and destroys a geological theory.

—George Orwell  
*Nineteen Eighty-Four*

Nothing in this book is true.

—Kurt Vonnegut  
*Cat's Cradle*

“Hellman!” Casker shrieked. Hellman was standing to one side, perspiration pouring down his face, reading his dictionary with a preoccupied frown. “Guess I bumbled the translation,” he said. “Do something!” Casker shouted. The liquid was trying to back him into a corner. “Nothing I can do,” Hellman said, reading on. “Ah, here’s the error. It doesn’t say ‘Everyone drinks Voozy.’ Wrong subject. ‘Voozy drinks everyone.’”

—Robert Sheckley  
“Untouched by Human Hands”

When the ideological invariance of Soviet TS is laid bare, it becomes possible to observe the rough outlines of a Soviet translator’s submission to or deviation from the *de jure* precepts of socialist realism. The historical long view also reveals the inevitability of translation becoming “an active production of a text which resembles, but nonetheless transforms, the original” (Venuti, “Invisibility” 181), exposing the translational choices and the successful and unsuccessful strategies of various agents of textual production (Malmkjær, “Error” 144), all the more important because neither Rait nor V/T include any explicatory accounts with their translations. When the TT ceases to be stringently mimetic and enters into the realm of play and negotiated verisimilitude with the ST, it becomes necessary to compare the two side by side one last time to demonstrate the limitations of both lexical and semantic equivalence.

**A Portrait of the Artist as an Old Woman**

The first test of a translator’s *modus operandi* at the word level reveals specifically how much and how often a translator’s word choice, phrases, and collocations that describe single, non-idiomatic concepts depart from normative semantic usage in specific translations. These

examples often fall into the categories that Kristen Malmkjær identifies in “Censorship or Error”: “Type 1: Inexplicability,” “Type 2: False friends” (150), “Type 3: Misleading graphemics/phonemics/morphemics” (151), “Type 4: Mis-calques” (152), “Type 5: Homonym selection” (153), and “Type 6: Grammar and syntax” (154). While it is difficult to say with certainty that such departures are always *errors*, it is possible to use them to determine a translator’s linguistic competence. In order to establish a baseline for normative semantics, I used the eleventh edition of Vladimir Müller’s popular English-Russian dictionary published since 1931. This edition, published in Moscow in 1965 is the closest available to the time period in which Rait had worked on her translations of Vonnegut. To counter the obvious objections to this choice, I did some background research on the dictionary and discovered that, as D. I. Ermolovich claims in “Say a Kind Word for Poor *Longman*,”<sup>691</sup> despite its popularity, the dictionary had not been thoroughly revised or updated since its very first version but is, nonetheless, being continuously added to by other authors and reprinted (most intensively after WWII and in the 1970s) until present day (54). According to Ermolovich, new editions are prepared by anonymous editors with “hastily pasted-together cosmetic additions, and often without any. These editions parasitically use the name of the famous lexicographer: they are designed for the purpose of earning money.”<sup>692</sup> Expecting to find many departures from such poor definitions on Rait’s part, I was surprised to discover that, for all its supposed archaism, the 1965 Müller offers reasonably logical definitions for almost all of the terms<sup>693</sup> while Rait’s selections (see Table 6) betray a consistent carelessness: she chooses words that belong to the

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<sup>691</sup> «О „Лонгмане” бедном замолвите слово» See also Ermolovich’s *Otkryvaia Mullera*.

<sup>692</sup> «сляпанными на скорую руку косметическими дополнениями, а часто и без таковых. Эти издания паразитируют на имени знаменитого лексикографа: они рассчитаны на то, чтобы заработать деньги» (54)

<sup>693</sup> In only a few cases Müller does not offer an exact definition; nonetheless, these meanings can still be gleaned from the dictionary by examining the definitions of separate word parts; these instances are highlighted in grey in the table.

**Table 6** Choice of Single Non-Idiomatic Concepts

Novel	ST	TT	Müller (1965)
CC	anecdotes (9)	messages	anecdote
		сообщения (182)	анекдот (38)
	barracuda (56, 150)	shark	—
		акул (227, 315)	
	marimba (156)	tambourine	a type of xylophone
		бубен (320)	разновидность ксилофона (467)
	uninteresting (161)	unconvincing	[not + interesting]
		неубедительным (325)	[«не-» (815) + «интересный» (401)]
	human (173)	humane	human
		гуманный (336)	человеческий (374)
	blinked (174)	winked	blink
		подмигнул (337)	мигать (86)
SF	famous (347)	called (177)	call
		закричал (177)	звать (112)
		notorious	famous
	profound (366)	пресловутой (27)	знаменитый (281)
		traitorous	deep
		предательскую (47)	глубокий (598)
	purple (395)	scarlet	purple colour
		алый (77)	пурпурный цвет (608)
	dartboard (438)	target for shooting	[dart + board]
		мишень для стрельбы (121)	[дротик (195) + доска (89)]
	bus boy (533)	driver	a person who clears away dirty dishes from tables at a restaurant
		шофёр (385)	убирающий, -ая грязную посуду со стола в ресторане (107)
	guardrail (543)	barrier gate	handrail
		шлагбаум (394)	перила (345)
	intern (549)	doctor	a student at a medical college
		врач (400)	студент медицинского колледжа (402)
BC	boost (574)	pass	advertisement
		пропуск (421)	рекламирование (93)
	high school (608)	college	secondary school
		колледж (450)	средняя школа (364)
	shatterproof (657)	Plexiglas	[break + ~ proof]
		плексигласовое (495)	[разбить(ся) (692) + ~ устойчивый (600)]

Table 6 Choice of Single Non-Idiomatic Concepts			
Novel	ST	TT	Müller (1965)
BC	rubberbands (659)	rubber transmission	rubber band
		резиновая передача (497)	резинка (sense 2) (658)
	trough (676)	[elaborate] bed	trough
		ложе (513)	корыто (807)
	a tenth to a hundredth of (699)	ten . . . one hundred times [more than]	one tenth, one hundredth
		в десять . . . во сто раз (534)	десятая часть (776), сотая часть (374)
	toe (717)	finger	toe
		палец (550)	палец на ноге (792)

same broad semantic categories but have completely different meanings (*message* for *anecdote*), words that have the same semantic meaning but different functional shadings (*famous* for *notorious*), and homonyms (*humane* for *human*). Rait does not simply reject formal equivalence, because even on a figurative level (unless one is a sophisticated magical realist<sup>694</sup>) *toe* cannot become *finger* and *a hundredth* cannot become *a hundred times*. Neither does Rait pursue any *ostranenie* because she smoothes out these semantic mismatches by altering the logic of the TT on a sentence level (this is also apparent when such single concepts have even slight idiomatic shading<sup>695</sup>). The same principle also applies to more complex phrases and collocations, where Rait uses “train thief”<sup>696</sup> for “car thief” (CC 401e), “poems *by* her”<sup>697</sup> for “poems *about* her” (CCe 81; emphasis added), “printed in a single copy”<sup>698</sup> for “set in type” (BCe 537), and “a wooden stand for *climbing out* of the foxhole more easily”<sup>699</sup> for “a block of balsa wood which was supposed to be a foxhole *pillow*” (SFe 371; emphasis added).

<sup>694</sup> Malmkjær points out that “at a sufficiently abstract level, everything resembles everything else” (“Censorship” 142).

<sup>695</sup> In such cases, “Virgin Islands” (CCe 173) become “Virginia[n]” («вирджинского» [CCr 336]), “mountebank” (CCe 179)—“jester” («шут» [CCr 342]), “Father’s Day” (SFe 462)—“birthday” («день рождения» [SFr 147]), “steal” (BCe 515)—“get [something] somewhere” («взять где-то» [BCr 369]), and “defunct” (BCe 726)—“deceased” («Усопшей» [BCr 557]).

<sup>696</sup> «поездного вора» (CCr 83)

<sup>697</sup> «её стихи» (CCr 250)

<sup>698</sup> «отпечатал в одном экземпляре» (BCr 388)

<sup>699</sup> «деревянная подставка чтобы легче было вылезти из стрелковой ячейки» (SFr 53)

Because such modifications are transparent and do not in any way inhibit the reading process, they substantiate Rait's operation according to target-oriented *vol'nyi* (free) translation principles. However, Rait's masking of linguistic incompetence at the word level also necessitates logical changes at the sentence level, and the accumulation of these modifications results in a logical (but nonetheless transparent) wholesale rewriting of the ST. For instance, Vonnegut's Bokonon ironically mocks human frailty when he humbly comments on himself, saying "If I am ever put to death . . . expect a very *human* performance" (CCe 173; emphasis added). However, Rait's Bokonon shows a self-destructive streak when he, without a trace of irony, comments on his executioners, stating "If one day anyone straight away executes me on the hook . . . then this, so to say, will be a very *humane* method"<sup>700</sup> (emphasis added). In some cases, Rait's choices appear to be clearly erroneous, for instance in the strange pattern of transliterating proper nouns (Table 7). For instance, it may be possible to argue that there is a tenuous ironic shift in changing the name of a hanged murderer from *Minor* to *Maior*, or that the

Table 7 Transliteration of Proper Nouns		
Novel	ST	TT
CC	Bokononist (5)	Bokonist
		Боконист (180)
	Minor (23)	Maior
		Майор (195)
	Naomi (28)	Noemi
		Ноеми (200)
	Enders (42)	Ėndless
		Эндлесс (213)
SF	Montana Wildhack (361)	Montana Uaildbek
		Монтана Уайлдбек (42)
	Reagan (467) in "Reagan for President"	Rigan
BC	DRĀNO (663)	Голосуйте за Ригана (152)
		DRANO <sup>701</sup>
		ДРАНО (500)

<sup>700</sup> «„Если меня когда-нибудь сразу казнят на крюке . . . то это, можно сказать, будет очень *гуманный* способ”» (CCr 336). In the novel, the hook is anything but a humane method of execution.

<sup>701</sup> The product name is pronounced *drāin-oh* (not *drūh-no*) in order to pun on the word *drain* which the chemical compound is designed to unclog.

shift from *Enders* to *Ēndless* extends the description of the “insanity” of the “small and ancient Negro” elevator operator (CCe 41-42), but such mismatches are far and few between and it is much more difficult to explain frequent changes that appear to be simple reading errors on the part of the octogenarian translator with poor eyesight,<sup>702</sup> for instance when *Bokononist* turns into *Bokonist*, *Naomi* into *Noemi*, or *Wildhack* into *Wildback* (owing to the visual confusion of the lowercase letters *h* and *b*). Less erroneous inconsistencies occur when *Kilgore Trout* is transliterated, but *Bunny Hoover* is translated as “Rabbit Hoover,”<sup>703</sup> and only on one occasion can such an inconsistency be explained with certainty, when in *SF* Rait hypercorrects *Resi North* (SFe 456) to *Helga North* (SFr 140) when referring to the German actress that Howard J. Campbell, Jr. marries, to make *SF* consistent with Vonnegut’s *MN*. (In *MN*, Campbell marries Helga Noth, but, when he reunites with her later, it turns out that the woman is Helga’s younger sister Resi Noth—a major plot point. In “Two Conversations,” Vonnegut admits that he himself was so taken in by the conceit of the interchangeable sisters that he had made the error in *SF*, and let it stand [7].) In all other cases, the frequent typographical and logical inconsistencies also betray a poor editorial ethos (or an unwillingness to thoroughly edit the work of an acclaimed translator). Thus, 60 feet (CCe 150) become 70 (CCr 227), “two thousand short stories” (BCe 516) become “two hundred” (BCr 370), “a tenth to a hundredth of” (BCe 699) becomes “ten . . . one hundred times more than,”<sup>704</sup> “a building . . . [that] rose six stories” (CCe 27) first becomes a “sixteen-story building”<sup>705</sup> but then eventually shrinks back to six floors (CCr 211), while a “shotgun” (BCe 592, 630) becomes at times “pistols”<sup>706</sup> and at other times “machine guns.”<sup>707</sup>

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<sup>702</sup> On November 11, 1977, Vonnegut wrote to Donald Fiene about his visit of Rait in Leningrad: “I brought Rita a fancy dictating machine and a huge magnifying glass. I guess she really is in big trouble with her eyes” (*Letters* 354).

<sup>703</sup> «Кролик Гувер» (BCr 481)

<sup>704</sup> «в десять . . . во сто раз» (BCr 534)

<sup>705</sup> «шестнадцатизтажно[е] здани[е]» (CCr 199)

<sup>706</sup> «пистолетами» (BCr 436)

<sup>707</sup> «пулемёты» (BCr 470)



## As American as Apple Pie

The second test reveals the translator's approach to conveying idiomatic concepts and *realia* (culture-specific material objects). It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between Rait's misunderstanding of distinctly American objects and concepts and her desire to tone down Vonnegut's explicit language and this ambiguity sometimes works in her favour, as when "She had been a go-go girl" (*SFe* 469), transliterated onomatopoeically, becomes "She was the o-ho-ho kind,"<sup>708</sup> "Grand Slam" (*SFe* 470), the name of a British bomb confused with a sports or Bridge term and transliterated homophonically, becomes "large helmet,"<sup>709</sup> and "To describe blow-jobs artistically" (*SFe* 484) becomes "To artistically describe an explosion."<sup>710</sup> In cases where the meaning of the original concept in the ST is fairly obvious, Rait resorts to formal equivalence, for instance when the protagonist of *CC* dejectedly calls to the survivors of Ice-Nine which he and Mona are looking for: "Hello? Hello?" I called through the palace ruins" (*CCe* 177); in the TT the protagonist shouts at no one in particular: "– Allo! Allo! – shouted I into the ruins of the castle."<sup>711</sup> When she faces more complicated concepts, Rait creates a slew of neologisms that cause a sense of *ostranenie*: "bittersweet lies" (*CCe* 5) turns into "bitter-sweet falsehood,"<sup>712</sup> "tomcat husband" (*CCe* 161) into "a male cat for a husband,"<sup>713</sup> "shit-storm" (*CCe* 161) into "rain of shit,"<sup>714</sup> "THIS CAR IS A LEMON!" (*BCe* 718) into "THIS IS NOT A CAR, BUT A LEMON!,"<sup>715</sup> "chips . . . off the old block" (*CCe* 38) into "so to say, fragments of a massive boulder,"<sup>716</sup> "choked up" (*CCe* 52) into "choked from coughing,"<sup>717</sup> and "Sweethearts and

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<sup>708</sup> «Она была о-го-го какая» (*SFr* 126)

<sup>709</sup> «большой шлем» (*SFr* 154)

<sup>710</sup> «Художественно описывать взрыв» (*SFr* 170)

<sup>711</sup> «– Алло! Алло! – закричал я в развалины замка» (*CCr* 340).

<sup>712</sup> «кисло-сладкую ложь» (*CCr* 180)

<sup>713</sup> «кота в мужья» (*CCr* 224)

<sup>714</sup> «дождь из дерьма» (*CCr* 325)

<sup>715</sup> «ЭТО НЕ МАШИНА, А ЛИМОН!» (*BCr* 551)

<sup>716</sup> «так сказать, осколками мощной глыбы» (*CCr* 210)

<sup>717</sup> «задохнулся от кашля» (*CCr* 223)

wives” (CCe 87) into “wives and lovers.”<sup>718</sup> However, more often than otherwise, Rait shows a tendency for *vol'nyi* (free) translation and domestication in her attempts to locate dynamic equivalents,<sup>719</sup> for instance when she renames the restaurant called *Tally-Ho!* (BCe 573) (a term from foxhunting that denotes the sighting of an animal) to *Sic Him!*<sup>720</sup> or when she goes through a complex contortion to fit Vonnegut’s lewd doggerel about the age of consent with the Soviet educational system<sup>721</sup> and with the assumed Russian expletive that provides its punchline:

<i>Roses are red,</i>	Roses are a-blooming,
<i>And ready for plucking.</i>	Soon they’ll be ripped up,
<i>You’re sixteen,</i>	You are already sixteen,
<i>And ready for high school. (608)</i>	Soon you will be . . . sent off to college. (450) <sup>722</sup>

Rait’s preference for domestication by means of dynamic equivalence is most problematic in *BC*, a novel built around the idea of total objectification and possession of typically-American things, from its subject matter to its own textual construction. In the novel, the monstrous capitalist world stuck in a loop of advertising and commodification where human beings are reduced to mere automata (not only in the demented mind of Dwayne Hoover), serves as an excellent litmus test for translating Americana into the austerity of socialist thought. The

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<sup>718</sup> «Жёны и любовницы» (CCr 255) To add logic to the rewritten joke, Rait adds “May the two never meet!” («Пусть никогда не встречаются!») to Newt’s toast (CCr 255).

<sup>719</sup> S. I. Andreyev et al.’s quantitative analysis of stylistic devices in Rait’s translations reveals that this is a consistent strategy for figurative expressions: “only 22 of 54 metaphors . . . [preserved] their metaphoric meaning, and . . . 32 metaphors lost . . . [their] metaphoric sense in the process of . . . translation” (78).

<sup>720</sup> «Ату его!» (BCr 419) In this regard, Leighton’s assertion that “she also taught Russian readers of Breakfast of Champions that Holidays Inns are likely to have a restaurant named Tally-Ho that serves a Number Five Breakfast” (Leighton, *Two Worlds* 225) is patently wrong. What exactly does Rait “teach” her readers if anything remotely American is either domesticated or erased outright?

<sup>721</sup> In the ST, the poem refers to moving up from middle school to high school; because Soviet children graduated from school at age sixteen or seventeen, the poem in the TT refers to moving up to college. While it is possible to argue that this is a foreignizing strategy, the simpler explanation is that the word *kolledzh* fits better poetically than the multisyllabic *universitet*.

<sup>722</sup> «Розы расцветают, / Скоро их сорвут. / Тебе уже шестнадцать, / Скоро тебя. . . отдадут в колледж.»

trouble begins with the title which Vonnegut intertextually borrows from a commercial product and which metafictionally frames the novel by referring back to the book as a material object in a prefatory Twainian gesture:

The expression “Breakfast of Champions” is a registered trademark of General Mills, Inc., for use on a breakfast cereal product. The use of the identical expression as the title for this book is not intended to indicate an association with or sponsorship by General Mills, nor is it intended to disparage their fine products. (501)

For the sake of irony, the association is obviously essential and desirable. By signing the preface “Filboid Studge,” Vonnegut makes another intertextual gesture, this time to “Filboid Studge, the Story of a Mouse that Helped” by Saki,<sup>723</sup> a short satirical story about advertising a cereal no one wants to eat. Thus, Vonnegut deprecates his own writing<sup>724</sup> (Berryman 166) or any attempt to take it too seriously and contradicts his own disclaimer with an immediate mockery of commercial thought. This tripartite arrangement of the title, the stab at General Mills, and the nod to Saki, forms a rather elaborate *Ceci n’est pas une pipe*-type of flourish which does not quite cross the threshold of translation: Rait gives the title as *Breakfast for Champions* to better align with Russian grammar;<sup>725</sup> she conveys the sense of Vonnegut’s disclaimer as-is; finally, she takes the narrator at his word by flattening “Philboyd Studge” (BCe 503) to the single meaning of “Snobby Hack.”<sup>726</sup> Leighton remarks that “Ra[i]t’s work serves to show that translators must know everything even though they do not use everything” (*Two Worlds* 225),

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<sup>723</sup> The pseudonym of Hector Hugh Munro

<sup>724</sup> Later in the introduction, Vonnegut admits that “[m]y friend Knox Burger said one time that a certain cumbersome novel ‘. . . read as though it had been written by Philboyd Studge’” (BCe 503). Rait missed the self-reflexive reference when it appears in the preface a second time (BCr 358).

<sup>725</sup> «Завтрак для чемпионов» (rather than «Завтрак чемпионов»)

<sup>726</sup> «Снобби Пшют» (BCr 358) The latter archaic word denotes “vulgar person, fop, coxcomb” («пошляк, фат, хлыщ») (“pshiut” n. pag.).

and Borisenko objects that Rait's "contemporaries had not the slightest impression of American food service."<sup>727</sup> However, one wonders how much exactly Rait *did* know (and, if she did know something, why she would not share what she knew with her contemporaries who thirsted for information about the West). Much of Rait's handling of Americana is domestication that results from pure guesswork and a hard-headed refusal to admit unfamiliarity with Western realia in all three novels: "Fraternity" (CCe 182) and "sorority" (CCe 186) become "corporations,"<sup>728</sup> despite the fact that Müller defines the word as "student organisation"<sup>729</sup> (sense 2), effectively transforming Newt Hoenniker's apologetic explanation of the reason for the decline in his social status from *bad elite student* to *fired employee*:

<p>"P.S. I can't sign myself 'fraternally yours' because they won't let me be your brother on account of my grades. I was only a pledge, and now they are going to take even that away from me." (CCe 16)</p>	<p>"P.S. I can't sign 'with fraternal greetings,' because I cannot be called your confrere—I am not in that position: I have just been accepted as a candidate for membership in the corporation, and now even of this they have deprived me."<sup>730</sup></p>
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The golf term "on a par" (BCe 658) becomes "began to compete with,"<sup>731</sup> "[American] Football" (CCe 47) becomes "soccer,"<sup>732</sup> and "professional golfers" (BCe 667) "play on a team"<sup>733</sup> possibly by association with hockey. The disposable income implied by Billy Pilgrim's

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<sup>727</sup> «её современники не имели ни малейшего представления об американском общепите» ("Sélindzher" n. pag.)

<sup>728</sup> «корпорации» (CCr 182, 186)

<sup>729</sup> «студенческая организация» (312)

<sup>730</sup> «„P. S. Не смогу подписаться «с братским приветом», потому что мне нельзя называться вашим собратом — у меня не то положение: меня только приняли кандидатом в члены корпорации, а теперь и этого лишили"» (CCr 189).

<sup>731</sup> «стал соперничать» (BCe 495); cf. "equally" («наравне») (Müller 545)

<sup>732</sup> «Футбол» (CCr 218)

<sup>733</sup> «как играет в гольф профессиональная команда» (BCr 504)

“basement rumpus room” (*SFe* 362) and the junk in it is transformed into a banal “basement pantry”<sup>734</sup> and “American Flyer” (*CCe* 53), a brand of toy trains and model railroads, into “American aviation company.”<sup>735</sup> “Downtown” (*BCe* 547) turns into “on the outskirts”<sup>736</sup>; the “McDonald’s Hamburger establishment” (*BCe* 598) into a boondocks “McDonald’s diner”;<sup>737</sup> “a hamburger” (598) into “chopped beefsteak”<sup>738</sup>; “7-Up” (*SFe* 395) into “medicine”;<sup>739</sup> “drug stores” (*CCe* 187) into “cafés and shops,”<sup>740</sup> “birth control” (*CCe* 19, *SFe* 460) into the nebulous “control over birthrates,”<sup>741</sup> “Christmas elf” (*CCe* 78) into “Christmas grandfather,”<sup>742</sup> and, of course, “knocked his brains out with a golfclub” (*BOC* 546) into “with a hockey stick.”<sup>743</sup> All of these familiarized concepts remain firmly and invisibly woven into the narrative fabric of Rait’s prose.

### The Tip of the Iceberg

The third test is the translator’s approach to reader competency and here, more than anywhere else, Rait’s editor runs interference. Nowhere is the ideological conditioning of Vonnegut’s translated novels more apparent than in the textual features mandated by the Soviet editorial process that existed for the sake of providing a “public service” and that seem very strange in a text designed for the “engineer class.” The most obvious of these is the footnote<sup>744</sup>

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<sup>734</sup> «подвальном помещении», «подвальную кладовку» (*SFr* 44); cf. “room for games and amusements” («комната для игр и развлечений») (Müller 660)

<sup>735</sup> «Американскую лётную компанию» (*CCr* 225)

<sup>736</sup> «на окраине» (*BCr* 398); cf. “the business centre of a city” («деловая часть города») (Müller 239)

<sup>737</sup> «закусочную Макдональда» (*BCr* 441)

<sup>738</sup> «Рублёные бифштексы» (442); here, even Müller stumbles on a Germanism, defining *hamburger* as “chopped schnitzel” («рублёный шницель») (351)

<sup>739</sup> «Микстуры» (*SFe* 77)

<sup>740</sup> «кафе и лавки» (*CCr* 349); cf. “pharmacy” («аптека») (Müller 245)

<sup>741</sup> «контроле над рождаемостью», «Контролировать рождаемость она умела» (*CCr* 191, *SFr* 144); cf. “contraceptive measures” («противозачаточные меры») (Müller 82)

<sup>742</sup> «рождественского деда» (*CCr* 247)

<sup>743</sup> «хоккейной клюшкой» (*BC* 397)

<sup>744</sup> Choldin separates Soviet footnotes into “neutral” and “loaded” (“Political Writing” 38); however, considering that exposure to anything Western was also a political issue in the U.S.S.R., even the neutral footnotes were ideologically loaded.

(there are nine in *CCr*, six in *SFr*, and thirteen in *BCr*) as well as the parenthetical note, the most direct means to interrupt the author's dialogue with the reader. Very often, these footnotes intrude into the flow of prose in the guise of serious information written in an encyclopedic style and provide trivial facts that have no bearing on the plot:

According to biblical legend, Jonah was brought into the belly of a whale.<sup>745</sup>

The state of Illinois is meant, in the administrative centre of which, in the city of Springfield, for a long time lived and is buried President Lincoln.<sup>746</sup>

Houdini—a famous magician.<sup>747</sup>

Betsy Ross (1752–1836)—the legendary creator of the American flag.<sup>748</sup>

Adolphe Menjou (1890–1963)—an American film actor.<sup>749</sup>

Pearl Buck (1892–1973)—an American author, laureate of the Nobel Prize.<sup>750</sup>

These interjections are *a priori* precluded from providing any *ostranenie* because they are minor rhetorical flourishes quite familiar to Soviet readers. However, they work to flatten Vonnegut's cynical narration, turning his frequent, offhanded remarks into supposedly informative statements meant to be taken at face value. Furthermore, in places where Vonnegut relies on implicit intertextual links, the footnotes explain away the references, leaving nothing to curiosity or the imagination:

Paraphrase of a line from the poem "To a Mouse" by R. Burns.<sup>751</sup>

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<sup>745</sup> «По библейскому преданию, Иона был занесён в чрево кита» (*CCr* 179n1).

<sup>746</sup> «Имеется в виду штат Иллинойс, в административном центре которого, городе Спрингфилде, долгое время жил и похоронен президент Линкольн» (*CCr* 223n1).

<sup>747</sup> «Гудини — известный фокусник» (*CCr* 232n1)

<sup>748</sup> «Бетси Росс (1752–1836) – легендарная создательница американского флага» (*CCr* 344n1).

<sup>749</sup> «Адольф Менжу (1890–1963) – американский киноактёр» (*SF* 172n1).

<sup>750</sup> «П[е]рл Бак (1892–1973) – американская писательница, лауреат Нобелевской премии» (*BC* 453n1).

<sup>751</sup> «Пер[и]фраз строки из стихотворения Р. Бернса „Полевой мыши”» (*CCr* 345n1).

*The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*—a famous children’s fairytale about a magical land by the American writer Lyman Frank Baum.<sup>752</sup>

*A Tale of Two Cities*—a work by Charles Dickens.<sup>753</sup>

A poem by Longfellow is meant.<sup>754</sup>

The situation is exacerbated when the editorial hand cancels Vonnegut’s control over minor instances of *ostranenie* or a lack thereof. For instance, in *CCe* the very specific demonym *Hoosiers* is not italicized and context cues soon clarify its meaning. However, *CCr* transliterates and italicizes the term as *huzherov* and adds the footnote “Hoosiers—the nickname of residents of Indiana.”<sup>755</sup> The transliterated name “doctor Voks Gumana” is demystified as “Vox Humana—human voice (*Lat.*).”<sup>756</sup> Nothing is left to the reader’s imagination when “Hilton” is footnoted as “the name of luxurious hotels common in many countries”<sup>757</sup> (but not in the U.S.S.R.), or when the initialism YMCA becomes “KhAML” (“khristianskaia *assotsiatsiia* molodykh liudei”) (*SFr* 55n1; emphasis added).<sup>758</sup> (The latter example also demonstrates editorial hypercorrection in action because even Glavlit’s second bulletin as far back as 1923 translates the abbreviation as “KhSML” and deabbreviates it as “khristianskii *Soiuz* molodykh liudei” [47] that Blum argues was thereafter the standard translation [47n3].) In cases where more nuanced translation becomes necessary, it is possible that the polyglot Rait assists the editor in four categories of unnecessary and indiscriminate translation of the following:

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<sup>752</sup> «„Мудрец из страны Оз” – известная детская сказка о волшебной стране американского писателя Лимана Фрэнка Баума» (*SFr* 129n1)

<sup>753</sup> «„Повесть о двух городах” – произведение Чарльза Диккенса» (*BCr* 452n1).

<sup>754</sup> «Имеется в виду стихотворение Лонгфелло» (*BCr* 476n1).

<sup>755</sup> «Хужеры – прозвище жителей Индианы» (*CCr* 232n1).

<sup>756</sup> «Vox Humana – человеческий голос (*лат.*)» (*CCr* 307n1).

<sup>757</sup> «Хилтон – название роскошных отелей, распространённых во многих странах» (*CCr* 271n1).

<sup>758</sup> «ХАМЛ — христианская ассоциация молодых людей».

1. Passages left untranslated in the ST, such as a paragraph from Goethe that appears in German (*SFe* 356; *SFr* 38), as well as proper nouns: “*Kreuzkirche*” and “*Frauenkirche*” (*SFe* 356) are translated as “Church of the Cross”<sup>759</sup> and “Church of the Holy Virgin,”<sup>760</sup> and “the Sangre de Cristo Mountains” (*CCe* 89) is parenthetically glossed as “(Christ’s Blood).”<sup>761</sup>
2. Expressions uncommon in English: “PRO PATRIA” (*CCe* 168)—translated as “‘For the motherland!’ (*Lat.*)”<sup>762</sup> (in Soviet iconography the nation is often depicted as a female figure), or the organ stops “vox humana and vox celeste” (*SFe* 365) as “*Human voice and celestial voice (Lat.)*.”<sup>763</sup>
3. Expressions naturalized into (or familiar) in English: “*tour de force*” (*BCe* 512) translated as “Here: an invention”<sup>764</sup> (instead of the more appropriate *a great achievement*), “*jeu d’esprit*” (*BCe* 512) as “A game of the mind”,<sup>765</sup> “CLAIR DE LUNE” (*BCe* 641) as “Moonlight”,<sup>766</sup> and “*Bon voyage*” (*BCe* 732) as “Happy trails.”<sup>767</sup>
4. Diegetic passages that serve no inherent semantic purpose (but do help depict the robotic qualities of the denizens of Midland City), for instance when Don Miller listens to language tapes in his car: “Demain nous allons passer la soirée au cinéma” (*BCe* 707) translated as “Tomorrow we will spend the evening at the cinema”,<sup>768</sup> “Nous espérons que notre grand-père vivra encore longtemps” (*BCe* 707) as “We hope that our grandfather will still live for a long time.”<sup>769</sup>

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<sup>759</sup> «Крестовой церкви» (*SFr* 38)

<sup>760</sup> «Церковь святой девы» (*SFr* 38)

<sup>761</sup> «(Кровь Христова)» (*CCr* 258)

<sup>762</sup> «„За родину!” (*лат.*)» (*CCr* 331n1).

<sup>763</sup> «Голос человеческий и глас небесный (*лат.*)» (*SFr* 46n1). The TT gives the latter as *celesta*.

<sup>764</sup> «Здесь: выдумка (*франц.*)» (*BCr* 366n1).

<sup>765</sup> «Игра ума (*франц.*)» (*BCr* 366n2).

<sup>766</sup> «Лунный свет» (*BCr* 480n1).

<sup>767</sup> «Счастливого пути (*франц.*)» (*BCr* 565n1).

<sup>768</sup> «Завтра мы проведём вечер в кино (*франц.*)» (*BCr* 540n1).

<sup>769</sup> «Мы надеемся, что наш дедушка ещё долго проживёт (*франц.*)» (*BCr* 541n1).



The editor's overzealous desire to explain anything remotely foreign is most apparent in a particular instance of careless proofreading, when Vonnegut's ironic inclusion of the *fictional* Bermuda Ern in a list that also includes actual extinct animals ("passenger pigeons and eagles . . . and whooping cranes" [BCe 569]) is completely overlooked by the footnote that gravely states, "Listed are those birds which have already gone extinct or are currently protected."<sup>770</sup> One of the few instances of avoiding unnecessary secondary translation occurs when "AP and UP" are transliterated as "Assoshiëited Press" and "Iunaited Press."<sup>771</sup>

The translator's hand finally joins the editor's more coherently in the case of illustrations (CC has none, SF has two, and BC has one hundred and thirty) because they cannot be simply recreated by an artist, requiring a translation that would make sense in context. BC relies on a multitude of visual puns and interjections for their satirical effect. As Peter Reed explains in "The Remarkable Artwork of Kurt Vonnegut," the drawings

came as a surprise at the time, first as being an unusual addition to a novel, but also for their frank, seemingly naive, and simply funny qualities. . . . In their almost childlike simplicity of line, they have a certain ironic propriety in a novel where the central event is an arts fair. Above all, they are part of—and draw attention to—the guileless, even adolescent perspective from which Vonnegut deconstructs and demystifies American culture and society in this novel. (13)

In the following example from SF, Billy Pilgrim's (and the narrator's) imaginary gravestone is inscribed in Russian (see Figure 9). Here, Rait chooses a dynamically equivalent rendering (for instance, avoiding the formal equivalent *Vse bylo prekrasno i nichto ne bolelo*) which results in sacrificing the antithetical arrangement of *everything* and *nothing* in the ST. However, BC also

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<sup>770</sup> «Перечислены те птицы, которые уже вымерли или находятся сейчас под охраной» (BCr 416n1).

<sup>771</sup> «А П – Ассошиэйтед Пресс; Ю П – Юнайтед пресс» (SFr 30n1).

contains an effective example of using dynamic equivalence. One of the running gags in Vonnegut's writing is that all of Kilgore Trout's novels are published only as textual filler to give volume to pornographic books. Using his trademark irony, Vonnegut includes an illustration of the lurid sticker pasted on one of

**Figure 9** "Everything was beautiful, and nothing hurt" (SFe 426);  
"Everything was wonderful and not even a little painful" (SFr 110)

Trout's books (see Figure 10), and goes on explain the allure of the concept—but how to translate the English *double entendre* of *beaver*? In her back-translation of Matveev's "Norki naraspashku," Mariya Gusev implies that a formal equivalent is possible in theory (something akin to *Bobrovye norki naraspashku*), and yet the TT opts for a much more complex solution: First, it replaces *beavers* with *nórki* (minks)—*nórka* is also a diminutive version of the noun *norá* (cave), hence the sexual innuendo that replicates the spirit but not the letter of the idiom.

Second, the TT replaces Vonnegut's drawing of the "large rodent" (BCe 518) with an entirely different drawing<sup>772</sup>

**Figure 10** "Wide-Open Beavers Inside!" (BCe 518);  
"Minks—wide open!" (BCr 371)

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<sup>772</sup> On July 2, 1975 Vonnegut wrote to Donald Fiene, "Well, I think the authorities really are fucking around with Rita's mail. I have learned from two sources other than you that Rita has learned nothing from me, and that she needs my approval for renaming *Slaughterhouse-5* for the stage, and so on. I've been writing her about three times during the past six weeks, doing all she says. And still she hears nothing. I will write again. . . . I knew a little about the beaver's being changed to a weasel. I didn't know the linking of the animal with the *mons veneris* was to be eliminated. I drew her a weasel during our visit to Moscow. In fact, she made me draw about ten of them." (*Letters* 222).

of a “small animal”<sup>773</sup> (*BCr* 372), to complete the visual pun (see). Paradoxically, the verbal strategy creates a successful sense of *ostranenie* because the phrase sounds unidiomatic and new (the beaver and the mink are equally alien to the Russian reader in a sexual sense).

**Figure 11** “beaver” (*BCe* 518); “mink” (*BCr* 372)

However, its visual counterpart is cumbersome and unnecessary, despite even the omission from the TT of Vonnegut’s drawing of a hairy vulva for those who did not “get” the joke (see), or the survival of the drawing of the “Female underpants” (*BCe* 520) in the TT (*BCr* 373). On the other hand, the only other

image of a scatological order that successfully survives

in the TT is Vonnegut’s famous glyph of “an asshole”

(see), due to the literal, anatomical translation (“holes in “this sort of beaver”  
(*BCe* 519)

the ass”<sup>774</sup>) that softens and foreignizes the term. The same cannot be said

“an asshole”  
(*BCe* 504 et passim); for the drawing of an “inch” (see) that simply  
(*BCr* 358 et passim)

disappears from the TT along with all the other ironic descriptions that

objectify the material measurements of the novel’s denizens (more on this

later). “an inch”  
(*BCe* 615)

In *BC*, Rait’s translation of illustrations is exacerbated by idiomatic expressions, for instance when the novel’s subtitle is revealed to be the same as the message that Harry LeSabre

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<sup>773</sup> «небольшой зверёк»

<sup>774</sup> «дырки в заднице» (*BCr* 358)

remembers painting “on a five-hundred-pound bomb which was going to be dropped on Hamburg, Germany” (see Figure 15), which is in turn similar to the original motto of “*The Robo-*

**Figure 15** “Goodbye Blue Monday” (BCe 535); “Goodbye Black Monday” (BCr 386) *Magic Corporation of America*” (BCe 534). When Vonnegut later explains the origins of the phrase, he draws on his real-life experience as a General Electric copywriter (Meeter 214) to explain the doublespeak of

[t]he motto . . . [that] cleverly confused two separate ideas people had about Monday. One idea was that women traditionally did their laundry on Monday. Monday was simply washday, and not an especially depressing day on that account. People who had horrible jobs during the week used to call Monday “Blue Monday” sometimes . . . because they hated to return to work after a day of rest. . . . Fred T. Barry<sup>775</sup> . . . *pretended* that Monday was called “Blue Monday” because doing the laundry disgusted and exhausted women. The Robo-Magic was going to cheer them up. (BCe 692; emphasis added)

Rait chooses dynamic equivalence and domesticates the concept and the subtitle of the novel by choosing *black* over *blue* as a colour she assumes to be more closely associated with sadness for Russian readers, and the use of Russian text on American ordnance also subtly co-opts the historical significance of the United States’ participation in WWII.<sup>776</sup> In addition, because of one

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<sup>775</sup> Vonnegut extends the war metaphor using the allusive name that refers to both the American airship Commander Fred T. Berry and the destroyer named after him, the USS Fred T. Berry (Carl Merrill n. pag.).

<sup>776</sup> We have already seen this rhetoric in relation to Soviet literary criticism of C22.

small change in translating the above passage, Rait modifies the entire point of Vonnegut's poetic conceit when "pretended" becomes "wanted to say,"<sup>777</sup> effacing Vonnegut's criticism of the artifice of advertising. In comparison, more of an editorial appropriation of cultural and national artefacts takes place when the inscription on "the highest decoration for heroism which an American soldier could receive" (BCe 660) changes from "VALOR" to "DOBLEST"<sup>778</sup> (BCr 498),<sup>778</sup> making the award

**Figure 16** "Valor" (BCe 660); (BCr 498)

Soviet (see Figure 16). This move is extremely problematic not only because it fails to bring *ostranenie* to the topicality of the American conflict with the Soviet-supported North Vietnam but also because it effaces the ironic contrast between the noble award with the deeds of its recipient, Ned Lingamon, who "fought yellow robots who ran on rice" (BCe 660) but eventually "committed the lowest crime which an American could commit, which was to kill his own child" (661). Similarly, the change of the inscription on an Olympic medal from German to Russian (see Figure 17) not only co-opts post-WWII West German cultural achievements, but also detracts from the juxtaposition of

**Figure 17** "XX. Olympiade München 1972" (BCe 672); (BCr 509)

<sup>777</sup> «он хотел сказать» (BCr 528)

<sup>778</sup> «ДОБЛЕСТЬ»

a world-class medal with the banality of its wearer, the representative of a small suburban town, a “teen-age girl on the cover of the program for the Festival of the Arts. . . . the only internationally famous human being in Midland City. . . . Mary Alice Miller, the Women’s Two Hundred Meter Breast Stroke Champion of the World” (BCr 671).

In other cases, illustrations become *decentered*, difficult to identify with, owing to the inconsistency that results from Rait’s unsuccessful attempts to establish dynamic equivalence between the inherent meaning and the visual expression of Vonnegut’s characters’ inner thoughts. For instance, when Wayne Hoobler thinks about “the name . . . written in lights on the inside of his skull” (BCe 576), the translated phrase (see Figure 18) reflects the utopian quality of the concept while disregarding the *double entendre* of *fairy* while Vonnegut explicitly describes Dwayne’s various homosexual prison activities elsewhere in the novel (BCe 649; BCr 487).

**Figure 18** “FAIRY LAND” (BCe 576); “MAGICAL LAND” (BCr 423)

Here, “GOLUBAIA STRANA”<sup>779</sup> is a possible dynamic equivalent, because in Russian, the colour *light blue* is a euphemism for *homosexual*. However, later in the novel, the TT does take advantage of the idiomatic sense of this pun when discussing Bunny Hoover’s fantasy of a “translucent, scarf-life . . . word” (see Figure 19), confirming that Rait recognizes the connection

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<sup>779</sup> «голубая страна»

**Figure 19** “BLUE” (BCe 640); “LIGHT BLUE” (BCr 480)

but does not apply the strategy of dynamic equivalence consistently. The fact that in Russian colours are gendered further overdetermines the masculine word which can refer either to Bunny’s imaginary “scarf” or to his sexuality (in the novel, Bunny is openly gay, though the English illustrations contains no allusions to this). Still, on the very next page, Rait creates a sense of *ostranenie* for Bunny’s second vision (see Figure 20) by retaining the French text that, as a side effect, lends Bunny a

**Figure 20** “Clair de lune<sup>1</sup> Moonlight.” (BCr 480)

sophisticated air but immediately becomes undermined by the editor’s footnote that demystifies it. In Bunny’s last vision in the novel, just moments before his father assaults him (see Figure 21), the TT translates the word *cool* literally, flattening the polysemic term and reifying the abstract, relaxed, meditative, sense of the word that Bunny yearns for (BCe 704). Similarly, near

**Figure 21** “COOL” (BCe 705); “CHILL” (BCr 539)

the end of the novel, the TT uses the formal form of an important pronoun (see Figure 22) in the “missive” to Dwayne Hoover from the Creator of the Universe that sends Dwayne on a violent rampage: “They have committed every possible atrocity and every possible kindness unfeelingly, automatically, inevitably, to get a reaction from Y-O-U” (BCe 703).<sup>780</sup> Because Rait uses the

**Figure 22** “Y-O-U” (BCe 703); (BCr 537)

second-person formal *vas* rather than the second-person informal *ty*, she adds an air of decorum to the Creator’s tone but removes the immediacy of the message (not only does God use *ty* in Russian scripture, but the address with *ty* in Russian is so familiar that it can be reason enough for a fistfight—quite appropriate to the rage that Dwayne flies into). Only one of the few illustrations that creates an unequivocal sense of *ostranenie* is Vonnegut’s monolithic “ETC.” that occurs twice in the novel (see Figure 23). The abbreviated

**Figure 23** “ETC.” (BCr 566 et passim)

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<sup>780</sup> cf. «Роботы бесчувственно, машинально, неуклонно делали всевозможные пакости и всевозможные добрые дела, лишь бы вызвать какую-то ответную реакцию у вас» (BCr 537).



Latin phrase is virtually unknown in Russia (a common equivalent would have been и т.д.), thus serving as a striking use of foreignization. These examples demonstrate that, while both formal and dynamic equivalence are useful in different circumstances, there is a marked decrease in their effectiveness when the strategies are not applied consciously and consistently to the TT, or when the translator does not fully understand the ST. In addition, although Rait proves to be capable of deploying both strategies, she gives clear preference to the latter, regardless of its effectiveness.

### Under the Sheets

Precisely how far does Rait's cooperation with the editor or her own initiative go within the TT? In the three novels, we find roughly nineteen omitted passages (one in *CC*, five in *SF*,<sup>781</sup> and thirteen in *BC*), as well as a large number of word-level and sentence-level changes. Certain lacunae that occur despite any discernible reason signal the presence of the self-editor, the self-censor, or both. These passages include short sentences such as "[b]usiness was booming as usual" (*SFe* 436 cf. *SFr* 119) or "[c]lipped to the letter was one share of common stock in Barrytron, made out in the name of Kilgore Trout. Here was the letter:" (*BCe* 527; cf. 527); a few longer passages, such as the following, are also omitted:

"I made it my business to read everything I could by and about every artist who was on his way here." "There isn't anything by me or about me anywhere," protested Trout. Milo came from behind his desk. He brought with him what appeared to be a lopsided old softball, swaddled in many different sorts of tape. "When I couldn't find out anything about you," he said, . . . (*BCe* 682; cf. *BC* 519)

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<sup>781</sup> Although Andrey Kutuzov's lexical-statistical analysis of Rait's translations of *CC* and *SF* reveals the valuable fact that the "Russian translations are almost 20% shorter than the source texts" (5), Kutuzov fails to consider the question of censorship or self-censorship, rather naïvely concluding that "the translations . . . are definitely 'good'" because of "their large-scale popularity and Vonnegut's high appraisal of Rait-Kovaleva's professional skills" (5).

In some cases, such lacunae interfere with Vonnegut's ironic humour, for instance when, pre-empting the political angle, the phrase *in a free election* is removed from "by secret ballot in a free election" (*SFe* 442; cf. *SFr* 125) when the TT mocks the idea of holding a vote in a camp for war prisoners, or when *human* is removed from "owned human slaves" (*BCe* 509; cf. *BCr* 363). In other cases, Rait attempts to *recreate* instances of irony and black humour. These passages most often make WWII their subject:

<p>One soldier in black was having a drunk hero's picnic all by himself on top of a tank. He spit on the Americans. The spit hit Roland Weary's shoulder, gave Weary a <i>fourragère</i> of snot and blutwurst and tobacco juice and Schnapps. (<i>SFe</i> 388)</p>	<p>One soldier, all in black, smashed drunk, arranged for himself "a hero's rest," having sprawled on the hatch of a tank. He spat at the Americans. A gob smacked onto the shoulder of Roland Weary, providing him simultaneously with saliva, sausage chew, and Schnapps.<sup>782</sup></p>
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Whereas Vonnegut's joke is predicated on the meaning of the technical term *fourragère*<sup>783</sup> applied to the dubious "honour" bestowed on Weary, the TT focuses on the soldier's uniform (likely belonging to a Schutzstaffel officer), thereby creating an apt contrast with Weary's own fouled-up uniform while also exaggerating the SS officer's drunkenness. Rait reconstructs the joke in Russian based on the idea that prisoners of war lack the luxuries that the officer so generously "provides" and the TT eschews both the French word and the Russian formal equivalent *aksel'bant*<sup>784</sup> (ironically, by way of its German cognate *Achselband*).

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<sup>782</sup> «Один солдат, весь в чёрном, пьяный вдребезину, устроил себе „отдых героя”, развалившись на крышке танка. Он плевал в американцев. Плевком шлёпнулся на плечо Роланда Вири, обеспечив его сразу слюной, колбасной жвачкой и шнапсом» (*SFr* 70).

<sup>783</sup> A military award in the form of a braided cord affixed to a uniform

<sup>784</sup> «аксельбант»

Interestingly, this example resembles an instance of the nineteenth-century practice of the *uluchshaiushchii* (improving) translation that removes and adds details that in the final balance increase a text's dramatic value, embodying neither formal nor dynamic equivalence proper because the passage effectively makes the text Rait's own. This strategy is not always successful. The phrasing of "*this intolerable atmosphere which one group of earthlings creates artificially when they don't want to leave other earthlings to live on Earth*" (emphasis added)<sup>785</sup> "fixes" Vonnegut's parallelism but diminishes the rhythm of the Shklovskian strategy of excessive repetition coupled with calling things by their own names of the hyperbolic irony in "*the incredible artificial weather that Earthlings sometimes create for other Earthlings when they don't want those other earthlings to inhabit Earth any more*" (*SFe* 416; emphasis added). In other cases, metafictional irony is flattened, for instance when the narrator states that

<p>One of the main effects of war, after all, is that people are discouraged from being characters. But old Derby was a <i>character</i> now. (<i>SFe</i> 455; emphasis added)</p>	<p>One of the main consequences of war consists of the fact that people in the very end are disappointed by heroism. But in that minute old Derby became a <i>hero</i>.<sup>786</sup></p>
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Although it could be argued that Rait merely misreads the passage, she does emphasize elsewhere the honour of a P.O.W. standing up to the traitorous Howard W. Campbell, Jr. (*SFe* 454). However, in retooling the phrase to retain the figurative sense of having *character* (*chutzpah*), Rait does not keep the literal one, thereby flattening the polysemy of the word and the self-reflexivity of Vonnegut's autobiographical presence as an unheroic, minor character in

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<sup>785</sup> «эту невыносимую атмосферу, которую искусственно создают одни земляне, когда они не хотят оставить других землян жить на Земле» (*SFr* 99)

<sup>786</sup> «Одно из самых главных последствий войны состоит в том, что люди в конце концов разочаровываются в героизме. Но в ту минуту старый Дарби стал героем» (*SFr* 139).

the novel. Thus, Leighton's assertion about the wholesale survival of "distinctive Vonnegutisms" is suspect because in the best-case scenario Rait appropriates them and in the worst-case scenario wordplay such as "[h]ave yourself embalmed while you're at it" (BCe 537; cf. BCr 389) or "an old man's limited palette of excrement and alcohol (BCe 559; cf. BCe 408) simply does not survive in the TT. However, whereas these examples demonstrate some amount of latitude in terms of linguistic choice, certain turns of phrase seem totally unavailable to Rait. For instance, she, like all Soviet citizens, remained innocent of newfangled casual psychopharmacology. When Vonnegut describes the only novel available to Billy Pilgrim on Tralfamadore (Jacqueline Susann's *Valley of the Dolls* [1966]), he explains that Billy enjoys reading it because "the people in it certainly had their ups and downs, ups and downs" (SFe 403). The joke, predicated on slang for narcotic pills that cause excitement (*uppers*) or depression (*downers*), is recreated as an awkward stab in the dark in "The characters in the book, of course, experienced successes and failures: sometimes successes, and sometimes failures."<sup>787</sup> Rait also struggles with the language of science fiction. When at one point in his time travels Billy Pilgrim finds himself in the future, about "to address a large crowd on the subject of flying saucers and the true nature of time" (SFe 441), the police protecting him strangely carry "revolvers"<sup>788</sup> rather than "zap guns" (SFe 441) in the TT even though in both the ST and TT Paul Lazzaro kills Billy with "a high-powered laser gun" (SFe 441)<sup>789</sup> thereby muddling Vonnegut's gag involving stereotypical futuristic imagery.

Rait's desire to improve Vonnegut's text by rewriting it eventually becomes very apparent in a consistent pattern of the shifts in the rhythm of the prose that do not affect its surface meaning. In the following example, another symptom of *vol'nyi* translation, Rait "straightens out" the parallelism in Vonnegut's sentences by adding anaphora:

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<sup>787</sup> «Герои книги, конечно, переживали удачи и неудачи: то удачи, а то неудачи» (SFr 85).

<sup>788</sup> «револьверы» (SFr 125)

<sup>789</sup> This survives in the TT as «мощного лазерного ружья» (SFr 125)—though it is interesting that Rait does foreignize *crosshairs* as *hairs* («волосками») instead of the Russian «прицельной сетки».

So I became betrothed at dawn to the	Thus I was engaged at dawn to the
most beautiful woman in the world.	most beautiful woman in the world.
And I agreed to become the next	Thus I agreed to become the next
President of San Lorenzo. (CCe 139)	President of San Lorenzo. <sup>790</sup>

Rait similarly plays fast and loose with the paragraph breaks that serve as boundaries for the fragments of Vonnegut's narrative and with the shifts between third-person narration and first-person direct speech:

In real life, Weary was retracing his	And in reality Weary slowed his
steps, trying to find out what had	steps—he had to see what had
happened to Billy. He had told the	happened to Billy back there. He told
scouts to wait while he went back for	the scouts: – Wait, I have to go after
the college bastard. (SFe 373)	this damn idiot. <sup>791</sup>

Dialect and the commentary on race and class that it suggests are also smoothed out, for instance in the speech balloon of a “black maid” on a billboard (here, even the option of racist linguistic minstrelsy, less acceptable although not less racist in Russian, would have created dynamic equivalence):

FEETS, GET MOVIN'! DEY'S GOT	MY LITTLE FEET, CARRY ME HOME! NOW
THEIRSELVES A ROBO-MAGIC! DEY	THEY HAVE “ROBO-MAGIC!” THEY
AIN'T GONNA BE NEEDIN' US 'ROUN'	DON'T NEED US ANYMORE—AND
HERE NO MO'! (BCe 693-694)	THAT'S ALL! <sup>792</sup>

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<sup>790</sup> «Так я обручился на заре с прекраснейшей женщиной в мире. Так я согласился стать следующим президентом Сан-Лорензо» (CCr 304).

<sup>791</sup> «А на самом деле Вири замедлил шаги – надо было посмотреть, что там случилось с Билли. Он сказал разведчикам: – Подождите, надо пойти за этим чёртовым идиотом» (SFr 54).

<sup>792</sup> «НОЖЕНЬКИ МОИ, НЕСИТЕ МЕНЯ ДОМОЙ! ТЕПЕРЬ У НИХ ЕСТЬ „РОБО-МАЖИК”! НЕ НУЖНЫ МЫ ИМ БОЛЬШЕ—ВОТ И ВСЁ!» (BCr 528).

The combined effect of these changes is the shift from Vonnegut's edgy, Twainian language sensitive to social and regional dialects to a flat, conservative Soviet diction. The fact that this is neither an error or misreading of the ST, nor a result of an editor's involvement, but a conscious choice on Rait's part is confirmed by the full-fledged subordination of the cultural artefacts of postwar American prosperity to rather traditional Soviet concepts (see Table 8) that do not accomplish any *ostranenie*. Here we find the imposition of conservative, heteronormative schemas: For instance, the boyfriend/girlfriend model of a *disposable relationship* (closely related to the rise of the *teenager* as a distinct post-WWII socioeconomic American construct, in turn heavily predicated on capitalism, expendable income, and conspicuous consumption) changes to the suitor/betrothed model, indicating a very traditional view of a *committed relationship*.

Table 8 Domestication of Cultural Artefacts		
Novel	ST	TT
CC	boy friends (15)	suitors, admirers <sup>793</sup>
	girl friend (16)	betrothed <sup>794</sup>
	"Yes! Yes!" (42)	"Da-s! Da-s!" <sup>795</sup>
	"Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" (74)	"Shaltai-Boltai" <sup>796</sup>
SF	bacon	smoked <i>salo</i> <sup>797</sup>
	next door to the new Holiday Inn (532; cf. 386)	next to the hotel "Tourist's Rest" <sup>798</sup>
BC	in a one-room apartment fourteen feet wide and twenty-six feet long, and six flights of stairs above street level (656)	in the tiny one-room apartment number fourteen, on the sixth floor without an elevator <sup>799</sup>
	the Gothic novelist	the author of Gothic novels – "horror-novels" <sup>800</sup>
	and whirlpool baths	with Charcot showers <sup>801</sup>

<sup>793</sup> «Ухажёров» (188)

<sup>794</sup> «наречённая» (189)

<sup>795</sup> «Да-с! Да-с!» (213) This is an archaic equivalent of "Yes, sir!"

<sup>796</sup> «Шалтай-Болтай» (243) This is the title of the Russian version of Lewis Carroll's Humpty Dumpty, from Marshak's famous translation of the same.

<sup>797</sup> «копчёным салом» (49)

<sup>798</sup> «рядом с гостиницей „Отдых туриста“» (68, cf. 49) This is a very Soviet name for a generic hotel.

<sup>799</sup> «в однокомнатной квартирке четырнадцать, на шестом этаже без лифта» (494)

<sup>800</sup> «автор готических романов – „романов-ужасов“» (493)

<sup>801</sup> «с душами Шарко» (554) This was a hydrotherapy procedure popular in the U.S.S.R.

Sovietisms like “Tourist’s Rest”<sup>802</sup> imply clean-living socialist recreation prescribed by the State, standing in implicit opposition to the Soviet-era colloquial term “savage’s rest”<sup>803</sup> that implied a youthful avoidance of hotels and resorts (certainly anything like Charcot showers), hitchhiking, and camping out illegally in cars or out in the open air. Vonnegut’s aside that describes a dog owner’s apartment gives the impression of a *modest*, lower- or lower-middle-class dwelling, whereas the Russian description emphasizes the claustrophobic *closeness* and *inconvenience* of the apartment, betraying a very common Soviet insecurity that arose as a result of the unfulfilled promise of high-quality, cheap housing that never materialized. Such shifts are also often reductive, as in the case of defining Gothic fiction using only a single quality (“horror”), or bacon using *saló*, a delicacy made of fatback (aside from being food cut from the same part of the pig, the two terms have quite different connotations: to a Soviet reader, *becon* was a part of a classy, “bourgeois” breakfast encountered only in fiction where it was eaten by the likes of Sherlock Holmes; *saló*, on the other hand had been, and still is, a peasant staple and an important traditional food in many Eastern European nations, such as Ukraine and Belarus).

### **That Which Shall Not Be Said**

There is no doubt that Rait is most careful when it comes to the touchy subject of politics. Leighton is correct when he asserts that “there are a [only a] few passages that could conceivably be interpreted as unkind to the Soviet Union, and every last one has been modified” (“Rita” 416). For instance, when the taxi driver tells the Crosbys (who are elderly American “Communist Sympathizers” [CCe 66]) that Bokonon is ““Very bad man,”” Crosby instinctively asks ““A Communist?”” and gets the disapproving answer ““Oh, sure.”” (CCe 99); in the TT, he gets an

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<sup>802</sup> Ironically, Rait translates the obviously second-rate “Quality Motel Court” (BCe 617) as “Motel-Luxe” («Мотель-люкс»; BCr 458).

<sup>803</sup> «отдых дикарём»

emphatic “– Yes, yes!” (CCr 267). In other cases, communists are simply omitted when Vonnegut adds them to the head of a list that includes “Nazis, Royalists, Parachutists, and Draft Dodgers” in one chapter title (CCe 80; cf. CCr 249). The same happens to the two passages in CC that could be construed as most incendiary: in one, the “Communist party” is grouped with “the Daughters of the American Revolution” as examples of “a false *karass*, of a seeming team that was meaningless in terms of the ways God get things done, a textbook example of what Bokonon calls a *granfalloon*” (CCe 63; cf. CCr 233); in the other, during an episode in San Lorenzo, “old Joe Stalin . . . and old Fidel Castro,” Karl Marx, and Mao Zedong, are omitted from a shooting gallery where they have been placed next to Hitler and Mussolini, “every enemy that freedom ever had” (CCe 151). Any potential implication of international politics is sanitized when “Liberia” (CCe 59) becomes “Libya” (CCr 230) and references to “the good people of Genoa” (CC 355) or promiscuous “Polack[s]” (SFe 449) disappear altogether. In the context of WWII, CC suffers only a handful of minor revisions, as, for instance, Nestor Aamons gets captured by generic “partisans” (CCr 249), rather than Soviet ones (CCe 81); SF suffers more, for instance where “two Russian soldiers who had looted a clock factory” (SFe 353) simply become “two Russian soldiers” (SFr 34); “the Russians . . . killing and robbing and raping and burning” (SFe 476) are transformed into mere terrifying “rumours of the coming of the Russians”;<sup>804</sup> and “the Russians, who occupied Dresden after the war, who are in Dresden still [in 1969]” (SFe 474) are simply “the Russians who had occupied Dresden after the war.”<sup>805</sup>

In the context of the Cold War, CC suffers the most. The U.S.S.R. as a whole is virtually written out of the novel. This is problematic foremost because the plot of the novel centres on the theft by a Soviet agent of a destructive substance called “ice-nine” that, taking a cue from Robert

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<sup>804</sup> «напуганные слухами о приходе русских» (SFr 161)

<sup>805</sup> «русских, занявших Дрезден после войны» (SFr 158)



Frost's "Fire and Ice" (1920), offers a frozen (rather than explosive) end of the world, allegorically representing the atomic bomb. Leighton explains that

where it is stated in the original that the midget girl Zi[n]ka is a member of the "Ukrainian Midget-Borzoï Dance Company,"<sup>806</sup> [CCe 16] the translation reports that . . . ["Zinka was a midget, a ballerina in a foreign ensemble"<sup>807</sup>]. Where Zi[n]ka requests political asylum in the United States, the translation states only that she disappeared [CCr 190], even though it turns out that she is a patriotic Soviet agent.<sup>808</sup> . . . Nor does the translation mention that the "enterprising American reporter" who uncovers Zi[n]ka's defection, does so "in Moscow" [CCe 17]. ("Rita" 417)

Leighton misses the fact that Rait also makes Zinka's name (a diminutive form of *Zinaida*) non-Slavic by omitting one letter, concluding that this complex collection of facts "presents a serious problem to the censors" (417), however an attentive reading of the text demonstrates a careful excision of the necessary details and rewriting of the plot of which only Rait would have been capable. If anything, Leighton misses another instance, a key passage that satirizes the Soviets' roundabout acquisition of the atomic bomb using sleeper agents, that, as a result of its wholesale omission, indicates the more likely presence of an editor's tacit "recommendation":

Apparently the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics had it, too. The United States had obtained it through Angela's husband, whose plant in Indianapolis was understandably surrounded by

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<sup>806</sup> The quotation is incorrect; it is "a dancer with the Borzoï Dance Company."

<sup>807</sup> «Зика была лилипуткой, балериной иностранного ансамбля» (CCe 189).

<sup>808</sup> Rait changes "Little Zinka presented herself at the *Russian Embassy*" (CCe 17; emphasis added) to "little Zinka appeared at *her own embassy*" («крошка Зика объявилась в своём посольстве») (CCr 190; emphasis added).

electrified fences and homicidal German shepherds. And Soviet Russia had come by it through Newt's little Zinka, that winsome troll of Ukrainian ballet. (CCe 161)

In the TT, the passage is replaced with a brief phrase: "Angela's husband gave the secret to the U.S.A., and Zika—to her embassy."<sup>809</sup>

In addition to the subtle ideological modification woven into the narrative we find instances of direct jabs at the United States that, by virtue of their stylistic complexity, point at Rait's pen rather than her editor's. For instance, in the following example, Rait conflates Vonnegut's "machine" metaphor with the "melting pot" imagery she adds into a poem in CC:

Oh, a sleeping drunkard	And the parks where drunkards,
Up in Central Park,	Lords, and cooks are hunkered,
And a lion-hunter	Jeffersonian chauffeur,
In the jungle dark,	And a Chinese dental burr,
And a Chinese dentist	Children, women, and their henchmen—
And a British queen—	<i>Are all cogs in the same engine.</i>
<i>All fit together</i>	We all live in the same spot,
<i>In the same machine.</i>	<i>Roiling, boiling in one pot.</i>
Nice, nice, very nice;	Very good, very good.
Nice, nice, very nice;	This is very, very good. <sup>810</sup> (emphasis
Nice, nice, very nice—	added)
So many different people	
<i>In the same device.</i> (CCe 6; emphasis	
added)	

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<sup>809</sup> «Муж Анджелы передал секрет США, а Зика – своему посольству» (CCr 325).

<sup>810</sup> «И пьянчужки в парке, / Лорды и кухарки, / Джефферсоновский шофёр, / И китайский зубодёр, / Дети, женщины, мужчины – / Винтики одной машины. / Все живём мы на земле, / Варимся в одном котле. / Хорошо, хорошо. / Это очень хорошо» (CCr 180).

Other similar stereotypes occasionally slip through the narrative cracks: for instance, “Practically nobody on Earth is an American” (*SFe* 419), a statement about Kilgore Trout’s (and, by extension, Vonnegut’s own) representation of *humans* as his own countrymen, becomes a racially-loaded “And practically purebred Americans almost do not exist on Earth,”<sup>811</sup> while the reason for “Americans . . . forever searching for love in forms it never takes” changes from “something [possibly] to do with the vanished frontier” (*CCe* 66) to “[p]robably, the roots of this phenomenon should be searched for in the distant past.”<sup>812</sup> One of the most interesting examples of such rewriting is in the following passage:

When Dwayne Hoover and Kilgore Trout met each other, their country was <i>by far</i> the richest and most powerful country on the planet. It had most of the food and minerals and machinery, and it <i>disciplined</i> other countries by threatening to shoot big rockets at them or to drop things on them from airplanes. ( <i>BCe</i> 510; emphasis added)	When Dwayne Hoover and Kilgore Trout met, their country was, <i>perhaps</i> , <i>one of</i> the richest and most powerful countries on the planet. It had lots of food and useful minerals, and machines, and it <i>pacified</i> other countries, threatening them that it will shoot them with giant missiles or pelt them with all kinds of things from planes. <sup>813</sup> (emphasis added)
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The Russian passage gains an unintended layer of irony because it simultaneously describes Cold War era U.S. and U.S.S.R. but also carefully twists words to paradoxically put the two nations on

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<sup>811</sup> «А фактически чистокровных американцев на земле почти что нет» (*SFr* 102).

<sup>812</sup> «Должно быть, корни этого явления надо искать далеко в прошлом» (*CCr* 237).

<sup>813</sup> «Когда встретились Двейн Гувер и Килгор Траут, их страна была, пожалуй, одной из самых богатых и сильных стран на планете. В ней было много еды, и полезных ископаемых, и машин, и она умирала другие страны, угрожая им, что обстреляет их гигантскими ракетами или забросает всякими штуками с самолётов» (*BCr* 364).

a par while also positioning the U.S. as a powerful aggressor. This rhetorical move is already familiar to us. as Leighton explains, it “is well known . . . [that] Soviet power might come crashing down were Russian feelings to be hurt” (“Rita” 416). Such modification of the ST conforms perfectly to Choldin’s categories of “themes” in Soviet censorship: on the one hand, “excising the negative” (40) and “emphasizing the positive” (41) with regard to “the image of the Soviet Union and Communism” (40) and, on the other hand, “criticism of the U.S. political system and people” (43) that frames the U.S. “and Western Powers as Imperialists” (45), depicts the U.S. as “arrogant” (47), and provides examples of the U.S. “behaving badly toward other countries” (47).

At this point, it would be instructive to remember the diametrically opposed approaches to Heller and Vonnegut by Sergei Mikhalkov and Aleksei Zverev, the unadulterated anti-American rhetoric of the former and the carefully-framed reconstructive rhetoric of the latter. Most of the time, both Heller and Vonnegut do plenty of favours to the Soviet standpoint critical of America because their writing (albeit a satire of *human* stupidity in a broad sense) is still primarily an *American* satire. However, unlike Zverev, Rait does not give her readers the sleight of hand of excessive censure that at the very end is tempered by a subtle recuperative statement, and so many of Vonnegut’s passages that happen to be aligned with Soviet criticism of the West survive in the TT untouched, exacerbating their ideologically-modified counterparts: comparisons between a “black ghetto” and the ruins of Dresden (*SFe* 384); criticism of race relations and economic disparity (*BCe* 533, 629); parallels between corporations and the Catholic Church (*BCe* 84); condemnation of American jingoism and hypocrisy (*BCe* 507), politics (*SFe* 507), the Vietnam War<sup>814</sup> (by means of the *ostranenie* in Kilgore Trout’s short story that

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<sup>814</sup> And war in general (see *SFe* 354)

“predicted the widespread use of burning jellied gasoline on human beings” [*SFe* 458], by explaining the “body bag”<sup>815</sup> as “a large plastic envelope[s] for a freshly killed American soldier” [*SFe* 526], and by defining Agent Orange as a “chemical[ ] intended to kill all the foliage, so it would be harder for communists to hide from airplanes” [*BCe* 568]); and, finally, the horror of Professor Rumfoord’s “thinking in a military manner: that an inconvenient person, one whose death he wished for very much, for practical reasons, was suffering from a repulsive disease” (*SF* 474-475). With regard to the Eastern Bloc, any communists that remain in the TT are mere victims of circumstance and unpredictable population explosions (*BCe* 510). Even though “West Berlin and East Berlin” (*SFe* 172, 357) are conspicuously translated simply as “Berlin” (*SFr* 39), limited Soviet criticism of U.S.S.R.’s Eastern Bloc projects does survive, as long as it indicates that communism has won out in the end:

We asked him how it was to live under Communism [in the G.D.R.], and he said that it was terrible at first, because everybody had to work so hard, and because there wasn’t much shelter or food or clothing. But things were much better now [in 1967]. He had a pleasant little apartment, and his daughter was getting an excellent education. (*SFe* 345)

In fact, this approach of political realignment is no different from that taken by the Soviet authorities towards texts written in Russian. Commenting on his novel *Babii Yar*, Anatolii Kuznetsov states “I began to argue and to defend every word. They would restore a word, cross it out again and then discuss it . . . This happened to the entire book. There was nothing left of the broader humanistic idea, and the Soviet edition was just one more indictment of German Fascism” (in Kuznetsov et al. 28). Thus, Rait (intentions notwithstanding) decisively enters the

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<sup>815</sup> Rait’s “personal bag” («персональный мешок»; *SFr* 378) does not have quite the same punch.

realm of *realisticheskii* (realistic) translation and does a conscious disservice to Vonnegut by proceeding to tie his *universal* concerns about inhumanity (that happen to be within Vonnegut's reflections on the shortcomings of the American project) to a series of very *narrow* Soviet ideological concerns.

Unlike the political aspects of Vonnegut's novels, references to violence return Rait to the realm of *vol'nyi* translation: mentions of cruelty are, for the most part, softened and Vonnegut's project of exposing post-industrial humanity's dark underbelly often loses its shocking effect in the TT: for instance, in *CC*, instead of *punching* his sister in the stomach (15), Frank Hoenikker *pushes* her in the stomach,<sup>816</sup> and the black humour of "big red meat wagon" (98) disappears in "huge, red ambulance";<sup>817</sup> in *SF*, the savagery of Roland Weary's senseless desire to "beat the shit out of" people (368; cf. 378) is reduced to "will beat half to death,"<sup>818</sup> and his sadistic invention of "sticking a dentist's drill into a guy's ear" (369) is absent from the TT, although, to Rait's credit, the horrific image of "put[ting] honey all over his balls and pecker, and . . . cut[ting] off his eyelids so he has to stare at the sun till he dies" (369) makes it through as an indictment of American cruelty; in *BC*, Dwayne Hoover only "knock[s] out" Francine Pefko's tooth<sup>819</sup> rather than breaking her jaw (715);<sup>820</sup> however, Thomas Jefferson frees his *brothers*<sup>821</sup> (!) rather than his *slaves* (732). References to religion once again align Rait with *realisticheskii* translation, resulting in changes of many colloquial references, such as "Good God!" (*CCe* 130) to "May the Devil tear you!",<sup>822</sup> and (although the formal equivalent of *Bog ego znaet* is in the realm of the possible), Rait consistently opts for the opposite:

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<sup>816</sup> «толкнул её в живот» (*CCr* 188)

<sup>817</sup> «в огромной красной карете» (*CCr* 266)

<sup>818</sup> «изобьёт до полусмерти» (*SFr* 49; cf. 60)

<sup>819</sup> «выбить ей зуб» (*BCr* 549)

<sup>820</sup> Rait does translate *jaw* (as *челюсть*) in another instance (*BCr* 549).

<sup>821</sup> «Томас Джефферсон освободил своих братьев» (*BCr* 565).

<sup>822</sup> «Чёрт [тебя] подери!» (*CCr* 296)

<p>“God,” she said, “don’t ask me . . .”</p> <p>And then she apologized for having</p> <p>said “God.” (CCe 25)</p>	<p>– The Devil knows! – said she . . . And</p> <p>she immediately apologised for saying</p> <p>“devil.”<sup>823</sup></p>
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Even a simple, affirmative phrase like “What God Is” (CCe 39) is changed into the question “What is God?”<sup>824</sup> Mention of organized religion is moderated by means of generalization, as when “for all his interest in the outward trappings of organized religion” (CCe 71) is changed to “despite love of all kinds of ceremonies,”<sup>825</sup> and (for obvious reasons) the TT retains criticism of Christianity, for instance when Vonnegut wonders why “Christians found it so easy to be cruel” (SFe 417; cf. SFr 100-101) when he contrasts their tenets with those of the admirable but duplicitous nature of his fictional religion Bokonon (CCe 114; CCr 281).

From the official Soviet standpoint, organized religion did not exist in the U.S.S.R. This makes questions of blasphemy in the TT irrelevant; however, to this category of “phantom” social phenomena also belong pornography and prostitution which become consciously effaced, extending Malmkjær’s broad categories of “patterns of manipulation”: “Type 1: Avoidance of the repulsive by omission . . . or substitution” (“Censorship” 147), “Type: Avoidance of blasphemy by omission and substitution” (148), “Type 3: Avoidance of associations with sexuality by omission and substitution” (148), and “Type 4: Avoidance of improper sentiments/emotion by substitution and omission” (148). The fairly specific explanation “could be rubbed all over by a woman until their penises squirted jism into Turkish towels” (BCe 552) changes to “let themselves be massaged and in general have fun in all kinds of ways” (BCr 402). The non-existent sexuality of the *homo sovieticus* necessitates “titillated” (SFe 258) to become

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<sup>823</sup> «– А Чёрт его знает! – сказала она. . . . И она тут же извинилась, что сказала „черт”» (CCr 197).

<sup>824</sup> «ЧТО ЕСТЬ БОГ?» (CCr 211)

<sup>825</sup> «несмотря на любовь ко всяким церемониям» (CCr 240)

“tickled” (*SFr* 40), “underpants magazines” (*BCe* 546) into “children’s little magazines,”<sup>826</sup> “blue movies” (*SFe* 483) (already a euphemism!) into “playful films,”<sup>827</sup> and on-screen “fucking and sucking” (*BCe* 554) into “all kinds of crudeness.”<sup>828</sup> A second look at the list of the dozen passages in *SF* that troubled an American board of education so in 1982 (see Appendix II) reveals that the offending excerpts actually survive in the 1978 Russian collection, albeit in extremely softened form,<sup>829</sup> eschewing *ostranenie* and embracing domesticating abstraction and indeterminacy: “Why don’t you go fuck yourself?” (*SFe* 438) becomes “Go you-know-where!”,<sup>830</sup> “pecker” (*SFe* 440) becomes “groin,”<sup>831</sup> “balls . . . bouncing gently on the floor” (*SFe* 449) becomes “hurt, hurt my various places,”<sup>832</sup> and “semierect” (*SFe* 480) becomes “excited,”<sup>833</sup> as does “jerk off” (*SFe* 483; cf. *SFr* 158). However, the same principle also applies to more ordinary epithets: “fugging” (*CCe* 21 et passim) becomes the (much softer) equivalent “*kholera*”<sup>834</sup> and “Fuck Dwayne Hoover . . . Fuck Midland City” (*BCe* 629) becomes “Dick him, this Dwayne Hoover . . . not a fig for any of this Midland-City”<sup>835</sup>; finally, “dumb bastard” (*SFe* 367), “silly cocksucker” (*SFe* 440), and “dumb fucking ~” (*BC* 542) become variants of “fool.”<sup>836</sup> Between the three novels, Rait does create a grand total of two very successful attempts at *ostranenie* in order to convey swearwords, but they remain exceptions to the rule: in the first instance, she gives her readers pause by using the reduplication and the alliteration of a

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<sup>826</sup> «детские журнальчики» (*BCr* 397)

<sup>827</sup> «игривых фильмов» (*SFr* 168)

<sup>828</sup> «всякие скабрёжности» (*BCr* 403)

<sup>829</sup> Even in my back-translations I struggle to reflect their tameness.

<sup>830</sup> «— Иди ты знаешь куда!» (*SFr* 122)

<sup>831</sup> «пах» (*SFr* 123)

<sup>832</sup> «болят, болят различные места» (*SFr* 133)

<sup>833</sup> «возбуждённый» (*SFr* 165)

<sup>834</sup> «холера» (*CCr* 192, 194)

<sup>835</sup> «Хрен с ним, с этим Двейном Гувером . . . На фиг весь этот Мидлэнд-Сити» (*BCr* 459).

<sup>836</sup> «дурака» (*SFr* 48, 124; *BC* 393)



familiar verb with the uncommon (and somewhat awkward) adverb form in “cursingly cursed”<sup>837</sup> for “raised hell” (*SFe* 364); in the second case, she gives “Try to botch a bagel on the fly. . . and the moon in the sky, while you’re at it” for “Go take a flying fuck at a rolling doughnut. . . Go take a flying fuck at the moon” (*SFe* 444).<sup>838</sup> Although Rait does substitute the domesticating *bublik*<sup>839</sup> for *doughnut*, she uses the extremely obscure verb *ukontrapupit*’ that connotes indistinct violence and traces its origins either back to a Mayakovsky poem from 1926, a Zoshchenko short story from the same year, or a 1966 song by Vysotskii (even an expert on the Russian language from Voice of Russia had difficulty saying for sure in 2011 [Safonova n. pag.]). Leighton often conflates these occasional successes with Rait’s overall method when he argues that

[n]o Russian would fail to catch the meaning of [“your mother tram-tararam”<sup>840</sup> used as a substitute for “you dumb mother-fucker” [*SFe* 367] . . . and [“well, brother. . . I’d seen what you’d been dreaming of”<sup>841</sup>] is a telling substitute for “man, you sure had a hard-on” [*SFe* 430] . . . [“He was the right kind of guy”<sup>842</sup>] might reduce the obviousness of “he had a tremendous wang” [*SFe* 434] . . . but it gets the idea across. (“Rita” 416)

First, the idea here is not merely that the sexual content can be guessed, it is that *Rait* *pathologizes sexuality in her translation*. The fine point that Leighton misses is that Vonnegut’s black humour requires Shklovskian *explicitness*, not muted attempts at Aesopian *insinuation*

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<sup>837</sup> «ругательски ругать» (*SFr* 45)

<sup>838</sup> «— Попробуй уконтрапупь бублик на лету . . . а заодно и луну в небе» (*SFr* 128).

<sup>839</sup> An Eastern-European variant of the bagel

<sup>840</sup> «мать твою трам-тарарам» (*SFr* 48)

<sup>841</sup> «— Ну, братец, . . . — видно было, *что* тебе снилось...» (*SFr* 114)

<sup>842</sup> «он был мужчина что надо» (*SFr* 118)

(especially because, even when he insinuates, Vonnegut is still fairly explicit). Second, if the purpose of a translated expletive is to merely *get an idea across*, why not simply write *he said something bad* and be done with it? Unfortunately, Rait adopts precisely this position when Kilgore Trout's invocation to the children selling newspapers for him, generously modified with *fuck* (SFe 457) is simply transformed into the insertion of "here came unprintable words"<sup>843</sup> and "unprintable epithets."<sup>844</sup> These choices are not only important and ironic because they unwittingly address the issue of compliance with censorship in the very text in which they appear, but also because they form an intertextual link to Vonnegut's metafictional acknowledgement of his own obscenity, for instance when the author-narrator of *BC* states, "I now make my living by being impolite" (BCe 501) (even here the TT softens *impolite* with "all kinds of disrespectful statements about everything in the world"<sup>845</sup>) or when Vonnegut explicitly comments on censorship by explaining that "it was the duty of the police and the courts to keep representations of . . . *ordinary apertures* from being examined and discussed by persons not engaged in the practice of medicine" (BCe 519; emphasis).

There is an undeniable element of *épatage* in Vonnegut's inclusion of verbal and visual images of such "ordinary apertures." However, it also establishes a connection between Vonnegut's own writing and the underappreciated genre fiction of Kilgore Trout, "a famous made-up person in my books" (BCe 620) that provides a commentary on the eroded modernist distinction between pornography, popular fiction, and literature, and metafictionally embodies these relationships in Vonnegut's own postmodern work. It is here that Rait does the most disservice to Vonnegut's *ostranenie* because his is explicit and obvious and hers is abbreviated and disingenuously euphemistic:

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<sup>843</sup> «тут шли нецензурные слова» (SFr 140)

<sup>844</sup> «нецензурные эпитеты» (SFr 141)

<sup>845</sup> «всякими непочтительными высказываниями обо всем на свете» (BCr 356)

A wide-open beaver was a photograph of a woman not wearing underpants, and with her legs far apart, so that the mouth of her vagina could be seen. . . . A beaver was actually a large rodent. It loved water so it built dams. (*BCe* 518)

“Minks” *for some reason* were called photographs of entirely nude or half-dressed girls. . . .<sup>846</sup> In fact, a mink was a name for a small animal. (emphasis added)<sup>847</sup>

The sort of beaver which excited news photographers so much looked like this: [illustration] This was where babies came from. (*BCe* 519)

And that from which newspapermen came into a rage was simply a place from where babies were born.<sup>848</sup>

As Andrei Matveev writes, “[i]n Russian books of our youth there were no complexes. In the American ones—there were. . . . And this is why we read about our complexes in those authors who wrote about them absolutely frankly.”<sup>849</sup> The Soviet readers yearned for a modicum of truth, for things to be called by their own names. Instead, a terribly emasculated semblance of human sexuality survives in Rait’s Vonnegut, and like the phantom genitals of Soviet encyclopaedias, her translation not only fails to say anything substantial *about* sex but also labours to *erase* the subject, relying on invisible but meaningful changes, such as those that transform a “*big sex orgy*” (*CCe* 10) into a “monstrous”<sup>850</sup> one, “oral-genital contacts” (*SFe* 482) into “all kinds of sexual perversions,”<sup>851</sup> “transvestite” (*BCe* 539, 579, 589) into “pervert,”<sup>852</sup> Vonnegut’s

<sup>846</sup> «„Норками” почему-то называли фотографии совсем голых или полуодетых девиц» (*BCr* 371).

<sup>847</sup> «На самом же деле норкой назывался небольшой зверёк» (*BCr* 372).

<sup>848</sup> «А то, от чего приходили в раж газетчики, было просто местом, откуда рождались дети» (*BCr* 372).

<sup>849</sup> «В русских книгах нашей юности комплексов не было. В американских — были. . . . И потому мы читали про свои комплексы у тех авторов, которые писали о них совершенно откровенно» (n. pag.).

<sup>850</sup> «чудовищную» (*CCr* 184)

<sup>851</sup> «всякие сексуальные извращения» (*SFr* 168)

<sup>852</sup> «извращенцем» (*BC* 391, 425, 433) The transvestites in *BC* have “underground” gathering places.

description of the pathetically amusing “rubber vagina for lonesomeness” (BCe 617) into “rubber<sup>853</sup> products,”<sup>854</sup> and “after a botched abortion . . . the destroyed fetus” (BCe 618) into “after the miscarriage . . . the unborn infant” (BCr 459). After all, there is no sex in the U.S.S.R., and so neither is there concern about homosexuality (or any other sexual orientation) which can now be entirely chalked up to American social malaise. Explicit references to homosexual feelings disappear when the narrator of *SF* describes a young German boy as a “heavenly androgyne” (SFe 381) that becomes a “heavenly angel”<sup>855</sup> and the Nazi destruction of homosexuals alongside “Jews and Gypsies and . . . communists” (SFe 409) is likewise expunged (SFr 91). Even though the Tralfamadorians in *SF* do manage to reveal to Billy and Rait’s Russian readers that “[t]here could be no Earthling babies without male homosexuals” (SFe 421; cf. SFr 105), the Zeltoldimarians in *BC* are said to be “of one gender,”<sup>856</sup> rather than “homosexual” (BCe 522).

Ultimately, Vonnegut’s humanist defense of individuals based on their intrinsic value falls on deaf ears in Rait’s translations where the description of the legal punishment for transvestism hanging over Harry LeSabre’s head (arrest, fine, imprisonment) (BCe 539) (not unlike that practiced in the U.S.S.R.!) becomes a banal enumeration of the criminal code (BCr 391). Likewise, the vicious cycle of *confused* sexual identity in the ST transforms into Bunny Hoover’s *conversion* to homosexuality in the Prairie Military Academy<sup>857</sup> when the TT uses “*studied* . . . sports, perversion, and fascism” (emphasis added)<sup>858</sup> rather than “eight years of

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<sup>853</sup> The word *rubber* in Russian connotes *eraser* rather than *condom*.

<sup>854</sup> «резиновых изделий» (BCr 458)

<sup>855</sup> «ангел небесный» (SFr 62)

<sup>856</sup> «одного пола» (BCr 375)

<sup>857</sup> Here, Rait conflates Vonnegut’s aversion for militarism with her own aversion for sexuality. cf. Francine Pefko’s husband, “a graduate of West Point, a military academy which turned young men into homicidal maniacs for use in war” (BCe 621)

<sup>858</sup> «учился в военной школе спорту, разврату и фашизму» (BCr 481)

uninterrupted sports, buggery, and Fascism”<sup>859</sup> (BCe 641). The fact that Wayne Hoobler “missed” (BCe 649), rather than “was bored without”<sup>860</sup> all the homosexuality and bestiality going on in the Adult Correctional Facility at Shepherdstown (the same facility to which Harry LeSabre constantly dreads being sent!) is also telling. Next, if there is no sex or homosexuality, neither is there sexual discrimination against women, who in the TT merely “work for anybody”<sup>861</sup> (rather than “*belong to anybody*” [CCe 29]) “with access to a Dictaphone”; in fact, the word “copulation” (SFe 433) and “women” (SFr 116) becomes basically interchangeable. It is then no surprise that the repetitive comedy of Dwayne Hoover’s awkward encounter with the Sexual Revolution is muddled into a mere nothing when Vonnegut’s discussion of female sexual pleasure drowns in Rait’s euphemisms:

Dwayne . . . had been reading articles and books on sexual intercourse . . . women were demanding that men pay more attention to women’s pleasure during sexual intercourse . . . The key to their pleasure, they said, and scientists backed them up, was the clitoris, <i>a tiny meat cylinder</i> which was right above the hole in women where men were supposed to stick <i>their much</i> <i>larger cylinders</i> . (BCe 619; emphasis added)	Dwayne . . . read a sizeable number of books and articles about the relationships between a man and a woman . . . women demanded that men in intimate relationships pay them as much attention as possible. <sup>862</sup>
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<sup>859</sup> Vonnegut also explains what “buggery” means, which the TT does not do.

<sup>860</sup> «скучал и без» (BC 387)

<sup>861</sup> «работают на каждого» (CCr 201)

<sup>862</sup> «Двейн . . . прочитал немало книжек и статей о взаимоотношениях мужчины и женщины. . . женщины требовали, чтобы мужчины в интимных отношениях уделяли им как можно больше внимания» (BCr 460).

So, driving out to the Quality Motor Court that day, Dwayne was hoping that he would pay exactly the right amount of attention to Francine's clitoris. (BCe 620)	And, headed to the "Motel-Luxe" on that day, Dwayne hoped that he wouldn't overdo it and wouldn't give too much attention when it wasn't necessary. <sup>863</sup>
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A cursory comparison between the passages in *SF* that offended Vonnegut's American censors and the parts that were excised from Rait's *BC* (see Appendix V), reveals a parallel set of passages dealing with sex and sexuality whose significance critics like Leighton dismiss so disdainfully ("Rita" 416). Indeed, at first blush the focus here appears to be entirely on sex and, by extension, impropriety. However, a closer look *in relation to the rest of the novel* reveals the significance of enumerating penis lengths for the men and the hip, waist, and "bosom" measurements for the women in the novel. Aside from the concern about not "measuring up" that cause Harry LeSabre to "feel[ ] panicky" about his "orgasm rate" (629) or Dwayne Hoover to (unbeknownst to himself) have "an unusually large penis" (614) (not without reason, since "[t]he blue whale . . . had a penis ninety-six inches long and fourteen inches in diameter" [616]) Vonnegut uses the yardstick of his recurring theme to institute a dystopian equality among the male characters in the novel (Dwayne and Bunny Hoover; Kilgore Trout; Harry LeSabre; Cyprian Ukwende, "the black physician from Nigeria"; Don Breedlove, "the gas-conversion unit installer who raped Patty Keene" [614-615]; Martha Simmons's husband [710]; and the novel's narrator himself [725]), as well as their female counterparts (Patty Keene, "Dwayne's late wife" [BCe 614-615], Francine Pefko, Dwayne's stepmother, and Martha Simmons). Vonnegut invites his readers to challenge their conceptions of self-worth by including a handy drawing of an

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<sup>863</sup> «И, направляясь к "Мотелю-люкс" в этот день, Двейн надеялся, что он не перестареет и не уделит слишком много внимания, когда это не нужно» (BCr 461).

“inch” in his novel. He then proceeds to cruelly and violently shatter his own characters’ meticulously crafted personalities, backgrounds, and achievements by reducing them all to a single and obviously insignificant measurement. In this way, Vonnegut’s actions metafictionally mirror those of his novel’s narrator who finally arrives in Midland City (673) in order to wreak havoc on his characters, knowing the outcome in advance (685). The narrator’s purpose is get Dwayne Hoover to run amok, and then to let Kilgore Trout (another one of Vonnegut’s doppelgangers) “meet his Creator, who would explain everything” (685). In this way, *BC* itself and its mechanistic enumeration of its denizens’ “parts” mirrors the embedded narrative of Kilgore Trout’s *Now It Can Be Told* which convinces the “bad chemicals” in Dwayne Hoover’s head to believe that he is “surrounded by . . . machines” and that “[t]heir only purpose is to stir you up in every considerable way, so the Creator of the Universe can watch your reactions” (702). *BC* itself challenges Vonnegut’s readers with the revelation that everyone surrounding them is a Burgessian “clockwork orange” lacking free will. The admission that the machines “have committed every possible atrocity and every possible kindness . . . to get a reaction from Y-O-U” (703), set aside with a large drawing of the letters, not only sends Dwayne Hoover on his violent rampage but also implicates Vonnegut’s readers in taking the novel too seriously, incriminates Vonnegut for testing his readers, and finally implodes during the narrator’s “liberation” of Kilgore Trout in the novel’s epilogue.

The baroque *mise en abyme* construction that underwrites Vonnegut’s desire of “cleansing and renewing myself for the very different sorts of years to come” (732) (or a “rebirth from shit,” as one of my articulate interlocutors on Librusek had once put it) never materializes in the TT because of the inertia of excessive self-censorship, especially in the second half of the novel. Wherever Rait attempts to half-heartedly recuperate meaning from a surviving passage,

the context is lost and of the absence of parallelism between different parts of the book causes the *denouement* of the TT to grind down to terrible banality. It goes without saying that in such a vacuum it is irrelevant to the narrative and uninteresting to the Soviet reader that the driver of the *Galaxie* truck is *merely* “in everything above average. His income, and insurance policy, and his manhood for a man of his age were far above average compared to other citizens of his country” (BCr 474; cf. BCe 633), and the revelation that the penis of “[a] black male dishwasher” was “nine inches long and two inches in diameter” (BCe 668) becomes that he was simply “an all right man.”<sup>864</sup> Thus, too, disappears the importance of knowing “the average dimensions of anatomical measures specifically on the current planet” (BCr 474; cf. BCe 634) in Kilgore Trout’s “novel . . . about national averages” (BCe 631) and the differences between Vonnegut’s “fucking machines” (BCe 704) and Rait’s “entertainment machines,”<sup>865</sup> or between Bunny Hoover being a “God damn cock-sucking machine!” (BCe 705) and a “stinking machine, poor pedo!”,<sup>866</sup> or between Francine Pefko being the ““Best fucking machine in the State”” (BCe 715) and “the best machine in the state for love affairs”<sup>867</sup> dissolve and disappear. In almost every piece of his writing, going back as early as “Deer in the Works” (1955), Vonnegut builds up to the same terrible idea. However, whereas in his earlier novels the human being is trapped *inside* a variety of machines (the machinery of technocracy in *PP* and *CC*, the machinery of fate in *ST* and *SF*, the machinery of ideology in *MN* and *GB*) it is in *BC* where human beings finally *become* machines (Merrill 156; Tally 169-170); it is in *BC* that Vonnegut gives Dwayne Hoover the “function . . . [of] point[ing] up the disastrous consequences of adopting a deterministic view of man” (Merrill 159); and it is in the *ST* of the novel where the machine-like qualities of the

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<sup>864</sup> «и был он мужчина хоть куда» (BCr 506)

<sup>865</sup> «развлекательные машины» (BC 538)

<sup>866</sup> «вонючая машина, педик несчастный!» (BC 539)

<sup>867</sup> «лучшая в штате машина для любовных делишек» (BCr 549)



denizens of Midland City, who are nothing more than cross marks in a newspaper “indicating the place where a person had been injured seriously” (706) are finally and fully juxtaposed with Rabo Karabekian’s notion of “unwavering bands of light” (675) that represents the restorative function of art, endowing each living being with an “immaterial core” (675). Rait’s Vonnegut never hits rock bottom, and so in her translations redemption is nowhere to be found.

### **We Are Who We Pretend To Be**

Vonnegut understood only vaguely the realities of the Era of Stagnation Soviet publishing machine and was sorely misinformed about the Russian translations of his novels and the nature of the Russian language. On the other hand, Rait was born in 1898 and lived through both revolutions, Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Andropov, and just about everything in between. She not only had experienced the full brunt of a series of repressive regime and policy changes in her adulthood but also *survived* all of them, with the exception of the Soviet state itself. Rait disliked experimental writing and criticism of Soviet literary notions, such as Nabokov’s (Skorobogatov 9). She travelled abroad on an extremely limited basis for research purposes and did not visit the United States until Vonnegut’s intercession in 1984. She died of old age in the U.S.S.R., a (relatively) free woman. These facts underwrite one clear notion: Rait must have been careful in the extreme about what she thought before she wrote it even if only (to use Shklovskii’s overdetermined word) *perezhit*’ (experience emotionally, live through, outlive) the system. After all, a wide gamut of punishments was readily available for creative deviants, but still they found ways to resist: “[d]uring a fifteen-year stay in a prison camp, Ivan Likhachev translated Baudelaire’s *Les Fleurs du mal*, which he had committed to memory, and Sergei Vladimirovich Petrov “had committed to memory an enormous number of French and German poems . . . in prison, at times going so far as to *introduce prison slang* into his translations, thus

leaving a trace of his incarceration within the translated text” (Baer, “Soviet Intelligentsia” 164; emphasis added). Considering the fact that the U.S.S.R. as a whole was in many ways no different from a giant prison, no means of resistance was guaranteed, but the tricks which the author or translator could attempt were truly limitless: one could play “Ivan the Fool” to one’s advantage when courted by the KGB (Parthé 25); one could “place something in a historical context” to get it printed (Belinkov in Belinkov et al., “Censorship” 15); one could, like Kashkin, wait (or create) an inflammatory critical debate and publish on the winning side; one could submit an expanded work as a supposed reprint of a first edition (as could have been easily done with Vonnegut’s 1978 collection which instead reproduces the journal versions almost verbatim); one could publish “in the provinces” rather “at the ever-watchful centre,” as was the case with V/T’s publication in *Ural* (Hingley 214); one could avoid official channels altogether using *samizdat* or *tamizdat*—and yet Rait did none of this.

In the 1960s, “[t]he regime approved” Rait’s translation of Salinger “as a damning critique of contemporary American society and institutions” (Baer, “Forum” 97), and in her 1970s translations of Vonnegut, Rait empowered a “trajectory [that], in many ways, resembled that of many other authors whose works were deemed appropriate by the cultural ministry: the state *allowed* his novels to be published, the state-run media *promoted* them, and Soviet society *embraced* them” (Skorobogatov 13; emphasis added). Borisenko defends Rait by arguing that many Soviet-era textual shortcomings are pinned on translation:

R. Rait-Kovaleva was not at all that gracious lady which the modern reader imagines her to be; she liked and knew how to use a strong little word, begged the editor to insert at least the word *govniuk*,<sup>868</sup> but even this she was not permitted. . .

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<sup>868</sup> *shithead* The word has weaker connotations than its English counterpart.

It is terrible that the ugly shadow of censorship marred so many wonderful translations.<sup>869</sup> (“Sélindzher” n. pag.; emphasis added)

Despite my great respect for Borisenko, I must ask: Was this really the fault of censorship or fear if Rait did *not* ultimately insert the word? Was Rait truly a “noble smuggler . . . of fresh air”? (Borisenko, “Fear” 184) Did Rait inscribe her own experiences in her translations? Did Rait truly “do all that she could and had to do at the time,”<sup>870</sup> or did she venture nothing but gained all by getting published and becoming a famous, canonical translator at the cost of bowing to the regime and, as the Russians say, getting her translations published *if not by washing, then by rolling*, one way or another? As André Lefevere explains in *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*, the notion of institutionalized patronage (15) that moderates the ideology, economics, and status (16) of cultural products is not an uncommon one, but in the U.S.S.R. it was *undifferentiated patronage*, when three components “are all dispensed by one and the same patron” and where the artist must work to preserve the *status quo*, legitimate the status and power of the patron (17), and condition the restricted expectations of one’s readers (23), or be called a “dissident,” a producer of “low” or “popular” literature (17). Friedberg forgets Edmund Burke’s dictum when he argues that “the endless sterile scholastic debates over the implications of official Socialist Realism were quite divorced from the hard facts of the literary process” (*History* 106). After all, as grandpa Lenin taught us, to live in society and to be free from society is impossible; the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil was for the good men and women of the Soviet Writers’ Union and its Translators’ Section to simply do nothing.

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<sup>869</sup> «Р. Райт-Ковалёва вовсе не была той благонаправной дамой, какой представляет её себе современный читатель, любила и умела употребить крепкое слово, умоляла редактора дать вставить хотя бы слово ‘говнюк’, но даже этого ей не разрешили... Ужасно, что уродливая тень цензуры омрачила столько прекрасных переводов» (n. pag.).

<sup>870</sup> «сделала все, что могла и должна была сделать на тот момент» (Borisenko, “Iazyk perevoda” n. pag.)

Today, justifications of beloved, canonized Soviet translators and their half-hearted efforts remain an abject excuse, a salve to soothe the cowardice of those who did not dare to stand up for their beliefs, those who did not become dissidents, those who stayed in the U.S.S.R. Malmkjær explains that “[u]sually, motivated choices are made by translators with finely tuned awareness of translational and other norms and in the interest of the success of the translation as such” (“Censorship” 143). It is no wonder that Markish calls Rait “a very experienced translator and very Soviet in that sense that she never made any false steps capable of bringing on the displeasure of the authorities.”<sup>871</sup> Markish explains this “experience” by commenting on Rait’s paltry selection of Malamud, designed to avoid the “Jewish question”:

Rait-Kovaleva contrived to put together her frail little collection in such a way that it has no Jewish themes at all, not counting the very short story “The Maid’s Shoes,” where the background of the hero is only specified but plays no role whatsoever. But the deception of the authorities became a deception, in the first place, of the reader, who received the most unappetizing and unrepresentative scraps of Malamud. This technique is very common among translators.<sup>872</sup>

Edith Rogovin Frankel argues that “[b]y the nineteen fifties the writer himself, trained as he had been, was in many ways his own enemy” (14). Indeed, by the 1960s Rait had internalized the process fully. V/T may have evaporated into thin air after the 1967/1970 C22 fiasco but, by the time Rait translated her first Vonnegut novel, she had been an *officially acclaimed* translator for five decades, a wily woman of twists and turns who over a period of seventy years had learned

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<sup>871</sup> «переводчица многоопытная и очень советская в том смысле, что никогда не совершала никаких ложных шагов, способных вызвать неудовольствие начальства» (п. pag.)

<sup>872</sup> «Райт-Ковалёва ухитрилась так составить свой хилый сборничек, что в нем нет еврейской темы вообще, не считая лишь рассказа “Туфли для служанки”, где происхождение героя, впрочем, только оговорено, но никакой роли не играет. Но обман начальства стал обманом, в первую голову, читателя, который получил самые неаппетитные и нерепрезентативные огрызки Маламуда. Этот приём очень распространён среди переводчиков» (п. pag.)

the Daedalean labyrinth by heart, effortlessly wending her way in and out of it. The twin *repertoires* of means of censorship and resistance had exhausted themselves, and the new genres of “the hypersubtle forms of the game with the censor themselves bec[a]me conventions” (Coetzee 149). The speech act ceased demonstrating a resistance, an opposition to the complicity inherent in playing this game (Sherry, “In Translation” 267). In a 1973 round-table on self-censorship, Anatolii Kuznetsov stated that “prostituting yourself . . . is the road to destruction, because the official, eternal censorship, by engendering self-censorship and compromise, destroys the soul, destroys the artist, and destroys the human being” (Kuznetsov et al. 31). In 1981, the Hungarian author Miklós Haraszti reminded us that “by internalizing the censoring function, the individual writer became assimilated into the system. Cooperating with the censor who controlled him, he had in a sense become a prototype of the ‘new individual’ that Communism sought to create” (qtd. in Coetzee 147). In 1983, the Polish poet Stanisław Barańczak wrote in “Poems and Tanks” that

The author used to make a show before the censor, pretending that he had really intended to write a novel about the Borgias; at the same time he used to wink at the reader, pretending that in fact he had written a novel about Stalinism. The reader in turn used to wink back, pretending that he understood the allusion, and the censor did the same, pretending that he did notice it. . . . it made literature sterile. . . . *if we do not call something by its name, we cease to understand what it is.* (53; emphasis added)

Rait may have strewn her road to her American friend’s writing with good intentions, but these intentions become irrelevant when the end result is the declawing and defanging of Vonnegut’s novels, and, even if her translations do include watery Aesopian allusions, their presence in no

way guarantees their reception and the possibility of distinguishing “an author’s *productive intentions* from the indications of intentionality realized in the patterned sequence of linguistic signs” (Neubert and Shreve 71) remains in reality no more than wishful thinking. Intentions can never tested definitively, but the fact that Rait’s translations were often published and officially praised reveals that her work had already been thoroughly pruned at the self-censorship stage by the “inner censor, a Freudian superego . . . [that] dictates what ‘passes’ and ‘doesn’t’ pass” (Venclova n. pag.). What approaches did this inner censor take? Per Shklovskii, Rait proves capable of occasional *ostranenie*; however, per Robinson, it is neither forceful, nor sustained. Per Toury, her translations become *acceptable* by adhering to the norms of the target culture, but also *inadequate* because they abandon the norms of the ST. Per Vermeer, Rait fulfils her *skopos* (purpose) but, per Venuti, her work is largely *domesticating* because, at best, it erases realia and nationalizes the foreign work (Leighton, *Two Worlds* 221) by adopting the target-oriented principles of *vol’nyi* (free) and *uluchshaiushchii* (improving) translation that tend towards what Chukovskii termed *gladkopolis*’ (smoothwriting) (Burak 14),<sup>873</sup> by amending the ST for the purpose of ennobling, correcting, and augmenting it, and worse still, by demonstrating not only the refusal to actively oppose the precepts of the Soviet *khudozhestvennyi* (artistic) translation machine in passages where it matters most, but simply takes the path of least resistance.

### **A Tale of Three Translators**

Even disregarding the question of intentionality, the ST remains unstable because of its complicated composition: Vonnegut originally planned *SF* and *BC* to be a single novel (“Two Conversations” 60), one of *C22*’s many titles was *Catch-18*, and Heller produced endless revisions (at one point working on “at least nine different drafts”) (Daugherty 202) that resulted

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<sup>873</sup> Leighton translates the term as *blandscript* (*Two Worlds* 13).

in a reduction from 800 to 600 pages of the final form of the novel (“Yossarian Survives” 145). In addition, the TT (especially the Soviet one) experienced extensive institutional, editorial, censorial, and self-censorial involvement. Neither ST nor TT can be read in just one way, as corresponding invariants. Regardless, everything that could be said about the equivalence of the ST and TT of *C22* had already been said (by Lorie about the 1967 TT in 1970, by Timko about the 1967 and 1988 TT in her 2001 dissertation, and by Aidar Salimov about the 1988 TT in his 2010 dissertation<sup>874</sup>). Regardless, the analysis becomes moot when it rejects *bukvalizm* (literalism) on ideological grounds, avoiding the explanation of translators’ choices. Although the observation of lexical and semantic equivalence admittedly reveals a translator’s technical proficiency and working principles, most choices resulting from these attitudes remain on the whole invisible to the reader, especially the Soviet reader who neither had access to the ST nor knew its language. As Friedberg points out, “[e]vidence of Soviet censorship of all Western writing, as well as of the spoken word, is both abundant and readily proven, but it is readily proven and visible only to those of us who have access to the originals of these literary works, which means those of us who live abroad” (Friedberg, “Outside” 22). How is it then possible to definitively gauge the “irreparable” losses and the “exorbitant” gains of the translations that “usually go unnoticed by the reader”? (Venuti, “Florence” n. pag.) The answer can be found only in disregarding the ST and comparing different versions of the same TT. Luckily, I was able to take advantage of five versions of the same text. Unluckily, my simulation of the Soviet reader’s experience necessitated the painstaking differentiation of these versions: Titov’s two excerpts in *SR* and *Krok* (incorrectly advertising the novel as *Paragraf-22*), V/T’s “condensed” 42-chapter Voenizdat version of *Ulovka-22* and their 34-chapter *Ural* version, and, finally, Andrei

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<sup>874</sup> Although Salimov is extremely thorough when he considers Heller’s novels, he disregards the V/T translation and any early periodical translations and fails to consider the question of censorship, thereby problematizing the issue of examining the author’s evolution based on unaccounted-for mediation of his work.

Kistiakovskii's retranslation, *Popravka-22*, published by Raduga<sup>875</sup> in 1988. Because of numerous lacunae and entirely dissimilar parts, the way these different pieces and versions fit together must be first made more obvious by sorting them into two sets (see Table 9).

Table 9 Five Versions of C22				
Heller	Titov	V/T		Kistiakovskii
<i>Catch-22</i> (1961) 42 Chapters	<i>Paragraf-22</i>	<i>Ulovka-22</i>		<i>Popravka-22</i>
	SR (1964) and <i>Krok</i> (1965) (excerpts)	Voenizdat (1967) 42 Chapters (condensed ed.)	<i>Ural</i> (1967) 34 Chapters	Raduga (1988) 42 Chapters
"Milo"	"President of the Firm 'M and M'" <sup>876</sup>	"Milo" <sup>877</sup>		"Milo Minderbinder" <sup>878</sup>
Chapter 24		Chapter 24	Part 2, Chapter 19	Chapter 24
"Milo the Militant"	"Milo Tears into Battle" <sup>879</sup>	"Milo Tears into Battle"		"Milo the Warrior" <sup>880</sup>
Chapter 35		Chapter 35	Part 4, Chapter 27	Chapter 35

### Seven Years of Bad Luck

It is necessary to give a little background to explain how Kistiakovskii's translation fits with the other four. According to A. G. Papovian's series "Dissident Writers: Biobibliographical Articles"<sup>881</sup> published in *NLO* in 2004 (n. pag.), unlike the evanescent V/T, Kistiakovskii was a very real person. He came from a family whose members had been repressed in the 1930s. He worked in a variety of technical positions before he began to study English literature and published his first translation in the same year that the Voenizdat version of C22 saw the light of day. Kistiakovskii published official translations of C. P. Snow, Robert Duncan, Faulkner, and O'Connor; however, his 1976 translation of Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*

<sup>875</sup> According to the copyright page, Izdatel'stvo Raduga is a member of the "V/O" (or «всесоюзное общество», a union society) of Sovëksportkniga which, in turn, is a subsidiary of Goskomizdat.

<sup>876</sup> «Президент фирмы „М и М”»

<sup>877</sup> «Милоу»

<sup>878</sup> «Мило Миндербиндер»

<sup>879</sup> «Милоу рвётся в бой»

<sup>880</sup> «Мило — воитель»

<sup>881</sup> «Писатели-диссиденты: биобиблиографические статьи»



about the Great Purge circulated in *samizdat*, was smuggled abroad by Sergei Khodorovich and was eventually published under the name of the defunct Chekhov Publishing House of the East European Fund in New York in the same year as Rait's collection of Vonnegut's translations. After Khodorovich's arrest in 1983, Kistiakovskii headed Solzhenitsyn's Fund for the Assistance of Political Prisoners,<sup>882</sup> as a result of which he was frequently searched, threatened, and beaten. After the fund fell apart in 1984, but before his death in 1987, Kistiakovskii completed a number of translations, among them the posthumously-published *Amendment-22*. The introductions to the first edition and reissue of the novel are less barbed, less reminiscent of those we have already encountered in the 1970s. In 1988, the expert on English literature and translation Georgii Andzhaparidze wrote in "Faces of America"<sup>883</sup> of the tremendous importance of Heller's novel that reached a total eight million printed copies by the mid-1970s (10), providing all the usual background details. Andzhaparidze makes one particularly important observation that plays on the name of the novel (After all, *what* precisely is the retranslation meant to *amend*, the ends of translation or its means?). Here, the V/T translation (never mentioned by name) is made tantamount to *Catch-22* itself, a construct that "*corrects reality*, so that a person as soon as possible would lose his independence and would become derivative of a statute, not so much a military one, but an unwritten social one, regulating the activities"<sup>884</sup> (emphasis added)—and here, it still being 1988, Andzhaparidze adds—of "American society." Aesopian language cannot ever be definitively proven, but if ever a statement could be applied to socialist realism, this is it.

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<sup>882</sup> «Фонд помощи политическим заключённым»

<sup>883</sup> «Лики Америки»

<sup>884</sup> «корректирует действительность, чтобы человек как можно скорее утратил свою самостоятельность и стал производным от устава, не столько армейского, сколько неписаного социального, регламентирующего деятельность американского общества» (15)

In 1992, the story was very different. In his introduction, “The Paradoxes of Joseph Heller,”<sup>885</sup> the Americanist and translator Aleksandr Muliarchik is no longer obliged to mince words: he discusses black humour and black comedy, surrealism and the grotesque, placing Vonnegut at the head of the movement and touching upon the influences of Céline and Hašek (3); he adds Barth, Pynchon, Barthelme, and James Purdy into the mix, draws connections to *A Farewell to Arms* and *The Naked and the Dead*, and discusses the machine-like inhumanity of “the soldier in white” (6), even going as far as framing Yossarian as the reflection of an Achilles in a modern *Iliad* (5). Interestingly, Muliarchik mentions the 1967 Voenizdat translation (though, again, not by name) calling it *tochnyi* (accurate) (5), although he admits that the translation of *catch* flattens its polysemic variety of meanings: *amendment, trick, trap, punkt, paragraph*<sup>886</sup> (5-6). Curiously, Muliarchik uses the confused language of post-Soviet rhetoric to comment on the problem of reinterpreting Milo Minderbinder’s character, considering “the stereotypical impression regarding the social role of business and businessmen formed in our country”:<sup>887</sup> on the one hand, it “reflects the penetration of American capital into the economies of developing nations”;<sup>888</sup> on the other hand, it “indicates also the widespread acceptance of American initiative and business acumen.”<sup>889</sup> Sic transit gloria mundi. The old regime was out and the new regime was in. The lies were over and freedom could ring from the snowcapped mountains of Ural and the curvaceous slopes of the Caucasus. The changing of the guard brought a new translation and new translation methods and everyone lived happily ever after. Things could not be more different from the truth.

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<sup>885</sup> «Парадоксы Джозефа Хеллера»

<sup>886</sup> «„поправка“, „уловка“, „ловушка“, . . . „пункт“, „параграф“» (6)

<sup>887</sup> «сложившихся в нашей стране шаблонных представлений относительно общественной роли бизнеса и бизнесменов» (7)

<sup>888</sup> «отражает проникновение американского капитала в экономику развивающихся стран» (7)

<sup>889</sup> «указывает также на широкое признание американской инициативы и деловой хватки» (7)

## Back to the Future

To substantiate my theory, I needed a *Gedankenexperiment* in which I would role-play (or, to be precise, *replay*) a Soviet, unilingual reader, for experiment's sake a devoted fan of Heller's writing who saw the excerpt of *C22* in *SR* in 1964 and from then on read every publically-available translation of Heller that he could put his hands on. In effect, my imaginary reader could judge a translation no better or worse than any other unilingual reader (although he also had the additional constraint of having no access to the ST). I set two simple conditions:

1. To compensate for having already read both the 1967 TT and the English ST, I purposefully avoided reading the alternative 1964, 1965, 1967, and 1988 translations until *after* comparing them to the Voenizdat translation fearing that confirmation bias and extreme familiarity with the text would preclude me from detecting any "nubs in the original, by points or passages that are in some sense forced, that stand out as clusters of textual energy" (Lewis 271).
2. To simulate not knowing English and not having access to the ST (but not necessarily other translations, because I was role-playing a Soviet reader who is moderately well-read) I disregarded the ST altogether (other than for the purpose of pointing out characters and plot details for my own readers' sake), attempting to give my reading process over to the internal logic of each translation that I encountered and experienced, as well as the interrelations between the translations.

In "The Translator's Invisibility" Venuti proposes, in relation to one of his own examples, that "we do not need to compare the translation to the original text"; the translator's "interpretive choice . . . is evident in the translation itself, in the word's signification of a meaning that markedly deviates from the range of possibilities circumscribed by the context" ("Invisibility" 202). Indeed, letting the ST fall by the wayside was an incredible experience, foremost precisely because of the tremendous confusion, suspicion, and bewilderment that immediately arose as

soon as I encountered contradictory versions of the ostensibly identical “stable” ST that had nonetheless passed through the hands of many very different writers, editors, censorship offices, and censorial agents. A multitude of questions immediately arose: Why are there so many versions? Which is the “correct” one? Which is the “best”? Can they coexist? The only recourse was to read on, attempting to formulate a working theory about the evolution of the novel’s translations in relation to the textual sample of the chapters that describe Milo Minderbinder’s entrepreneurial machinations and negotiations, particularly rich in idiom and realia.

### **Mirror, Mirror on the Wall**

Titles were the first and most obvious difference within each set of texts. While *SR* uses “President of the Firm ‘M and M’” for chapter 24 to conflate the figure of the American head of state with Milo’s capitalist intrigues, all subsequent versions are titled simply “Milo” or “Milo Minderbinder.” However, while *Krok*, *Voenizdat*, and *Ural* use “Milo Tears into Battle” for chapter 35 to send up Milo’s feint of asking for more combat missions in order to demonstrate his irreplaceability to Colonel Cathcart and get others to fly his missions, the *Raduga* version uses the somewhat less ironic “Milo the Warrior.” Second, unlike the other versions, *SR* and *Krok* were not only edited by a Moscow censor specifically tasked with reviewing civilian periodicals, but also edited down for periodical length requirements, and although some excisions are more understandable than others, none are irrelevant.<sup>890</sup> Third, the fact that V/T not

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<sup>890</sup> The *SR* version is missing the following: Milo negotiates his flight to Portugal enumerating various delicacies; General Dreedle assigns an uncooperative pilot to dig graves on the Solomon Islands; descriptions of people benefitting from the foodstuffs that Milo procures; Milo’s flights, purchases, slogans, and menu items; Milo makes a profit with only two signatures; Yossarian exclaims to Milo that his tent mate was killed before he could even unpack; Milo’s remark about the Germans killing millions but paying their bills on time; Milo points at soldiers watching a film, calling them his best friends and swearing he could never do them harm.

The *Krok* version is missing the following: Yossarian begs Nately not to fly more than seventy missions; Milo writes a “share” for the displeased Minnesotan major on the spot; repartee between Milo and Cathcart about which of Milo’s missions can be counted for his total; Milo’s elaborate description of his international trade; Milo betrays Nately to Cathcart; Milo’s discussion with Cathcart leading up to the number of missions being raised to eighty.

only *dared* to publish the *Ural* version that noticeably deviated from Voenizdat's but still *succeeded* in doing it despite subjecting themselves to at least four formal censorial bodies, indicates their adoption of a conscious resistant strategy in relation to official censorship and publication procedures. The differences between the four translations are noticeable in the very first few sentences of chapter 24 that parody the beginning of T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922):

<b>Titov in SR (1964)</b>	<b>V/T in Voenizdat (1967)</b>	<b>V/T in Ural (1967)</b>	<b>Kistiakovskii in Raduga (1988)</b>
<p>April was the most favourite month of Milo's. In April the lilies blossomed. The heart beat faster, and past desires flared up with a new vigour. April is spring, and in spring the dreams of Milo Minderbinder somehow by themselves turned to mandarin oranges.<sup>891</sup></p>	<p>April was the most favourite month of Milo's. In April the lilies blossomed and on the grapevines bunches of grapes filled with juice. The heart beat faster, and past desires flared with a new vigour. In April the plumage of pigeons cast an even-brighter rainbow glow. April is spring, and in spring the dreams of Milo Minderbinder somehow by themselves turned to mandarin oranges.<sup>892</sup></p>	<p>April is spring, and in spring the dreams of Milo Minderbinder somehow by themselves turned to mandarin oranges.<sup>893</sup></p>	<p>April was the absolute best month for Milo. Young hearts beat faster, enamoured souls trembled more sweetly, and old appetites flared up anew. April carried spring to the earth, and spring brought to the mind of Milo Minderbinder thoughts of mandarin oranges.<sup>894</sup></p>

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<sup>891</sup> «Апрель был самым любимым месяцем Милоу. В апреле распускались лилии. Сердце билось чаще, и прежние желания вспыхивали с новой силой. Апрель — это весна, а весной мечты Милоу Миндербиндера как-то сами по себе обращались к мандаринам» (C22SR 3).

<sup>892</sup> «Апрель был самым любимым месяцем Милоу. В апреле распускались лилии, а на виноградных лозах наливались соком гроздь. Сердце билось чаще, и прежние желания вспыхивали с новой силой. В апреле оперение голубей ещё ярче отливало радужным сиянием. Апрель — это весна, а весной мечты Милоу Миндербиндера как-то сами собой обращались к мандаринам» (C22V 276).

<sup>893</sup> «Апрель — это весна, а весной мечты Милоу Миндербиндера как-то сами по себе обращались к мандаринам» (C22U 120).

<sup>894</sup> «Апрель был наилучшим месяцем для Мило. Юные сердца бились чаще, влюблённые души трепетали слаще, а старые аппетиты по-новому разгорались. Апрель нёс на землю весну, а весна привнесла в голову Мило Миндербиндера мысли о мандаринах» (C22R 246).

The opportunities offered by the divorce of the ST and TT from lexical and semantic equivalence and from each other are astounding. (After all, what does it matter that Voenizdat gives “veal chops”<sup>895</sup> while *Ural* gives “lamb chops,”<sup>896</sup> and Raduga “breaded veal chops”<sup>897</sup>? The point of Milo bribing the B-25 bombing commander with food remains the same.) Because the translator’s competency no longer lies in producing a *secondary* cultural product, the quality of his work can finally be judged on its own merit, without the fruitless examination of maximally equivalent words, phrases, or expressions. Surprisingly, it becomes immediately apparent that the Voenizdat version, its defense publisher censorship notwithstanding, offers the richest, most intertextually fertile of the four passages, whereas the *perestroika*-era translation by a dissident writer offers a rather stilted version that takes away the beating heart from Milo and makes it the privilege of the young, contrasting the latter with more lascivious “old appetites.” Even more incredible is the revelation that the *SR* and *Krok* versions, the most challenged of the four because of the utilitarian requirement to fit on a single page in very small type,<sup>898</sup> manage to preserve almost every important aspect that Voenizdat and *Ural* have, despite each omitting more than a dozen passages of background detail and dialogue. In fact, *SR* even manages to produce *ostranenie* using the trademark Heller repetition that *none* of the other versions have, such as “Krakow sausage goes well in exchange for peanuts in Krakow.”<sup>899</sup> Because it is the *first* translation, *SR* also often lays the groundwork for satirical gags that are then reproduced in Voenizdat or *Ural*, as when Milo states bathetically, “Let it be known, sir, that in Geneva there exists an international bourse for the exchange of Krakow sausage”<sup>900</sup> (cf. *C22V* 278, *C22U*

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<sup>895</sup> «телячьи отбивные» (*C22V* 276)

<sup>896</sup> «бараньи отбивные» (*C22U* 120)

<sup>897</sup> «телячьи отбивные в сухарях» (*C22R* 246)

<sup>898</sup> I provide the same page numbers for all quotations from the two sources, 3 and 10 respectively.

<sup>899</sup> «Краковская колбаса хорошо идёт в обмен на земляные орехи в Кракове» (*C22SR* 3).

<sup>900</sup> «— Да будет вам известно, сэр, что в Женеве существует международная биржа по обмену краковской колбасы» (*C22SR* 3)

121); Raduga flattens this to the humourless “In Geneva there is an international centre for the trade in Polish products.”<sup>901</sup> Another such joke is about the possibility of getting striking coal miners from Pennsylvania or West Virginia to fly Milo’s missions: in *Krok* (10), Voenizdat (405), and *Ural* (119), Milo callously gets behind the idea, but then objects that it would take too long *to ship the workers in*, whereas in Raduga the joke is flattened where Milo objects that it would take too long *to teach the workers to fly planes* (370). In *SR*, Voenizdat, and *Ural*, the characters speak with a full emotional register, unrestrained and appropriate to context: on the one hand, Cathcart exclaims, “Milo, you son of a bitch! Have you gone mad? What the hell are you doing?”<sup>902</sup> (whereas in Raduga we see the familiar euphemistic stand-in, in “Milo, you *so-and-so*, where are your brains? What are you, you bitch’s bastard, doing?”<sup>903</sup>); on the other hand, in a different passage in Voenizdat and *Ural*, Yossarian cries at Milo “My god, have you gone mad?”<sup>904</sup> (whereas in Raduga he screams “I hope you choke on your own shit!”<sup>905</sup>).

## Method in Madness

My first inklings regarding translation strategies occurred when it became obvious that *SR*, Voenizdat, and *Ural* transliterate almost all proper nouns, including names, places, and realia, while Raduga provides a mix of translated and transliterated names: *General Dolbing* (249) rather than “General Peckem” (C22V 280), by derivation from *peck* ‘em and *dolbit*’ (to peck); *Colonel Koshkart* (253; cf. C22) rather than “Colonel Cathcart” (C22SR3, C22V264, C22U124), by derivation from *cat* and *koshka* (female cat); *Kapitan Gnus* (257) rather than

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<sup>901</sup> «— В Женеве есть международный центр по торговле польскими продуктами» (C22R 247).

<sup>902</sup> «— Милоу, сукин сын! Ты с ума сошёл? Какого черта ты делаешь?» (C22SR 3, C22V 285, C22U 124)

<sup>903</sup> «— Мило, так тебя и не так, где твои мозги? Что ты, сучий выродок, творишь?» (C22R 253)

<sup>904</sup> «— Бог мой, да ты что, спятил?» (C22V 289, C22U 126)

<sup>905</sup> «— Чтоб ты подавился своим дерьмом!» (C22R 257)

“Captain Black” (C22V 290, C22U 126), by association with *gnus* (midge<sup>906</sup>); and the inappropriately comical *Sneggi* (255) rather than “Snowden” (C22V 287, C22U 125) (whose death traumatizes Yossarian so deeply that he refuses to wear a uniform), by association with *sneg* (snow). True enough, this creates *ostranenie* because the names are distinctly un-Russian, but if my hypothetical reader happens to come across even two of the available four translations (and my theory of comparative reading is not far-fetched, especially since both *SR* and *Krok* actively advertised the “full” Voenizdat version) the game is up, betraying Kistiakovskii’s domesticating strategy. In a similar manner, Milo procures “rye cakes and pastries with pepper from Berlin”<sup>907</sup> rather than *Kugelhupf*<sup>908</sup> and *Pfefferkuchen*<sup>909</sup> (C22V 280). By far, Raduga is much more domesticating than the rest, especially when it comes to idiomatic expressions: “[a]nd after all sometimes it is enough to have one man who will start shoving sticks into wheels to do in the whole chariot”<sup>910</sup> rather than “[b]ecause of one man the whole thing could collapse”<sup>911</sup>; the laconic (and ironically Soviet-sounding) “Joint prayer strengthens family”<sup>912</sup> rather than “THE FAMILY THAT PRAYS AS ONE, WILL NEVER EVER BE UNDONE”;<sup>913</sup> “What fly bit you?”<sup>914</sup> rather than “I don’t know what came over you”;<sup>915</sup> the nebulous (and quintessentially Russian) statement that people “*Could maybe squeeze*” (emphasis added)<sup>916</sup> the unappetising delicacy (Milo’s Egyptian cotton) through their throats, rather than “*If need be*, they’ll swallow

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<sup>906</sup> A small fly or a small person

<sup>907</sup> «ржанных кексов и пирожных с перцем из Берлина» (C22R 249)

<sup>908</sup> marble cake or Bundt cake

<sup>909</sup> gingerbread

<sup>910</sup> «А ведь порой достаточно одного человека, который начинает совать палки в колеса, чтобы угробить всю колесницу» (C22R 247).

<sup>911</sup> «Из-за одного человека может развалиться все дело» (C22V 277, C22U 121)

<sup>912</sup> «Совместная молитва крепит семью» (C22R 250)

<sup>913</sup> «СЕМЬЯ, ЧТО ВМЕСТЕ МОЛИТСЯ, ВОВЕКИ НЕ РАСКОЛЕТСЯ» (C22V 280)

<sup>914</sup> «Какая муха тебя укусила?» (C22R 365)

<sup>915</sup> «не знаю, что на вас нашло» (C22K 10, C22V 400, C22U 117)

<sup>916</sup> «— Авось полезет» (C22R 257)



it” (emphasis added);<sup>917</sup> finally, Dobbs’s tragic mistake is the banal “turned right when commanded ‘Left!’”<sup>918</sup> rather than “doing ‘zigs’ when he had to do ‘zags.’”<sup>919</sup>

At this point, it is necessary to clarify that I am not necessarily classifying Raduga’s attempts as “bad” and the other translations’ as “good”; rather, Raduga consistently resists polysemic possibilities and pluralities while the other translations actively and continuously explore them. One of the best examples of enrichment of the TL by means of translation is in a short sentence at the very end of chapter 35, when Dobbs’s plane slices off the wing of another plane, killing Nately:

V/T in Voenizdat and <i>Ural</i> (1967)	Kistiakovskii in Raduga (1988)
From the blow, the sea foamed up, and on the dark-blue smooth expanse <i>there grew a white lily</i> , and the moment the plane disappeared under the water, the lily fell in a seething scatter of <i>apple-green froth</i> . <sup>920</sup> (emphasis added)	. . . poked with its nose the azure water that became white, <i>resembling a lily</i> with petals outspread on the blue waves and then, noiselessly swallowing its prey, tossed to the sky in a <i>greenish geyser</i> . <sup>921</sup> (emphasis added)

Both passages are undoubtedly lyrical. However, whereas V/T *metaphorically* appropriate and incorporate the strangeness of the hyphenated colours on a sentence level, Kistiakovskii hesitates to commit to a description without a *simile* to mediate it each time. Between the four translations, there are a number of strategies that apply only to Raduga: It tends towards specialized, esoteric

<sup>917</sup> «— Если надо, проглотят» (C22V 289, C22U 126)

<sup>918</sup> «повернул вправо при команде „Влево!“» (C22R 372)»

<sup>919</sup> «Доббс, ведя самолёт, делал „зиги“, когда надо было делать „заги“» (C22V 408, C22U 121)

<sup>920</sup> «От удара море вспенилось, и на темно-голубой глади выросла белая лилия, а едва самолёт скрылся под водой, лилия опала бурлящей россыпью яблочно-зелёных пузырей» (C22V 408, C22U 121).

<sup>921</sup> «. . . ткнулся носом в лазурную воды, которая побелела, наподобие лилии с раскинутыми на синих волнах лепестками, а потом, бесшумно проглотив свою жертву, взметнулась к небу зеленоватым гейзером» (C22R 372-373).

technical terms: in *SR*, Voenizdat, and *Ural*, when Alvin Brown completes his bomb run on Milo's own base, Milo laconically commands "Open fire"<sup>922</sup> for the pilot to finish the job; however in Raduga, the abstruse command is "Attack with machine gun fire, hedgehop",<sup>923</sup> likewise, Snowden's blood is washed off Yossarian with "wet swabs of hygroscopic cotton"<sup>924</sup> rather than simply with "wet swabs" (*C22V* 287, *C22U* 125). Raduga tends towards synecdoche by preferring "black swastikas"<sup>925</sup> to "fascist swastikas."<sup>926</sup> It tends towards passive voice or indeterminate predicates, as when Yossarian tells Milo "[a]nd at war *they* kill"<sup>927</sup> rather than "[p]eople are dying."<sup>928</sup>

Interestingly, all four translations seem to suggest that "errors" *can* still be identified without recourse to the ST: After all, everyone around Milo (with the exception of Yossarian) considers him to be a "busybody"<sup>929</sup> in Voenizdat, a "fidget"<sup>930</sup> in *Ural*, or a "dunce"<sup>931</sup> in Raduga. Thus, at first glance, it appears that at least one translation must be "wrong"; however, in the absence of the ST, rather than challenge a translator's competency, these "errors" cease to be erroneous, revealing the possibility of pluralistic interpretive choice (regarding the ST in general and Milo's complex character in specific) that refuses to foreclose the ST as an immutable invariant. Only in extremely rare cases can such "errors" ascertain an (unverifiable) misreading of the ST, as when Sweden in Voenizdat (280) and *Ural* (122) becomes Switzerland (249) in Raduga; when Lisbon in *Krok* (10) becomes Lebanon in Voenizdat (403), *Ural* (118),

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<sup>922</sup> «— Начинать обстрел» (*C22SR* 3, *C22V* 286, *C22U* 124)

<sup>923</sup> «— Атакуй пулемётным огнём на бреющем» (254) To *hedgehop* means to fly at a low altitude.

<sup>924</sup> «влажными тампонами из гигроскопической ваты» (*C22R* 255)

<sup>925</sup> «черные свастики» (*C22R* 249)

<sup>926</sup> «фашистские свастики» (*C22SR* 3, *C22V* 280, *C22U* 122)

<sup>927</sup> «А на войне убивают» (*C22R* 251)

<sup>928</sup> «Люди умирают» (*C22V* 282, *C22U* 123)

<sup>929</sup> «хлопотун» (*C22V* 279)

<sup>930</sup> «непоседа» (*C22U* 121)

<sup>931</sup> «тупица» (*C22R* 249)

and Raduga (368); when the mysterious “Holy Cape”<sup>932</sup> in *Krok* gets translated and transliterated as “Cape Cod”<sup>933</sup> in *Voenizdat*, but then becomes hypercorrected to the comical *mys Treski* (that takes *cod* to mean the fish species) (118) and eventually reverts to the compromise *kemp Kod* (368); or when Alabama in *Krok* (10) becomes Atlanta in *Voenizdat* (403), *Atlantika* (!) in *Ural* (118), but finally reverts to Atlanta in Raduga (368). Surprisingly, not only does this variance not affect the plot in any significant way, but it also shows the natural mechanism of successive translations’ tendency towards the attempt to not only improve each TT predecessor (whether produced by the same translator or not) but also the ST itself. In contrast to these interpretive choices, there is also a number of interventions that appear more forcefully imposed, for instance when Poland, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria are omitted from the list of Milo’s trading partners in *Voenizdat* (122) (after all, this would put them on a par with his Nazi trading partners), and Romania is added to the list in Raduga (249), but these remain minor and do not affect the overall ideological slant of the narrative. Other examples include Cathcart changing his mind about Milo’s low mission count only *after* he begins to fear losing Milo’s services in *Voenizdat*, *Ural*, and Raduga, whereas in *Krok* he asks, “And is that so very bad?”<sup>934</sup> Surprisingly, the military publisher does show an admirable ethos when every editorial footnote is visibly marked as such, and so when discussion comes around to a historical figure such as Lord Haw-Haw or Axis Sally, it is quite clear who would like to remind the reader that these are “[t]raitors, engaged in the time of war in radio propaganda in English —*Ed.*”;<sup>935</sup> in comparison, Raduga incorporates the assertion directly into the prose (250), vaguely conflating the narrative and its ideological framing.

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<sup>932</sup> «Святой мыс» (C22K 10)

<sup>933</sup> «мыс Код» (C22V 403)

<sup>934</sup> «— А разве это так уж плохо?» (C22K 10)

<sup>935</sup> «Предатели, занимавшиеся во время войны радиопропагандой на английском языке. — *Прим. ред.*» (C22V 281n1)

## Simple Recursion

The strategy of continuous improvement often appears in the translators' approach to the gradual rewriting of parallelisms: Voenizdat gives "a decrepit colonel with *sharp* haemorrhoidal pain and *tender* love for peanuts";<sup>936</sup> *Ural* improves on this with "a decrepit colonel with *sharp* haemorrhoidal pain and a *sharpened* appetite for peanuts";<sup>937</sup> finally, Raduga takes the sober approach with "a decrepit colonel with bursitis who loved nuts."<sup>938</sup> However, the ultimate test of textual appropriation appears in the different translations of Milo's comically complex description of his international trades that is obviously predicated on the rhyming of the product and its destination, recreated and improved upon *in every successive translation*. However, owing to the constrained properties of the doggerel, each iteration of it must like a magnified fractal image invariably produce a new and unique version of the same fractal image which defeats the point of back-translating each example of the doggerel into English. In fact, I must offer one brand-new iteration in English using Voenizdat as a starting point and then provide the examples from the ST in Russian (see next page): "“And beside this, lemon peels. . .’ ‘Peels?’ ‘Peels—for New York meals, éclairs—for Tangiers chargé d'affaires, pork—for farmers in York, olives—for Athens alcoholics, biscuit—side for Cretan brisket.” This translatorial “catch” demonstrates the incredibly generative capacity of translation. However, more importantly, by avoiding the poetic either/or choice of dynamic or formal equivalence either of which destroys the ST unless it is recreated from scratch, the passage provides a striking example of the ultimate failure of equivalence, in this case practically impossible, and of the inherent nonsense of the notion of “correct” or “best” translation. Now, revisiting my assertion at the beginning of my

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<sup>936</sup> «дряхлого полковника с острым геморроем и нежной любовью к земляным орехам» (C22V 277)

<sup>937</sup> «дряхлого полковника с острым геморроем и обострённым аппетитом к земляным орехам» (C22U 121)

<sup>938</sup> «дряхлым полковником с бурситом, который любил орехи» (C22R 247)

**Titov in *SR*  
(1964)**

И кроме того, пробка.  
— Пробка?  
— Её надо отправить в  
Нью-Йорк, обувь — в  
Тулузу, свинину — в  
Мессину и мандарины — в  
Новый Орлеан. (3)

**V/T in *Voenizdat*  
and *Ural* (1967)**

И кроме того, лимонные  
корки. . .  
— Корки?  
— Корки — для Нью-  
Йорка, эклеры — для  
Танжера, свинину — в  
Мессину, маслины — в  
Афины, бисквит — на  
остров Крит. (404, 119)

**Kistiakovskii in *Raduga*  
(1988)**

И норка. . .  
— Это ты про мою ферму?  
— Да нет, норка с  
аукционов Нью-Йорка  
запродана . . . в магазины  
Лондона для скупки губки  
на рынках Алжира, чтобы  
обменять её на сало из  
Йоркшира для поставщиков  
швейцарского сыра,  
который пойдёт в уплату за  
масло, посланное из Дании  
шахтёрам в Ньюкасле.  
— Мило!..  
— Ничего не поделаешь,  
сэр, у нас есть шахты в  
Ньюкасле. (369-370)

thesis, that the “mistranslated” ST “betrayed” its readers, I must revise my position: the notion that “[t]he entire force of a literary work can be destroyed by mistranslating a single word or expression” (Leighton, *Two Worlds* 208) is false; rather, it is transparent and invisible ideological modification that shakes up worldviews and leaves us feeling betrayed when we discover our path back to the ST. Forceful and vibrant recreation of the ST that reflects the struggle of the translator, as well as visible and effective resistance (rather than mere attempts at it or appearances of it) directed against regimes of domestication and automatization remain the only criteria of an acceptable translation.

It is not an accident that V/T knows just when to stop when Milo jokingly warns Cathcart to not bring coals to Newcastle and their (actually helpful) editor’s footnote (that identifies itself as such) explains not only the English proverb, but gives the Russian dynamic equivalent of

“going to Tula with one’s own samovar<sup>939</sup>” (405n1). Kistiakovskii, on the other hand, overplays his hand and builds the proverb and the explanation right into the repartee whereby Milo is eventually obliged to explain to Cathcart that “There’s nothing we can do, sir, we have mines in Newcastle” (370).<sup>940</sup> I do not call Kistiakovskii’s addendum *otsebiatina* (an invention from the self) because his decision to amalgamate the text and peritext is here both an interpretive and performative choice. However, now an obvious question becomes important to counter: What about Rait? Cannot we read her by means of disregarding the ST, thereby effacing her translatorial sins? We cannot. Titov and V/T’s translation strategies *remain visible even in the absence of the ST*, demonstrating not that their text is by far superior to its supposedly formally and artistically better successor by virtue of the evidence of the resistant remainder in their translations *despite censorial editorial interventions of any kind*. “Art,” Iosif Brodskii insisted, “is . . . an attempt to create an alternative reality,” so if the translatorial precepts of socialist realism attempted fruitlessly to reveal a world that could never be, then a force of equal magnitude had to arise and oppose it, so that art would not “relinquish the principle of necessity,” would not “surrender its position,” would not consign its fate “to fulfilling a purely decorative function” (221); after all, “a poet eager to demonstrate his ability for self-effacement should not be content with using neutral diction; in theory, he ought to take the next logical step and shut up altogether” (222). In 1973, when Rait was making translation of Vonnegut into a Soviet cottage industry, Anatolii Kuznetsov admitted that

I regard my own past silence as a crime. My own self-censorship was motivated by cowardice and the instinct of self-preservation. It is nothing to be proud of; I

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<sup>939</sup> A traditional (usually decorated) Russian tea urn. Tula is an industrial city that has been famous for its *samovars* since the 1700s.

<sup>940</sup> «— Ничего не поделаешь, сэр, у нас есть шахты в Ньюкасле» (369-370).

would even go further and say that no writer in the Soviet Union has anything very much to be proud of, not one writer! Even the great—Pasternak, Tsvetayeva, and Akhmatova—practised at least the self-censorship of silence. And the contemporary poetess Bella Akhmadulina . . . writes almost only about eternal values and does not reveal her attitude to the Orwellian horrors surrounding her: the invasion of Czechoslovakia, the imprisonment of Sinyavsky, Daniel, Ginzburg, and Marchenko, and much else. (Kuznetsov et al. 36)

Indeed, there were those who chose not to shut up. Some paid with their citizenships, some with their lives, and some with their livelihoods. Others bowed in submission and showed their true colours. Indeed, throughout the entirety of the Titov and V/T versions of *C22* there are numerous examples of why, in the wake of *Uralovka-22*, the *obkom*<sup>941</sup> of the CPSU (Central Party of the Soviet Union) demanded the resignation of its chief editor Zhora Krasnov (Matveev n. pag.) whose accusers have likely never even seen the ST, the matter soon swept under the carpet and relegated to history. In the end, there is no better example of resistance than in one of Vilenskii and Titov's minor but thunderous *Ural* additions, when Milo Minderbinder indignantly exclaims at the news that the delivery of his goods by German pilots to an American military base will be confiscated: "What, are we in Russia?"<sup>942</sup>

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<sup>941</sup> regional committee

<sup>942</sup> «— Мы что, в России?» (*C22U* 121)

**Chapter 5**  
**Per aspera ad astra:**  
**Notes Towards a New Translation Praxis**

Grau, teurer Freund, ist alle Theorie,  
und grün des Lebens goldner Baum.<sup>943</sup>

— Johann Wolfgang von Goethe  
*Faust: The First Part of the Tragedy*

Бессмысленно внушать представление  
об аромате дыни человеку, который  
годами жевал сапожные шнурки.<sup>944</sup>

—Viktor Shklovskii to Sergei Dovlatov  
*Solo on Underwood. Solo on IBM.*

“What an impossible dream,” said Sim.  
“People couldn’t possibly live in such a  
nightmare. Forget it. You’re awake now.”

—Ray Bradbury  
“Frost and Fire”

No original text exists. No ideal translation exists. Any translation can achieve formal equivalence, but only covert translations that pass for original texts can attempt to asymptotically become functionally equivalent; because no translation is fully covert, no translation can achieve full functional equivalence. Only *effective* translations are possible, that use intertextuality to unapologetically appropriate the ST that came before and to demonstrate a forceful and visible literary and ideological resistance using strategies such as domestication and foreignization as necessary. What obstacles remain before these practices? How can new translations that espouse new principles survive when facing competition from canonical works? What are some examples of the effective translation? How do such translations inform the ethos of creating “original” literature and its subsequent translation? To these final questions I turn next.

**Pearls Before Swine**

After the Era of Stagnation, after *perestroika*, after the fall of the U.S.S.R. itself, Russian TS did not easily take the direction away from dichotomies and towards pluralism and

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<sup>943</sup> “Grey, dear friend is every theory, / and green the golden tree of life.”

<sup>944</sup> “It is meaningless to suggest the impression of the aroma of melon to a person who for years chewed bootlaces.”



syncretism (the same applied to most Soviet cultural movements some of which, like modernism, were publically squashed as ideologically undesirable by the 1930s and others, like postmodernism, which remained a well-hidden underground phenomenon from the 1960s to 1991). One discussion in particular set the tone not only for all other discussions and debates in Russian TS at the end of the twentieth century, but for those of the twenty-first. In 1996, the Slavist and translation expert Elizabeth Markstein published in *IL* “The Postmodern Conception of Translation (With a Question Mark or Without)”<sup>945</sup> where she mused that, although postmodernism can be seen as beginning with François Rabelais and Hieronymus Bosch (or, specifically with regard to translation, with Friedrich Hölderlin), or even as a continuation of the “break in art”<sup>946</sup> begun by Baudelaire and Cézanne and named modernism where the prefix *post* “signals the sobering-up after all that which happened with humanity ever since,”<sup>947</sup> there emerged a need for a new translational method, marked by Wolfgang Hildesheimer’s 1975 lecture “The End of Fiction” and its discussion of the “*conventionality* of fabulistic realistic writing, the artistic creation of quasireality offered to us as reality.”<sup>948</sup> Markstein argues that the Soviets have for decades assumed that a translation must read like an original work, or that *realisticheskii* translation reached the golden mean, invoking the postulate of “naturalness”,<sup>949</sup> however, the desire to recreate the ST where the author “as if by chance began to speak in a foreign language”<sup>950</sup> is a fiction. Because everything in TS must begin with St. Jerome’s brand of scriptural translation, Markstein contrasts Martin Luther with Martin Buber and Franz Rozenweig: the first made it his goal to preserve some of the ancient Hebrew melodies in

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<sup>945</sup> «Постмодернистская концепция перевода (с вопросительным знаком или без него)»

<sup>946</sup> «слома в искусстве» (267)

<sup>947</sup> «сигнализирует отрезвление после всего, что с человечеством с тех пор случилось» (267)

<sup>948</sup> «условность фабульного реалистического письма, художественное сотворение квазидействительности, предлагаемой нам как реальность» (267)

<sup>949</sup> «естественность» (267)

<sup>950</sup> «невзначай заговорившего на чужом языке» (267)

German, but ultimately created a vernacular Bible; the latter two wanted to bring German as close to the ancient Hebrew as possible (268). Moreover, Rosenzweig argued that, if the Bible ever *did* become “one’s own, familiar, mastered, then it is necessary for it to use a foreign, unfamiliar sound from the outside to each time newly disturb the contented satiety of the man who supposedly mastered it.”<sup>951</sup> The Old Testament that Buber began and Rosenzweig completed did not read easily and attracted criticism (Ludwig Wittgenstein being one of its few defenders) because the Luther Bible was too entrenched in the hearts and minds of Germans (268). In 1991, when the ability to talk and write about religion returned to Russia, Kirill Logachev produced a translation of the Acts of the Apostles that attempted to recreate the Buber/Rosenzweig feat in Russian; not only did Logachev use *bukvalizm* (literalism) and broke Russian stylistic norms, but he also attempted to enrich the Russian language using this method (268). Directly tying these and other examples to the terms “unfamiliar . . . hard . . . obstinate”<sup>952</sup> and adding them to Douglas Robinson’s *subversive*, Markstein argues that

precisely our times have become postmodern—fast and hard, when illusions and utopias are destroyed. And these times are very conducive to the deconstruction of fictions, to the denuding of methods, to the exposure of clichés and smoothwriting, to overcoming of *literariness*, of all, I repeat, that had begun already before us.<sup>953</sup>

A brave new world opened up before the Russians who could now travel to countries far and wide and browse the Internet, who have a much better grasp of various languages, and who as

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<sup>951</sup> «стала своей, привычной, освоенной, то надо, чтобы она чужим, непривычным звуком извне каждый раз заново будоражила довольную сытость человека, якобы освоившего её» (trans. and qtd. in Markstein 268).

<sup>952</sup> «непривычный . . . жёсткий . . . строптивый» (269)

<sup>953</sup> «именно наши времена и стали постмодерными — быстрые и жёсткие, когда иллюзии и утопии разрушены. И времена эти очень способствуют деконструкции фикций, обнажению приёмов, разоблачению клише и гладкописания, преодолению литературности, всего, повторяю, что началось уже до нас» (269)

readers have become qualified and improved their tastes, showing that they are ready to participate in translatorial experiments (270).

One of the first of these experiments is T. A. Mikhailova and Vadim Rudnev's *The House in the Bear's Corner*<sup>954</sup> published as part of *Winnie the Pooh and the Philosophy of Everyday Language*<sup>955</sup> in 1994. Markstein is transfixed by the book's mixture of Latin and Cyrillic scripts in the title «Winnie-Пых» and the preservation of certain words in the text proper in Latin script which, in turn, “preserves the associative series”<sup>956</sup> of the words (for example, “*Woozle*—puzzle, weasel, waddle, wheeze, wool; *Heffalump*—lump” [270]). More importantly, Markstein draws a connection between Hildesheimer's Theatre of the Absurd and Rudnev's explanation of his “analytical method” which explicitly requires to

not give the reader, even for a second, the opportunity to forget that before his eyes is a text translated from a foreign tongue, structuring reality completely differently than his native tongue; to remind him of this in every word so that he would not become immersed thoughtlessly into that which “happens,” but in detail follow those linguistic games which the author plays in front of him, and in this case, also the translator.<sup>957</sup>

Rudnev's “analytical” translation achieves the Brechtian *alienation effect* by playing with typographical design, preserving characters' names and exclamations (both in Latin typeface and transliterated into Russian), by creating playful and lively neologisms from English words (for

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<sup>954</sup> «Дом в медвежьем углу»

<sup>955</sup> «Винни Пух и философия обыденного языка»

<sup>956</sup> «сохранить ассоциативные ряды» (270)

<sup>957</sup> «не дать читателю забыть ни на секунду, что перед его глазами текст, переведённый с иностранного языка, совершенно по-другому, чем его родной язык, структурирующего реальность; напоминать ему об этом каждым словом с тем, чтобы он не погружался бездумно в то, что “происходит”, а подробно следил за теми языковыми партиями, которые разыгрывает перед ним автор, а в данном случае и переводчик» (Rudnev qtd. in Nesterova 94)

example, “*bonsirovat*’, *bonsanut*’, *bons*, *debonsirovka*” from *bounce*) (271), and by deploying *bukvalizm* and *ostranenie* that coexists with intertextual references to popular Soviet songs (271). In contrast, Zakhoder’s “synthetic” translation (or *adaptation*) espouses the Stanislavskian attempt to mimetically reproduce reality by means of dynamic equivalence (the byline states “Retold by Boris Zakhoder”<sup>958</sup> and the book’s introduction explains that Zakhoder “taught” Winnie and his friends Russian, adding that they speak English much better) (271). Markstein reasons that Rudnev’s inclusion of foreign glyphs and words is acceptable not only because individuals sometimes find words unfamiliar to them in their *own* language, but also because Russian children in the 1990s become familiar with some words from elementary school classes and with others from advertising of Western products<sup>959</sup> or from context (such as “Happy Birthday”) (271). However, above all, Markstein carefully adds that, whether you call it pluralism or relativism, this translation method challenges the ST but does not necessarily preclude other translation methods (272). In the same issue of *IL*, immediately following Markstein’s article, there appeared the response of literary scholar and critic Inna Bernshtein, titled “Conception with a Question Mark.”<sup>960</sup> It was terse, pointed, and typically Soviet: “[n]o postmodernism of any kind exists in contemporary translation, and it does not seem that it will appear.”<sup>961</sup> Bernshtein is not ready to discuss sacred texts, and anyway the issue at hand is not one of postmodernism but the debate between *bukval’nyi* (literal) and *svobodnyi* (free) translation; *bukvalisty* are only useful insofar as they produce interlinear trots and are incapable of creating works of art (272). Rudnev’s analytical translation bears no interest for Bernshtein and in fact it is not a translation at all, though it could be used for pedagogical reasons, as a mnemonic aid for the names of animals (273).

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<sup>958</sup> «Пересказал Борис Заходер»

<sup>959</sup> This is an important point. In a reverse situation, Western children could not even begin to recognize words written in Cyrillic script on foreign products. In this way, Markstein inadvertently reveals the persistent market economy hegemony of English over Russian as well as many other languages.

<sup>960</sup> «Концепция с вопросительным знаком»

<sup>961</sup> «никакого постмодернизма в современном переводе нет и непохоже, чтобы он появился» (272)

## Dusting the Iron Curtain

If the first post-Soviet decade might have been an era of confusion and uncertainty, the second proved abundantly clear why Moses had to lead the Israelites in circles around the desert for forty years before entering the Promised Land: the generation of those who had the mentality of slaves had to die out first.<sup>962</sup> It is not in the least surprising that V. S. Modestov's 2006 textbook on translation officially recommended for the teaching of literary studies in institutions of higher education of the Russian Federation, titled *Khudozhestvennyi perevod. Istoriia. Teoriia. Praktika*. (*Artistic Translation: History. Theory. Practice.*), begins the old tune again. Which TS scholars does Modestov include in his introduction to the *khudozhestvennyi* (artistic) method (now the *only* acceptable method of translation)? Barkhudarov, Komissarov, Retsker, and Shveitser. Whom does he include as the method's proponents? Apt, Gasparov, Gachechiladze, Kashkin, Kopanev, Mkrtchian, Topper, and Toury (!) (21). Whom does he praise? Marshak and Lozinskii (24), St. Jerome and his dictum "non verbum e verbo, sed sensum ex[p]rimere de sensu,"<sup>963</sup> Petr I and his own dictum about "sens" (26), "the master of Russian [!] translation studies"<sup>964</sup> Fedorov as well as Vinogradov and Liubimov (27). An appendix titled "Opinions of Russian translators of 18th-20th Centuries" includes a carefully-pruned list of names (461), but the youngest person on the list is Nikolai Zabolotskii (1903-1958). Who is nowhere to be found in Modestov's overview? Steiner, Frawley, Lewis, Berman, Venuti, Robinson, Hatim, Koskinen, Tymoczko, Munday, or Kemppanen. It is not difficult to identify Modestov's bias because already on the third page of his discussion he pledges allegiance to functional equivalence and skopos theory (23, 35), thereby aligning himself with Nida and Vermeer and distinctly Soviet TS

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<sup>962</sup> Whether or not a new pharaoh emerged to replace the old in the case of Russia is another question altogether.

<sup>963</sup> "not word from word but sense to express from sense" (26)

<sup>964</sup> «мэтр российского переводоведения» (27)

theories more than forty years old. Worst of all, Modestov minces his words in that all-too-familiar fashion: on the one hand, the goal of *khudozhestvennyi* translation is the “maximally full recreation of the original . . . and not the creation of a new original work”;<sup>965</sup> on the other hand the method entails “original interpretational artistry.”<sup>966</sup> Modestov’s textbook is hardly an exception. V. V. Sdobnikov and O. V. Petrova’s *Theory of Translation* published in the same year, this time recommended by the state for the teaching of linguistics, lambastes Fedorov and sings praises to Kashkin in its overview of Soviet TS in the 1950s and 1960s (57) and includes lengthy epigraphs from Gachechiladze that introduce the discussion of *khudozhestvennyi* translation (344); the discussion unsurprisingly soon boils down to a condemnation of *bukvalizm* (356). A. O. Ivanov’s *Non-Equivalent Lexicon*,<sup>967</sup> not endorsed by the state but produced by the philological faculty of the St. Petersburg National University (presumably for in-house use), begins with a section titled “Equivalence as a Central Problem of the Theory of Translation”<sup>968</sup> where Ivanov reminds us of the names Fedorov, Komissarov, Shveitser, Retsker, Barkhudarov, and Nida (5) and launches into Nida’s formal/dynamic equivalence and Jakobson’s equivalence-in-difference (6). Unlike Sdobnikov and Petrova, Ivanov praises Fedorov (10), however the overview of Nida’s work soon takes centre-stage (13), leading to the discussion of theorists like Latyshev (Timko’s dissertation supervisor) (18, 28) and Komissarov (19). To his credit, Ivanov eschews the now-traditional castigation of the letter; however, he eventually rehabilitates Fedorov and his *adekvatnyi* (adequate) translation by separating it from its (still necessary) counterpart of functional equivalence (75). Chukovskii would shed a proud tear.

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<sup>965</sup> «максимально полное воспроизведение подлинника (в единстве его содержания и формы) . . . а не создание нового оригинального произведения» (25)

<sup>966</sup> «оригинальное интерпретационное творчество» (25)

<sup>967</sup> «Безэквивалентная лексика»

<sup>968</sup> «Эквивалентность как центральная проблема теории перевода» (5)

Outside of official channels, lone voices arose in dissent. In 2005, N. M. Nesterova published “The Alien to Promptly Feel One’s Own”<sup>969</sup> where she argues against the “myth of the secondariness of translation, its lack of independence, the subordination of translatorial art.”<sup>970</sup> Nesterova not only recognizes translation as an interdisciplinary science (92) but uses a diverse variety of critics such as Bakhtin, Derrida, and Lacan to reach the conclusion that “primacy as a textual category is relative. All texts are simultaneously both primary and secondary.”<sup>971</sup> Nesterova contrasts Russian and Westerns conceptions concluding that “[t]he manifestation of secondariness in the text of translation depends on how much the translator wanted, as V. Briusov wrote, ‘the alien to promptly feel one’s own’” (93). She uses Schleiermacher’s and Venuti’s recommendations to point out practical examples, such as Nabokov’s *EO* and Rudnev’s “analytical method.”<sup>972</sup> Nesterova also connects this “credo” to José Ortega y Gasset, Fet, Viazemskii, and Schleiermacher (94) and goes on to contrast Rudnev’s translation of *Winnie the Pooh* with Zakhoder’s (94) finding both translations to be primary, albeit Zakhoder’s also decidedly domesticating (95). Nesterova offers a very interesting *divergentnyi* (divergent) model of translation that demonstrates that every text is simultaneously both a translation and an original: the author first draws the material for his ST from an intertextual space, a sort of Jungian collective (un)conscious (95) and the translator weaves the TT into a parallel intertextual space (96); in addition, the translation is moderated by the “controls” (rather than norms) that direct the translator’s activities when he constructs a “semiotic bridge” between the two intertextual spaces, “conquers” a space into which to transplant the ST, and creates new intertextual links (96). As a result, the “existential space”<sup>973</sup> of the ST is ever-expanding due to

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<sup>969</sup> «Чужое вмиг почувствовать своим»

<sup>970</sup> «миф о вторичности перевода, о несамостоятельности, подчинённости переводческого искусства» (97)

<sup>971</sup> «первичность как текстовая категория является относительной. Все тексты являются одновременно и первичными, и вторичными» (92)

<sup>972</sup> As opposed to *synthetic* (Borisenko, “Fear” 178)

<sup>973</sup> «бытийное пространство» (96)

the additional semantic values and interpretations added to it (96). In 2006, Natal'ia Galeeva published "Dichotomies in Translational Activity," where she takes a similar approach by tracing the roots of TS through structural linguistics and the work of de Saussure, Barthes, Even-Zohar, Lacan, and Levi-Strauss (127). Galeeva argues that, because translation is by definition oppositional, it is often described with a series of dichotomies (127); supplementing Hatim and Mason's schema, Galeeva lists *bukval'nyi/vol'nyi* translation, *form/content*, *formal/dynamic equivalence*, *semantic/communicative* translation, *visibility/invisibility* (129) and Pym's *transfer/translation* (130). Because of the demands that these dichotomies place on TS, Galeeva judges linguistic involvement to be insufficient, recommending the involvement of specialists from fields such as hermeneutics, linguoculturology, culturological theory of translation, publishing industry, and so forth (129). Moreover, she argues that technical, scientific, literary and other translations are not necessarily oppositional in nature because of the existence of "integrative textual properties of translational activity . . . independent from the type of translation"<sup>974</sup> (Galeeva bases this conclusion on the argument that "all texts must satisfy basic standards of textuality before acquiring the additional characteristics of being literary, technical, oral, etc." [Hatim and Mason vii]). Ultimately, Galeeva rejects the *vol'nyi/bukval'nyi* dichotomy by arguing that both approaches in their essence are metaphors that are ineffective and often counterproductive in practice and proposes the *gibridnyi* (hybrid) translation that syncretizes *bukvalizm* (literalism) with *vol'nost'* (freedom) and is present in recent formulations<sup>975</sup> by the

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<sup>974</sup> «интегративные текстовые свойства переводческой деятельности, независимые от вида перевода» (129) However, Galeeva later adds that not only do different types of texts still require different professional skills (reminding us that Schleiermacher differentiated the Dolmetscher who translates commercial texts and the Übersetzer who translates artistic ones [132]), but that the same text may also be treated differently in different cultures (133).

<sup>975</sup> Galeeva also attempts to fit Dryden's classification of translation with her own, and while I agree that Dryden's conception of *metaphrase* can be matched to *bukval'nyi* (literal) translation and *paraphrase* to *khudozhestvennyi* (artistic) translation, I disagree with Galeeva's argument that Dryden's category of *imitation* can be matched to *vol'nyi* (free) translation because *khudozhestvennyi* translation is only a subset of *vol'nyi* translation, the two embodying an identical method (apart from their ideological slant).



Chinese scholar Han Ziman (131). As a result, the concept of equivalence becomes unnecessary and the only dichotomy that remains is cultural (131), changing the issue to that of translation's orientation towards the source culture or target culture (132) and requiring the inclusion of descriptive methodology (such as Toury's) in TS (133).

### **Same Shit, Different Decade**

The benefits of translatorial syncretism had not yet been fully adopted in the West, but in Russia, the debate (on both sides strongly reminiscent in tone and fierceness of Kashkin's anti-bukvalizm crusade in the 1950s and Nabokov's *EO* affair in *NYREV* in the 1960s) came to a head in 2007 in the translation journal *Mosty* where the translator and translation scholar Alexandra Borisenko published the article "Don't Shout 'Bukvalizm'!"<sup>976</sup> in which she recruits Goethe, Schleiermacher, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Viazemskii, Fet, Briusov, and Nabokov (25) to express an age-old frustration about an "us vs. them" dichotomy: "They have bukvalizm, we have adequate, 'realistic' translation. Somehow it happened that bukvalizm happens only with 'them' . . . with elements alien to us—with talentless translators, with dangerous formalists."<sup>977</sup> The problem, Borisenko explains, was that *realisticheskii* translation and *bukvalisticheskii* translation did not mean much more than "good" and "bad" in terms of translation assessment (26). She is also frustrated with the fact that Western European TS already speaks of *ochuzhdaiushchii* (foreignizing) and *osvaiuvaiushchii* (domesticating) translation while Russia is stuck in the past with its old categories (26). Part of the problem, Borisenko notes, is that "[o]ur answer to Schleiermacher is brief and simple—we do not read him. The lecture 'On the Different

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<sup>976</sup> «Не кричи, „Буквализм!“»

<sup>977</sup> «У них — буквализм, у нас адекватный, "реалистический" перевод. Как-то так повелось что буквализм бывает только "у них" . . . у чуждых нам элементов — у бездарных переводчиков, у опасных формалистов» (25).

Methods of Translation' has to date [2007] not been translated fully into Russian."<sup>978</sup> After all, neither Schleiermacher nor Gasparov believed in a golden mean (31) while Soviet TS was convinced that this golden mean was found in *adekvatnyi*, *tvorcheskii*, or *realisticheskii*, translation (31). In contrast, the benefits of foreignization are the fostering of interest in foreign languages and cultures as well as in the author as their carrier (32) and the enrichment of one's own tongue and literature with foreign literary approaches (33). Unfortunately, Borisenko closes her article with a subjective, limiting assessment: the Soviet masters did not domesticate (after all, V. P. Golyshev's translations of Faulkner correspond to every word of the ST and yet he was never accused of *bukvalizm*) (34).

The linguist, translator, and heir-apparent to Kashkin, Viktor Lanchikov responded to Borisenko in "A Penthouse Made of Ivory"<sup>979</sup> in the very next issue of *Mosty* where he argues that Borisenko's arguments are mostly "journalistic clichés"<sup>980</sup> and mocks Borisenko's idea that all struggles in Soviet times were ideological (16). Lanchikov defers to the bible of Chukovskii's *High Art* (16) while having the temerity to insist that common antipathy towards *bukvalisty* in Soviet times actually needs to be demonstrated (17) and that the Soviet period was actually the *only* time in the past three hundred years when *bukvalizm* was actually very successful. Readers, he argues, respond poorly to such translations (18) and do not wish to be lab rats in linguoculturological experiments (2) while Brecht (whom Borisenko used as an example) opposed the *bukvalisticheskii* method (20n3). Conveniently disregarding Shklovskii's work, Lanchikov claims that the term *ochuzhdaiushchii* (foreignizing) is just a politically correct replacement for *bukvalisticheskii* (21). Assuming that the author's distinct persona can be

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<sup>978</sup> «Наш ответ Шлейермахеру краток и прост — мы его не читаем. Лекция „О разных методах перевода“ до сих пор [2007] не переведена полностью на русский язык» (30).

<sup>979</sup> «Пентхаус из слоновой кости»

<sup>980</sup> «публицистические штампы» (15)

isolated within the text, he adds that the “portrait” of the author cannot be preserved if it is mixed with the background into a “motley hodgepodge”<sup>981</sup> and a “vulgar multiculturalism”;<sup>982</sup> *bukvalisticheskii* translation is not elite, but “glamorous.”<sup>983</sup> After all, the Russian language is being invaded by foreignisms<sup>984</sup> and additional foreignization is tantamount to asking for the fireplace to be lit during a conflagration (27).

The first 2008 issue of *Mosty* carried Borisenko’s response and Lanchikov’s rebuttal. In “One More Time about Bukvalizm,”<sup>985</sup> Borisenko states that any clichés in her articles are, in fact, a result of the aesthetic hegemony that prevents discussing or even thinking about the anathema concept (7), after all (here Borisenko restates Briusov) *bukvalizm* does not exist for its own sake; rather, it aids a Shklovskian “exit from an automatism of perception”<sup>986</sup> *Adekvatnyi* (adequate) translation lacks any clear criteria of “good” or “bad” (11); it is an intuitive, normative, traditional concept (13) and domestication

ignores the connection between language and thought. An Englishman structures reality differently than a Russian. A Russian reading an English novel in the original inescapably feels this. This same tension can be also preserved in a Russian translation; it has a right to exist.<sup>987</sup>

Lanchikov’s concern for the “ordinary reader,” Borisenko argues, is a pretense, because he would hardly acquiesce to the demands made by the Internet fans of *Harry Potter* for a more

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<sup>981</sup> «пёструю мешанину» (25)

<sup>982</sup> «вульгарный мультикультурализм» (25)

<sup>983</sup> «гламурен» (27) In Russian, the word has a strongly negative connotation.

<sup>984</sup> This worn-out argument is the same that Leighton already made in 1991, alarmed over his “German, Italian, Spanish, and Japanese” colleagues who “have expressed concern, even alarm, over the ‘Americanization’ of their languages” (*Two Worlds* 222) and “Russian newspaper articles, stories, and novels” filled with foreign words (223).

<sup>985</sup> «Ещё раз о буквализме»

<sup>986</sup> «вывод из автоматизма восприятия» (10)

<sup>987</sup> «игнорирует связь между языком и мышлением. Англичанин структурирует реальность иначе, чем русский. Русский, читающий английский роман в оригинале, неизбежно чувствует это. Это же напряжение может сохраняться и в русском переводе, оно имеет право на существование» (12).

*tochnyi* (accurate) translation that is instead interpreted as *bukvalizm* (literalism) (13).

Lanchikov's vicious response, "According to Rules of In-Generalness,"<sup>988</sup> shows the best Soviet traditions of literary criticism when he responds to Borisenko with *ad hominem* attacks on hypothetical translated samples of her article (Would she prefer to be judged by an awkward, "foreignizing" translation or a polished one?) (15) and the emphatic insistence that translation is a "secondary communicative act. Se-con-dary."<sup>989</sup> How dare Borisenko subordinate the role of the author! Lanchikov wishes to resurrect the notion of *traduttori traditori* by arguing that "according to tacit agreement between the author, translator, and readers, the translator merely recreates the communicative intentions of the author",<sup>990</sup> otherwise the translator betrays his agreement (15). After all, what publisher would agree to spend time, money, and effort on releasing competing translations? (17) Kashkin must be spinning in his grave! (17-18). "This is all strange," concludes Lanchikov, "History 'in general.' Formal accuracy 'in general.' Translation 'in general' (as if prose, poetry, sacred texts are phenomena of the same order). Language 'in general.'"<sup>991</sup> God forbid "tomorrow in an argument with an editor some incompetent could justify his clumsy translation with the idea that it is just one of a 'hundred flowers,' and an exotic one to boot, and that his translation 'paves the way to others'"!<sup>992</sup> Such a horror cannot come to pass, but "from the height of an ivory penthouse these quite earthly concerns really can seem to be 'an ideological habit of the "struggle" of methods.'"<sup>993</sup>

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<sup>988</sup> «По законам вообщестики»

<sup>989</sup> «вторичный коммуникативный акт Вто-рич-ный» (15)

<sup>990</sup> «по молчаливому уговору между автором, переводчиком и читателями переводчик всего лишь воспроизводит коммуникативное намерение автора» (15)

<sup>991</sup> «Странно всё это. История „вообще.“ Формальная точность „вообще.“ Перевод „вообще“ (как будто проза, поэзия, сакральные тексты — явления одного порядка. Язык „вообще“» (19).

<sup>992</sup> «завтра любой неумеха в споре с редактором может оправдывать свои косолапый перевод тем, что это просто один и ста цветов, и притом экзотический, и что его перевод „прокладывает дорогу другим“» (19).

<sup>993</sup> «с высоты пентхауса из слоновой кости, это вполне земные заботу действительно могут показаться „идеологической привычкой «борьбы» методов“» (19)

Meanwhile, another edition of Chukovskii's *High Art* was released in the same year and the following year Lanchikov became the chief editor of *Mosty*.

### **Verba volant, scripta manent**

In 2011, Chukovskii's *High Art* was released again. In the same year, having made *Mosty* into his personal soapbox, Lanchikov published "The Topography of the Search,"<sup>994</sup> where he accused Venuti and his followers of perpetrating "a rebellion against 'the laws of nature'—an attempt to overcome the law of increasing standardization."<sup>995</sup> Lanchikov uses phrases such as "declared war"<sup>996</sup> and "*pokushenie*"<sup>997</sup> with improper means"<sup>998</sup> (3; emphasis added) in reference to the distortion of the "image of the author."<sup>999</sup> Meanwhile, Borisenko presented "Fear of Foreignization: 'Soviet School' in Russian Literary Translation" at the *Domestication and Foreignization in Translation Studies* conference in Joensuu, Finland, arguing that

[a]fter the Perestroika, the situation on the translation and book market changed dramatically: the number of titles went up, circulation numbers plummeted, target audiences became more varied, as did the approaches to translation. Since the early 1990s there has been virtually no censorship in literature and translation. Paradoxically, all this diversity and freedom had no consequences for aesthetic expectations of the reading public and critics: standards of literary translation were frozen in the same shape as they had been in Soviet times. (177)

In 2012, Borisenko's student Andrei Azov published an incisive article "Towards the History of the Theory of Translation in the Soviet Union: The Problem of Realistic Translation"<sup>1000</sup> that in

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<sup>994</sup> «Топография поиска»

<sup>995</sup> «бунт против „законов природы“ – попытку преодолеть закон возрастания стандартизации» (3)

<sup>996</sup> «объявивших войну» (3)

<sup>997</sup> The word means both *assassination attempt* and *encroachment*.

<sup>998</sup> «покушением с негодными средствами» (3)

<sup>999</sup> «облик автора» (6)

<sup>1000</sup> «К истории теории перевода в Советском Союзе. Проблема реалистического перевода.»

2013 he expanded and published as *The Defeated Bukvalisty*<sup>1001</sup> which collected many accolades, including “Best Book in the Humanities”<sup>1002</sup> awarded by the Association of Russian Book Publishers (ASKI) (“Podvedeny itogi” 10).

In 2014, Chukovskii’s *High Art* was released once more and Lanchikov published yet another scathing polemic, “Science Clean and Not-So-Clean,”<sup>1003</sup> in an attempt to destroy all his enemies at once. While I am forced to admit that I am still not sold on the idea that history of TS is based on vacillation between *bukvalizm* and *vol’nost’* (Lanchikov pounces on this notion like a hawk [31]), the rest of his arguments range from the tired and predictable to the desperate and absurd: Pushkin ignored Viazemskii, and so should we; Viazemskii himself deferred to Zhukovskii, and so should we (31); Azov is far too selective, focusing on the limited Kashkin/Lann/Shengeli polemic of the 1940s (32);<sup>1004</sup> Azov is simply dissatisfied with the existing state of things and he has made it his goal to prove that it arose under the pressure of Soviet ideology (32) (indeed, Azov has plenty of reasons for such dissatisfaction and he demonstrates the Soviet pressures meticulously and disinterestedly); Azov cherry-picks his critics: both Chukovskii and Lozinskii were acclaimed by the Soviet state, but Chukovskii the “domesticator” could not be more different from Lozinskii the “bukvalist” (33) (this is sheer nonsense: Lozinskii did consider the word to be the building block of poetry [Lozinskii 87] but ultimately advocated dynamic equivalence [88]); Azov paraphrases Venuti’s limited binary categories of domestication and foreignization while existing categories for these concepts already exist in Russian TS (not only do they exist and are interchangeable with their Western counterparts, but this interchangeability and their syncretism has already been demonstrated in

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<sup>1001</sup> «Поверженные буквалисты»

<sup>1002</sup> «Лучшая книга по гуманитарным наукам»

<sup>1003</sup> «Наука чистая и не очень»

<sup>1004</sup> This is (in part) true, and I have rectified this issue in my own thesis.

Russian TS for nearly a decade); “the Russian neobukvalisty, hiding behind the name of Venuti, oppose ‘the invisibility of the translator,’ in relation, say, to a translation from English to Russian; they pursue a target precisely the opposite of the one which the ‘antiglobalist’ Venuti placed in front of himself”<sup>1005</sup> (just because Venuti wrote about translation *into* English does not mean that his theory cannot be broadly applied—and it has been!); finally, Azov never even *defines* the key concept of *bukvalizm* (neither did the Soviet demagogues, but Lanchikov and Borisenko had already defined it sufficiently in their debates).

Who won? How much longer will the Russians have to wander in the desert in the era following Soviet ideological and political interference in their culture and life? In *BC*, there is a brief episode where Kilgore Trout has a conversation with his parakeet Bill and decides to grant him three wishes: he opens Bill’s cage and then the window; however, the sound of the opening window alarms the bird so much that it flies back into the cage which Trout promptly latches up: “That’s the most intelligent use of three wishes I ever heard of,” he tells Bill, “You made sure you’d still have something worth wishing for—to get out of the cage” (529). Trout’s pet was not the only one to make this wish. In 2004, Carlin Romano noted that “[s]ome recent polls indicate that more than 70 percent of Russians regret the collapse of the Soviet Union, and 76 percent back censorship as an integral part of the media” (n. pag.). In 2011, Nadezhda Azhgikhina wrote that after twenty years of market reforms and democratic development, many Russians support official censorship. Polls suggest that 50 to 70 percent of the nation would like to reestablish state control over media content with the aim, first of all, of regulating its ethical substance. Shockingly, according to a survey of the Russian

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<sup>1005</sup> «российские необуквалисты, прикрывшись именем Венути, выступают против „невидимости переводчика“ применительно, скажем, к переводу с английского на русский, они преследуют цели, как раз противоположные той, которую ставил перед собой „антиглобализатор“ Венути» (35)

Union of Journalists, around 20 percent of Russian media workers would not oppose official censorship (and 85 percent of them said they faced censorship in their work). (38)

In the same year, Hannu Kemppanen argued that “[t]he discourse in the field of translation studies in Russia is characterised by pondering the question of the invariance of translation, of the existence of an unchangeable, ideal level of the quality of translation (58). In 2013, Boris Akunin admitted in an interview (speaking about his Japanese and English translations) that “a translated book should sound absolutely natural and read as an original. The impact on the reader should be the same. The means by which this effect is achieved can be quite bold. I think that a translator should be allowed a lot of liberties. A good translator is not an interpreter, but almost a co-author” (Akunin, “Questions” n. pag.). In the same year, E. V. Shelestiuk’s esoterically-titled “Linguocultural Transfer as the Psycholinguistic Basis of Translatorial Adaptation”<sup>1006</sup> boiled down to an attack on *translationese* (unidiomatic language) that deferred to Chukovskii (42), an indictment of *bukvalizm* (44, 45), an expression of the xenophobic fear of globalization (46) and of the “decline of national languages”<sup>1007</sup> (as if Russian were a minority language); the icing on the cake was the traditional and familiar fixture in Russian TS, a superficial and unquestioning repetition of Lorie’s ideologically-loaded criticism of the V/T translation of *C22* that amounts to not depicting Yossarian the way he should have been (42) (according to the precepts of socialist realism). In 2015, the website of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Union of Translators of Russia ([www.utr.spb.ru](http://www.utr.spb.ru)) proudly displays a fragment of Domenico Ghirlandaio’s fresco *Saint Jerome in his Study*<sup>1008</sup> (1480) with the familiar dictum beside it, “Non verbum e verbo, sed sensum exprimere de sensu.”

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<sup>1006</sup> «Лингвокультурный перенос как психолингвистическая основа переводческой адаптации»

<sup>1007</sup> «упадку национальных языков» (46)

<sup>1008</sup> *San Girolamo nello studio*



## You Don't Have to Be Crazy to Work Here

After the Borisenko-Lanchikov flare-up, the *status quo* returned with only very rare opposition from familiar quarters. In 2008, N. N. Troshina published “Stylistic Equivalence of Translation as a Problem of Intercultural Communication”<sup>1009</sup> where she returns to formal correspondence, dynamic equivalence, and *skopos* (162) and revisits Nida (162-163), arguing that literal translation disrupts communicative values and giving examples where it tends to shock or confuse the speaker or listener (163). While Troshina admits that a word rich with meaning is “flattened” with the use of a much more basic counterpart (168-169), she glosses over domestication and foreignization (174-175), insisting on the author’s refusal to die, for instance when Astrid Lindgren complains about the sentimentality of her English translation (175-176) attached by the TL culture (176). In the same anthology, Borisenko published “Nonstandard Language: Problems of Khudozhestvennyi Translation”<sup>1010</sup> where she reminds us that “[o]ur impressions of ‘bad’ and ‘good’ translation . . . are falling far behind real changes in language and literature. The ‘naturalness,’ that domestic translation studies familiarly places first as a criterion of the evaluation of a translated text, constantly changes.”<sup>1011</sup> Still in the same anthology, M. B. Rarenko little by little reinstates Soviet terminology in “On the Boundaries of ‘Tochnost’ and ‘Vol’nost’ in Khudozhestvennyi Translation”<sup>1012</sup> by name-checking Borisenko’s debates in *Mosty* and working towards the conclusion that *tochnyi* (accurate) translation should not be replaced with *bukval’nyi* (literal) translation while the solution is *vossozdaiushchii* (recreative) translation and dynamic equivalence.

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<sup>1009</sup> «Стилистическая эквивалентность перевода как проблема межкультурной коммуникации»

<sup>1010</sup> «Нестандартный язык. Проблемы художественного перевода.»

<sup>1011</sup> «Наши представления о "плохом" и "хорошем" переводе . . . отстают от реальных изменений в языке и литературе. "Естественность", которую отечественное переводоведение привычно ставит во главу угла в качестве критерия оценки переводного текста, постоянно меняется» (261).

<sup>1012</sup> «О границах „точности“ и „вольности“ в художественном переводе»

In 2009, L. L. Neliubin's textbook *Introduction to the Methods of Translation*<sup>1013</sup> provided an overview of no fewer than fourteen different theories of translation, naming Retsker (43), Barkhudarov (45), Komissarov (47), and Shveitser (48) but mentioning almost no Western theorists, with the exception of Nida and Chomsky (55). In the same year, I. V. Voinich tested Venuti's notions *invisibility*, *fluency*, and *domestication* by comparing five (out of thirteen extant) Russian translations of *Julius Caesar* to the ST ("Strategiia" 58). The first thing that Voinich notes is that "different translations of one and the same work complement each other and provide the most full impression of the original work"<sup>1014</sup> N. M. Karamzin's 1787 prose translation (62) is dated, often literal and difficult to read, and is thus *both foreignizing and visible* (57); Fet's 1859 translation is very close to the ST, preserving the original metre but changing certain word accents and stumbling around semantics and is thus also *both foreignizing and visible* (58); M. A. Zenkevich's 1959 translation uses the principles of Akmeism (neoclassical modernism) to give a *tochnyi* (accurate) reproduction of the text that results in occasional *foreignization* that does not affect the translator's wholesale *domestication and invisibility* (Voinich praises it as an ideal version [62]); A. L. Velichanskii's 1998 translation uses a slew of Russian phrases and expressions that are also *foreignizing* despite the translator's *domestication and invisibility* on the whole (58); finally, V. Flori's 2007 translation reproduces many lines very closely, includes a great amount of *domesticating* modern colloquial speech and slang that results in a "lowering of register"<sup>1015</sup> and is thus *foreignizing and visible* (59). Voinich stresses the success of Zenkevich's and Velichanskii's versions precisely because they combine opposing methods of translation (62); however, she erroneously terms the strategy a "golden

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<sup>1013</sup> «Введение в технику перевода»

<sup>1014</sup> «различные переводы одного и того же произведения дополняют друг друга и дают наиболее полное представление об оригинальном произведении» (57)

<sup>1015</sup> «снижение регистра» (58-59)

mean,” implying an *equal proportion* of opposing strategies rather than Gasparov’s insistence on the impossibility of a golden mean and the necessity of syncretism where each strategy is used in the *necessary proportion*. The following year, Voinich published an article that in part addressed this concern, concluding that the golden mean consists of “that which the translator *must* say (that which the original assigns—foreignization), plus that which the translator *can* say (the means of the native tongue—domestication), plus that which the translator *wants* to say (the preferences and tastes of the translator).”<sup>1016</sup>

The linguist Dmitrii Buzadzhi (who sat on the editorial board of *Mosty* together with Lanchikov, Lynn Visson, D. I. Ermolovich, and others) published “The Transparent and Opaque Translator”<sup>1017</sup> in 2009, arguing that the traditional model of “transparent glass” cannot be bettered (31) but the Western TS critics have more ideological arguments than linguistic ones (31). After all, *visibility* and *transparency* are only metaphors and including them in TS is meaningless—why not use more familiar terminology? (32). Would not a truly transparent translator merely smooth out only what was already smooth in the ST? After all, true transparency is a painstaking, professional labour (33), so visibility is the path of least resistance (36). Buzadzhi assumes that intercultural communication is inherently problem-free when he adds that translation would become unpredictable and would interfere in intercultural communication were it to contain any omissions or additions (34); this is precisely why translation contains no “presence of a middleman”<sup>1018</sup> of any kind and, moreover, multiple interpretations cannot all have a “right to life.”<sup>1019</sup> Buzadzhi essentially rejects Cultural Studies

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<sup>1016</sup> «то, что переводчик должен сказать (то, что задаёт подлинник — форенизация), плюс то, что переводчик может сказать (средства родного языка — доместиация), плюс то, что переводчик хочет сказать (предпочтения и вкусы переводчика)» (“Seredina” 43)

<sup>1017</sup> «Переводчик прозрачный и непрозрачный»

<sup>1018</sup> «присутствие посредника» (34)

<sup>1019</sup> «право на жизнь» (35)

when he concludes that there are no serious practical or reasons for insisting on the translator's visibility (36), arguing that any "postmodern" translation of the kind that Markstein proposes simply caters to the lowest common cultural denominator (36) that seeks to divorce translation from psychology, politics, sociology, religion, and philosophy (he never says how or why) in order to promulgate descriptivism and relativism (38).

### **What Might Have Been and What Has Been**

Russian translation can no longer innocently bear the name *khudozhestvennyi* (artistic) because this name (which even Borisenko still uses for the website of her seminar at the Moscow State University at [www.persangl.net](http://www.persangl.net)) conceals and carries within it a distinctly Soviet term designed to ideologically appropriate and twist the nineteenth-century concept of *vol'nyi* (free) translation (after all, as Witt points out, not only was *vol'nyi* translation "consonant with the official dogmas of Socialist Realism," but "[a]part from habitual xenophobia . . . 'free' translation justified and facilitated censorship and ideologically motivated modifications of the source texts" ["Lines" 165]). Both concepts no longer have any meaning whatsoever in the current development of Russian TS. In point of fact, there never was *tochnyi*, *perestraivaiushchii*, *vossozdaiushchii*, *adekvatnyi*, *polnotsennyi*, *vernyi*, *khudozhestvennyi*, *realisticheskii*, *ëkvivalentnyi*, *funktsional'nyi* or *sobstvenno* translation, only a series of labels for the dogma of socialist realism that replaced one another. For effective translation, there is only new text, that unapologetically appropriates older texts and demonstrates a forceful and visible resistance to them, and like any other text it can be judged only on its own qualities. There is always something to appropriate and something to resist, and the only way to continue the lively genealogy of text is to allow the new to continuously replace the old, and this is the most serious issue that faces not only Russian TS but TS and literary studies as a whole. Schleiermacher

explained that

different translations of the same work made from different points of view will be able to coexist, and it would be difficult to say that any one of them is as a whole more perfect than the others or falls short in merit; . . . only the sum of all these taken together and in relation to each other . . . will fulfill the task completely, and each in its own right will always have only relative and subjective value. (55)

However, Schleiermacher's schema does not factor in nostalgia. As Koskinen points out, "many adult readers prefer a version that repeats their childhood experiences. That is the reason why a new translation is often in many ways bound by earlier versions; the names of the characters and places, memorable events and sayings and so on are not easily changed" ("Affect" 24).

Schleiermacher also does not account for top-down cultural controls. As Lefevere argues, "a literature is never, at any moment in its history, the monolithic whole which textbooks tend to present it as, but rather, in each phase of its evolution, a collocation of different, often antagonistic trends, dominated by the set of literary works a given era accepts as 'canonized'" ("Beyond the Process" 35); in terms of undifferentiated patronage, the U.S.S.R. was the best example of rewriting a work "to bring it in line with the 'new' dominant poetics" (*Literary Fame* 19). However, the definition of canonicity remained problematic even after 1991. For instance, in 2013, R. R. Chaikovskii implicitly decanonizes all oral and non-official cultural traditions (such, for example, as *samizdat* and *tamizdat*), arguing that "[a]bout canonization we can speak mainly relative to translations . . . on the pages of printed production";<sup>1020</sup> in fact, when he discusses the surprisingly resilient history of Russian translations of Rilke's «Der Panther» (1902) (more than 135 had been written) Chaikovskii eventually reaches the populist world of

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<sup>1020</sup> «О канонизации мы можем говорить в основном относительно переводов . . . на страницах печатных изделий» (27).

twenty-first century Internet where he draws a line between “artistic” and “graphomaniac” tendencies (25-26). Although this rather harsh distinction is predicated mostly on conjecture about and expectations of the layperson translators’ knowledge of German or poetic skill, Chaikovskii’s position betrays the long-held distinction of official and unofficial texts. When ephemeral literature continues to be elbowed out of the spotlight of canon, we must ask what happened to the works that were never given a right to exist in the first place and those works that dared challenge their canonical brethren.

To establish the canonicity of a work, it is necessary to observe how long it has “reigned” in print. Supplementing the meagre records of the *Index Translationum* with bibliographies compiled by Konstantin Kalmyk and Aleksei L’vov that include not only book editions but also translations and excerpts serialized in periodicals, the fate of C22 is fairly simple: V/T’s version became an obvious exemplar of “bad” translation good only for scaring would-be translators and, despite V. Machulis’s new translation published in 1994 and 1995, Kistiakovskii’s appeared to have become canonical, printed six times between in 1992 and 2007. Interestingly, not everyone approved: in 2001, Matveev wrote that he preferred the 1967 *Ural* version while in a 2005 interview the musician and poet Dmitrii Ozerskii stated, “*Ulovka*, once again, you cannot compare with the original, but it is written in a simply fantastic language! And *Popravka*—there all the time you stumble, it’s like that, not funny.”<sup>1021</sup> However, the most curious criticism came from Sergei Vergilesov’s “Catch-92” published in 1992 in *Nezavisimaia gazeta* and then in 1993 (in translation) in the *Russian Social Science Review*. Vergilesov begins with the sentence “[p]ostmodernists have been popping up like mushrooms after a rain lately” (90). The incredible thing about his brief article is not only that it says just about nothing on the subject of C22, but

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<sup>1021</sup> «„Уловку“, опять-таки, не сравнить с оригиналом, но написана она просто фантастическим языком! А „Поправка“ – там всё время спотыкаешься, она уже такая, не смешная” (“Volshebnoe interv’iu” n. pag.).

also that it uses a number of typically-Soviet rhetorical moves to pretend that the U.S.S.R. and its canon of translation have never existed. For instance, Vergilesov claims that “Russia has marvelous translations of Ken Kesey’s *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* and Joseph Heller’s *Catch-22*” (the former was translated by V. Golyshev and printed in *NM* in 1987, the latter printed by Raduga in 1988 and then again by Pressa in 1992). Vergilesov also belligerently declares that “[w]e are not obliged to do what the Americans say” before he disparages the “the school of black humor . . . which the Russian reader associates above all with ‘sadistic verse’” (90). After all, no more than “[t]wo or three stories by Donald Barthelme” had been translated, and “no one but the specialists know about . . . James P. Donleavy and even Thomas Pynchon” (91); however, one exception is Vonnegut because “[t]he first publication in Russia of his famous novel *Mother Night* . . . proves not only the popularity of Vonnegut’s work but also its relevance” (91). *MN*? The novel was translated by Iu. Zakharovich in 1990, but Vonnegut has been, of course, translated *since 1967*! It is astounding that Vergilesov makes no single mention of Rait, but his whitewashing of the incestuous and complicit Soviet TS becomes as clear as day when one examines closely the competing Russian translations of the same works published before and after the fall of the Soviet Union (see Table 10). Rait held an undisputed monopoly on any Vonnegut novels that she translated between 1970 and 1976 (*CC*, *SF*, *BC*, and *GB*) and the four *de facto* canonical translations remain to this day untouched by any other translator’s hand (the most recent editions of Rait’s translations were 2007, 2004, 2001, and 2004 respectively). Although Rait attempted to continue her dynasty by handing the sceptre to her daughter M. Kovaleva (whose most successful Vonnegut translation remains *ST*), the dam of nepotism finally broke with Vonnegut’s *Slapstick* (that Rait first translated as an excerpt in 1976) which yielded competing translations by M. Kovaleva (1992, 2002) and M. Kondrusevich (1993); *ST* yielded

**Table 10** Retranslation of Canonical Russian Translations

Text	Author	First Translator	Year of First Translation	Years of Competing Translations <sup>1022</sup> or Republication
<i>CR</i> (1951)	J. D.	Rait	1960	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rait: 1967, 1973 (excerpts), 1983, 1987, 1988, 1989</li> </ul>
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rait: 1991, 1992, 1994, 1996, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2015</li> <li>• S. Makhov: 1998</li> <li>• Nemtsov: 2008</li> </ul>
<i>C22</i> (1961)	JH	Titov	1964 (excerpt)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Titov: 1965</li> <li>• V/T: 1967 (condensed), 1992</li> </ul>
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kistiakovskii: 1988, 1992, 1998, 2000, 2003, 2006, 2007</li> <li>• V. Machulis: 1994, 1995</li> </ul>
<i>PP</i> (1952)	KV	Brukhnov	1967 (condensed)	1992, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2007
<i>CC</i> (1963)	KV	Rait	1970	1978, 1981, 1983, 1988, 1989
				1992, 1993, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2007
<i>SF</i> (1969)	KV	Rait	1970	1978, 1981, 1983, 1989
				1992, 1993, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2004
<i>BC</i> (1973)	KV	Rait	1974	1975, 1978
				1992, 2001
<i>GB</i> (1965)	KV	Razumovskaia and Samostrelova	1976	Rait: 1978, 1981
				Rait: 1992, 1993, 1999, 2001, 2004
<i>Slapstick</i> (1976)	KV	Uncredited	1976	• Rait: 1976 (excerpt)
				• M. Kovaleva: 1992, 2002
				• M. Kondrusevich: 1993
<i>SH</i> (1978)	JH	R. Oblonskaia	1978	1978
				1998
<i>ST</i> (1959)	KV	Natal'ia Kalinina	1982	• A. Sanin: 1986 (excerpt)
				• M. Kovaleva: 1988, 1989
				• A. Sanin: 1991 (excerpts)
				• N. Koptiug: 1991
<i>Deadeye Dick</i> (1982)	KV	Rait and M. Kovaleva	1986	• M. Kovaleva: 1992, 1993, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2004, 2006, 2008
				1988
				1992
<i>MN</i> (1961)	KV	Iu. Zakharovich	1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• L. Dubinskaia and D. Kesler: 1991, 1992, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2006, 2010</li> <li>• Zakharovich: 1991, 2001</li> </ul>

<sup>1022</sup> Excluding works by the same translator published in different anthologies or periodicals in the same year.



three competing translations by A. Sanin (excerpts in 1986 and 1991), M. Kovaleva (printed nine times between 1988 and 2008), and N. Koptiug (1991); *MN* yielded two competing translations by L. Dubinskaia and D. Kesler (printed six times between 1991 and 2010) and Iu. Zakharovich (1991, 2001). These facts reveal a definitive shift away from the Soviet TS practice of handing one author to the sacred priesthood of one translator, towards the pluralistic acknowledgement of multiple concurrent and competing interpretations of a single text. However, they also demonstrate that the capitalist market forces not only *permit* but continue to *encourage* multiple simultaneous translations and retranslations (supply and demand demonstrates that some translations are more economically successful, though not necessarily “better” or “worse” than others), proving wrong Lanchikov’s contention that the production of multiple translations is undesirable or untenable.

### **The First Thing You’ll Probably Want to Know**

Rait’s translation of *CR*, titled *Near the Abyss in Rye*<sup>1023</sup> was first published in *NM* in 1960, was printed ten times between 1967 and 1996, and was considered an unassailable work beyond reproach. Despite the pluralistic slew of competing post-Rait translations in the mid-1970s and post-Soviet translations in the mid-1990s, no one had challenged Rait’s canon, despite its obvious shortcomings. In “If Holden Caulfield Spoke Russian,” Reed Johnson pointed out the common knowledge that the novel was obviously “authorized” by the CPSU and that it “betrays the translator’s second- or third-hand grasp of American idioms”<sup>1024</sup> (n. pag.). However, when the first “attempt” on Rait’s *Catcher in the Rye* by Sergei Makhov<sup>1025</sup> came in 1998, his *A Precipice on the Edge of the Rye Field of Childhood*<sup>1026</sup> made so little impact that, if it were not

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<sup>1023</sup> «Над пропастью во ржи»

<sup>1024</sup> However, Reed is incorrect in asserting that “Rait-Kovaleva had never set foot in America”; she finally was allowed to visit Vonnegut in 1984.

<sup>1025</sup> Borisenko incorrectly gives the name as “A. Makhov” (227).

<sup>1026</sup> «Обрыв на краю ржаного поля детства»

for its passing mention in Borisenko's article ("Sèlindzher" 227), I would never even have found it because it is not listed in any of the bibliographies I have examined. The translation was read by the influential translator and critic Nora Gal'<sup>1027</sup> at some point during the early stages of its composition, and Gal' wrote an internal review (reprinted in her memoirs) that prevented the initial publication of the book: the very title speaks of the "deafness"<sup>1028</sup> of the author; it has none of the "brevity, brightness, figurativeness"<sup>1029</sup> that Rait's translation has (and Rait is a "master of the highest class"<sup>1030</sup>); the book is full of *otsebiatina* and "guessing of literary criticism",<sup>1031</sup> it mixes temporal and stylistic layers. What does the translation lack? "The author . . . does not understand the main meaning of *khudozhestvennyi* (artistic) translation: to convey, to 're-express,' in Pushkin's words, the thought, feeling, style of the author, and not act wilfully."<sup>1032</sup> Makhov claims that the Soviet readers "read [*Catcher*] carefully, but just not at all that book which Salinger wrote."<sup>1033</sup> However, Borisenko does not stop to cross-question Gal's typically-Soviet critique or Makhov's concerns but gives a pass to both Gal' and Rait,<sup>1034</sup> calling Makhov's introduction to his translation "god-fighting pathos"<sup>1035</sup> that owes everything to Rait's translation (228). A much more thorough study of Makhov's work came in 2007, when Denis Petrenko's dissertation placed Rait's translation firmly within the context of history and censorship (3) and characterized Makhov's work as "written in the period of formation of the

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<sup>1027</sup> The pseudonym of Eleonora Iakovlevna Gal'perina

<sup>1028</sup> «глухоте» (n. pag.)

<sup>1029</sup> «краткости, яркости, образности» (n. pag.)

<sup>1030</sup> «мастер высокого класса» (n. pag.)

<sup>1031</sup> «литературоведческое домысливание» (n. pag.)

<sup>1032</sup> «Автор . . . не понимает основного смысла художественного перевода: передать, „перевыразить“, по слову Пушкина, мысль, чувство, стиль автора, а не самовольничать» (n. pag.).

<sup>1033</sup> «Читали-то внимательно, да вовсе не ту книгу которую написал Салинджер» (qtd. in Borisenko 228)

<sup>1034</sup> In fact, Borisenko argues elsewhere that no one in the 1960s would even think of criticizing Rait for smoothing out Salinger ("Nonstandard" 261), forgetting that other translators like Simon Markish did criticize Rait, both at the time and afterwards.

<sup>1035</sup> «богоборческим пафосом» (228)

culture of the postmodern with its attention to linguistic marginality, reaccentuation of the ‘top’ and ‘bottom’ of culture. In it has a place the expression of the general tendency of post-totalitarian culture connected with the ‘overthrowing’ of authorities.”<sup>1036</sup> Although an overview of Petrenko’s work does reveal that he severely hinders his own project of examining Soviet-era translation by choosing almost exclusively Soviet TS theorists, including Chukovskii, Etkind, Komissarov, Fedorov, Kopanev, and Gachechiladze (6), he treats the relationship between Makhov’s and Rait’s translations more carefully, by using Bakhtin, Deleuze and Guattari, Foucault, and Derrida to discuss the heteroglossia in Makhov’s *CR* (7), by contrasting Rait’s “elite linguistic culture”<sup>1037</sup> with Makhov’s reasons for responding to Rait (7), and by examining Makhov use of the postmodern mode (8) that makes his text “overloaded, difficult to read”<sup>1038</sup> while not necessarily embodying a “bad” translation but rather “a new, postmodern approach to the translation of texts, when in one text there coexist various types of texts.”<sup>1039</sup> Meanwhile, Rait’s translation was printed six times between 1999 and 2007.

In 2008, the award-winning translator and editor Maksim Nemtsov dared to perpetrate a second “attempt.” Nemtsov’s *The Catcher on the Rye Field*<sup>1040</sup> was said to be shockingly different from what the readers expected it to be. Suddenly, everyone had an opinion. The more moderate commentators acknowledged the value of having both translations. In 2008, Alexey Dyachkov wrote in *Chto chitat*, that “any attempt at a new translation of the American chef d’oeuvre into Russian is doomed to comparison with the translation of Rita Rait-Kovaleva,”

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<sup>1036</sup> «Перевод С.А. Махова написан в период формирования культуры постмодерна с её вниманием к языковой маргинальности, переакцентуации «верха» и «низа» в искусстве. В нем находит выражение общая тенденция посттоталитарной культуры, связанная с «низвержением» авторитетов» (4).

<sup>1037</sup> «Элитарной языковой культурой» (7-8)

<sup>1038</sup> «перегруженным, трудным для чтения» (23)

<sup>1039</sup> «отображает новый, постмодернистский подход к переводу текстов, когда в одном тексте сосуществуют различные типы текстов» (23)

<sup>1040</sup> «Ловец на хлебном поле»

glibly adding, “[a]nd here I almost wrote ‘to a comparison with the original.’”<sup>1041</sup> In 2009, Artem Fer’e mused on *Proza.ru* that neither translation “corresponds to the spirit of the original one hundred percent”;<sup>1042</sup> however, Nemtsov’s translation being “sharper”<sup>1043</sup> than Rait’s “hyperliterary” one makes sense, because Rait’s, albeit “brighter”<sup>1044</sup> and more “literary,” introduces a tragic pathos simply not present in either the title or the content of the ST (n. pag.). Interestingly (although he admits that he had read the only fragment that critics had been tossing at each other), Fer’e notes that neither Rait nor Nemtsov caught onto the part where Phoebe reaches for the ring on the merry-go-round and that the meaning of the gesture (obvious to an American teenager but not to a Soviet reader) should have been either footnoted or explained (n. pag.). Others reviewers were less forgiving. Viktor Toporov wrote in *Chastnyi korrespondent*, that “[i]n the complete absence of feeling for language Nemtsov retranslates the classical translation of Rita Rait! I have no words. . . .”<sup>1045</sup> Toporov used familiar and patently untrue assertions, such as that the censorial excisions in Soviet translations were mostly erotic, or that Rait’s *CR* had no censorial excisions, or that (and here I can personally vouch for Toporov’s delusion) the excisions in Vonnegut were limited to the transformation of the Soviet midget named Zinka to the spy of indeterminate nationality named Zika (“Pereperevody” n. pag.). In *Kommersant*’s *Weekend*, Mikhail Idov rather callously wrote that, if the original *CR* motivated Mark Chapman to shoot John Lennon, then Nemtsov’s translation could at most motivate an unhinged reader to rob a beer stand (100). True enough, Idov argues, Rait creates a lyrical yet

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<sup>1041</sup> «всякая попытка нового перевода американского шедевра на русский язык . . . обречена на сравнение с переводом Риты Райт-Ковалёвой. А я здесь чуть даже не написал „на сравнение с оригиналом“» (n. pag.)

<sup>1042</sup> «не на сто процентов соответствует духу оригинала» (n. pag.)

<sup>1043</sup> «порезче» (n. pag.)

<sup>1044</sup> «ярче» (n. pag.)

<sup>1045</sup> «При полном отсутствии языкового чутья Немцов перепереводит классический перевод Риты Райт! У меня нет слов...» (n. pag.)

*economic* text when she cuts out Holden's numerous "and-alls" whereas "[i]n the new text each one is lovingly preserved . . . and with confidence translated as 'any-different'";<sup>1046</sup> true enough. Rait "*dilutes* slightly synthetic Russian . . . with charming pseudoslang, partly invented by the translator herself"<sup>1047</sup> (emphasis added), but nothing more was required of Rait, "judging by the nationwide love"<sup>1048</sup> for her translations (100). The "postmodernist-translator," Idov claimed, desired to "earnestly force *épatage* at the expense of *tochnost'* [accuracy]";<sup>1049</sup> and, moreover, his footnotes, "[t]hese explosions of academism"<sup>1050</sup> demonstrate nothing more than Nemtsov's wish to avoid being seen as

an author of the literary equivalent of the translations of Goblin, the vulgarizer-popularizer, the discount Racine. He wants to be remembered as the guardian of the spirit, if not the letter, of the work towards which he feels a clear, albeit strangely-expressed piety: no one goes *so* far, or risks showing himself to be *such* a laughingstock, without loving the source strongly and sincerely. . .<sup>1051</sup>

In 2009, Viacheslav Danilov published "Topic: How to Steal a Childhood? Ask the Catcher on the Rye Field"<sup>1052</sup> in *Svobodnyi mir*. The most vicious of the polemics, it criticized the titles of the other works in Nemtsov's collection of Salinger, called Nemtsov a provocateur, alluding to his last name being the same as that of the liberal politician and activist Boris Nemtsov, reminded his readers that Rait's translations are "classical," and concluded with the signature

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<sup>1046</sup> «В новом тексте каждый любовно сохранен... и уверенно переведён как „всяко-разно“» (100).

<sup>1047</sup> «разбавляет слегка синтетический русский . . . очаровательным псевдосленгом, отчасти изобретённым самим переводчиком» (100)

<sup>1048</sup> «судя по всенародной любви к переводу» (100)

<sup>1049</sup> «истовому нагнетанию эпатажности за счёт точности» (100)

<sup>1050</sup> «Эти взрывы академизма» (100)

<sup>1051</sup> «автор литературного эквивалента переводов Гоблина, опошлитель-популяризатор, дисконтный Расин. Он хочет, чтобы его запомнили как хранителя духа, если не буквы, произведения, к которому испытывает явный, хоть и странно выраженный, пиетет: никто не заходит *так* далеко и не рискует выставить себя *таким* посмешищем, не любя первоисточник крепко и искренне . . .» (100)

<sup>1052</sup> «Тема: Как украсть детство? Спросите у ловца на хлебном поле»

“Viacheslav Danilov, who, needless to say, *has not read the new translation and will not read it*. And in general is in favour of there being more translations<sup>1053</sup> and fewer indisputable authorities”<sup>1054</sup> (emphasis added).

### Once More into the Fray

Nemtsov did not stoop to the level of his attackers. In 2008, his blog post simply noted the contradictions of the combined criticism of his work and stated that “readers who do not hurry to judge a new version of a text, who approach something unfamiliar thoughtfully and intelligently, are very few”<sup>1055</sup> (“Talking Animals” n. pag.). In 2009, Borisenko came to Nemtsov’s defense in the article “Salinger Starts and Wins,”<sup>1056</sup> where she dispelled some of Toporov’s misconceptions (224) and pointed out that not only have most of Nemtsov’s critics not read the retranslation (223), but also the question was more often moral and ethical: “is it or is it not possible to translate Salinger after this has already been done by the great translator Rita Rait-Kovaleva. . . . After all, it turns out that the author of the book is Rait-Kovaleva.”<sup>1057</sup> Because of her affinity for Rait (227), Borisenko walks a tightrope when she attempts to justify Soviet translation as the last creative art in a nation where creative art was forbidden (224); however, she regains her footing where she ties the notion of Soviet TS and the role of dynamic equivalence to the replacement of the ST (225). Borisenko notes that poetry and children’s literature sometimes allowed concurrent translations to coexist; however, the “[c]entralization of

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<sup>1053</sup> It seems that, in haste, Danilov wrote “more translations” rather than *fewer translations* which is a position that he so scurrilously advocates in the rest of his review.

<sup>1054</sup> «Вячеслав Данилов, который, разумеется, новый перевод не читал и читать не будет. И вообще, выступает за то, чтобы переводов было больше, а всяких непрекаемых авторитетов – меньше» (n. pag.)

<sup>1055</sup> «читателей, не торопящихся судить новую версию текста, подошедших к чему-то непривычному вдумчиво и грамотно, очень немного»

<sup>1056</sup> «Сэлинджер начинает и выигрывает»

<sup>1057</sup> «можно или нельзя переводить Сэлинджера после того, как это уже сделала великая переводчица Рита Райт-Ковалёва. . . . Все-таки получается, что автор книги — Райт-Ковалёва» (223)

publishing, censorship, and total control did not help pluralism very much. This concerned translation criticism also”;<sup>1058</sup> the problem, she explains, was that canonical translations were not only beyond criticism; they also *could not be studied* (225): for instance, the defense of “Sonnets by Shakespeare, Translations by Marshak,”<sup>1059</sup> N. Avtonomova’s thesis (225) written under Gasparov’s supervision ended in scandal because it dared to challenge Marshak’s classical translations (226). Nowadays, “[t]ranslation lives according to market laws, and for all its faults the market is still better than prison. But prison habits are surprisingly tenacious.”<sup>1060</sup> Borisenko returns to Gasparov’s idea of different translations and approaches to translation being necessary for different readers and contrasts it with *realisticheskii* (realistic) translation that claimed to be the only ultimate ideal (226). (Here, Borisenko forgets the vicious “Translation Wars” regarding Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky’s translation of *War and Peace* that broke out in 2007 in *The New York Times* Reading Room blog<sup>1061</sup> when she asks why it is that Tolstoi’s *War and Peace* can exist in concurrent translations into English but no one even remembers Constance Garnett when reviewing new translations. In fact, Garnett’s name was mentioned in nearly every post). Ultimately, the weakest part of Borisenko’s argument is her dual allegiance to Rait and Nemtsov that betrays the fact that Borisenko could not yet find it in herself to disavow the Soviet school of translation as a whole. Thus, Borisenko forces herself to argue that a new translation does not necessary mean that the old one was “bad,” or that the old translation will be “taken

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<sup>1058</sup> «Централизация издательского дела, цензура и тотальный контроль не очень-то способствовали плюрализму. Это касалось и переводческой критики» (225).

<sup>1059</sup> «Сонеты Шекспира, Переводы Маршака»

<sup>1060</sup> «Перевод живёт по законам рынка, и при всех своих недостатках рынок все-таки лучше, чем тюрьма. Но тюремные привычки удивительно живучи» (226).

<sup>1061</sup> Layperson evaluation of foreignizing translations amounted to either *I know no Russian, but the domesticating translation seems smoother* or *I know Russian, and the foreignizing translation is a laughable betrayal of the original* while the literary scholars in the mix desperately defended and debated unidiomaticity, abusiveness, timelessness and universality, and authenticity (Remnick n. pag.). The debate itself was a bitter continuation of P/V’s *The Brothers Karamazov* affair in the 1990s (Venuti, *Everything* 112) and Russian scholars like Buzadzhi made their bitter contribution to it.

away” now that a “better” one is available (227), although, she adds, the use of slang is unsuccessful in both latter versions (229). The article raises a number of important questions: Why is Makhov’s “attempt” on Rait “god-fighting pathos,” but Nemtsov’s is not? (After all, in 2011 Borisenko will go on to argue much more forcefully that “the old translation, for all its literary merits, was severely censored, smoothed out, domesticated, and it was only natural that a new one should appear” [“Fear” 187]). Does Nemtsov in fact try to “actively introduce to the text various layers of Russian youth slang”<sup>1062</sup> and would a textual comparison to other translations bear out the successes and failures of his version? (In a 2013 roundtable “Language of Translation,”<sup>1063</sup> Borisenko admitted that she “did not compare the translations of Rait-Kovaleva and Nemtsov.”<sup>1064</sup>) Is Rait’s translation in fact so good as to deserve to be not displaced by a new contender (or is the contender so good as to displace it)? (As Konstantin Bogomolov will note in 2014, “[h]aving translated the novel into Russian, Rita Rait-Kovaleva brought closer the abyss, but lost the catcher in it.”<sup>1065</sup>) Clearly, one more test remained to be done.

For my examination of the assertions of Nemtsov’s detractors and supporters, I decided to continue to disregard the ST while comparing excerpts of the three translations (see Appendix VII) side by side and on their own individual merits. However, unlike my examination of the five different versions of *C22*, it became very difficult to locate any “clusters of textual energy,” and each version yielded much stronger revelations about its translator and itself than about the ST. For one thing, the assertion that Makhov’s translation depends on Rait’s is ludicrous: whereas

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<sup>1062</sup> «активным введением в текст разных пластов русского молодёжного сленга» (229)

<sup>1063</sup> «Язык перевода»

<sup>1064</sup> «Я не сравнивала переводы Райт-Ковалёвой и Немцова» (n. pag.).

<sup>1065</sup> «Переводя роман на русский, Рита Райт-Ковалёва приблизила пропасть, но потеряла в ней ловца» (n. pag.).



Rait and Nemtsov allow slang in Holden's *direct speech*, Makhov's Holden *thinks* in slang, for instance whereas in *CRR* and *CRN* Phoebe merely turns her back to Holden, in *CRM* Holden narrates to the reader, "Meaning, turning her spine-bone thing"<sup>1066</sup> or when Holden emphasizes the fact he did not need to tell Phoebe to stop crying, he narrates "But I—same shit—said."<sup>1067</sup> Likewise, whereas *CRR* and *CRN* use *poidem* and *poshli* for *let's go*, *CRM* reduces the former to *pom*, requiring the reader to stop, mentally pronounce the abbreviated word, appreciate it, and then move on. (However, all three translations do logically connect Phoebe telling Holden to shut up to his inner reaction that points to his constant worrying about protecting his little sister, similarly to his infamous encounter with two instances of graffitied *Fuck You*). Certain inconsistencies do slip through, once again suggesting predilections of interpretation, for instance Rait's difficulty with describing meals (*CRR* gives "had breakfast"<sup>1068</sup> while both *CRM* and *CRN* give "had lunch"<sup>1069</sup>) or Holden's reaction to Phoebe throwing the red hunting cap at him: whereas *CRR* nonchalantly states "I was amused, I didn't say anything,"<sup>1070</sup> in *CRM* and *CRN* Holden cares much more: "I even shuddered all over, but didn't say shit"<sup>1071</sup> (75) / "I nearly died, but didn't say anything."<sup>1072</sup> Nemtsov's translation is unique in a number of ways: it frequently employs anaphora and parallelism ("Only she down the stairs with me. . ."<sup>1073</sup> / "Only I anyway said . . ."; "She still stood. . ." / "She knows this stuff." / "She did not reply, nothing."<sup>1074</sup>) to poetically link parts of Holden's narrative, while the other two do not; it is also the only one that uses italicized words for emphasis or cares to explain who Benedict Arnold was

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<sup>1066</sup> «В смысле, хребтиной поворачиваться» (75).

<sup>1067</sup> «Но я один хрен сказал» (75).

<sup>1068</sup> «завтракала» (134)

<sup>1069</sup> «обедала» (75; 162)

<sup>1070</sup> «Мне стало смешно, я промолчал» (134).

<sup>1071</sup> «Я аж весь передёрнулся, но ни фиги не сказал» (75).

<sup>1072</sup> «Я чуть не сдох, но ничего не сказал» (162).

<sup>1073</sup> «Только она по лестнице со мной. . .» / «Только я все равно сказал. . .» (162)

<sup>1074</sup> «Она по-прежнему стояла. . .» / «Она так умеет.» / «Она ни ответила, ничего.» (162)

in a lengthy historical footnote, creating the possibility for comedy when Holden later tries to coax Phoebe by reminding her that she wants to be Benedict Arnold in a school play (*no one* should want to play the character) (162). Ultimately, however, the most striking thing about the three translations is how *similar* they are: after all, it eventually makes no difference that *CRR* selects the most common *zoopark* for *zoo* (135) whereas *CRM* selects *zverinets* (menagerie) (75) and *CRN* *zoosad* (zoological garden) (162); or that the *CRR* and *CRN* use *mashiny* for *cars* (135; 162) whereas *CRM* uses the slangy *tachki* (76); or that Holden calls Phoebe's tantrum *vykamarivat'* (oddball out) (135) in *CRR*, *vykobenivat'sia* (play the fool) (75) in *CRM*, and *maiat'sia fignei* (suffer from shittiness) (162) in *CRN*; or that Phoebe "stares askance with an irate eye"<sup>1075</sup> at Holden in *CRR*, whereas she "stares askance with the corner of a crazed eye"<sup>1076</sup> in *CRM*, and "the squinter still presses"<sup>1077</sup> in *CRN*. It very quickly becomes patently obvious that there is no possible way that Makhov and Nemtsov's translations could have effected a significant shift in reader subjectivity, and, although Soviet constructions do occasionally slip through Rait's prose in *CR*, and the two latter translators attempt to inject their prose with instances of foreignization, it is middle-class banality that slips through the cracks of Salinger's novel, that lacks the capacity for ideological restructuring that governed and made so treacherous (and therefore interesting) my investigation of Rait's translations of Vonnegut or V/T's translations of Heller. Thus, despite the translators' best intentions and excellent effort, there is very little for them to *appropriate* in the ST and nearly nothing *to resist* (after all, when Salinger's reincarnation of Tom Sawyer finishes experimenting with alcohol, prostitutes, and Adult Thinking in the big city, he will most likely go back to his private school and middle-class

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<sup>1075</sup> «косится сердитым глазом» (135)

<sup>1076</sup> «уголком прибабахнутого глаза косится» (76)

<sup>1077</sup> «косяка-то все-таки давит» (162)

aspirations), and all three translations (my apologies to the translators!) can do nothing more than convey the inexorable determinism of Salinger's ST. However, it remains a bitter testament to the uncritical nostalgia of the post-Soviet reader that, while Makhov's and Nemtsov's equally valid and valuable translations did not outlive one print run each, Rait's translation continued to be published six times between 2008 and 2015.

### **A Miracle of Rare Device**

In my examination of Rait's and V/T's translations, I have demonstrated two types of resistance: literary and ideological. When neither one is deployed, the translation is not resistant at all. When only literary resistance is deployed (as critics like Borisenko claim was the case with Rait), the text becomes Aesopian, esoteric, and self-indulgent. A situation when only ideological resistance is deployed is unlikely because of its dependence on literary technique and rhetoricity. Thus, the desirable translation demonstrates both literary and ideological resistance. However, it would be as naïve to assume that a new approach to TS in Russia after 1991 would make for a kinder, more multicultural, more humanist person as it was to assume that a new literature after 1917 would use the tenets of socialist realism to give rise to a New Man; after all, seventy-four years of communist rule were ample proof that ideology creates cultural products, not the other way around. Clearly, the *official* position of Russian TS does not yet seem ready for the possibility of syncretism that has emerged in the West over the past two decades. However, as Alexander Burak explains, "[t]he professional elite of the 'high-art' school of translators are scrutinizing the process with jealousy, suspicion, and unease, but are having little effect on or control over the process, which is not to say that they have not been vociferous – although in a disjointed and often contradictory fashion – in expressing their criticism" (28). Indeed, if we

momentarily step away from the realm of the *permitted* into that of the *possible*, we find that precisely the type of translation I advocate has already existed for three decades, if not longer.

In the 2008 anthology *Mentality. Communication. Translation*.<sup>1078</sup> prepared by the Russian Academy of Sciences, E. V. Sokolova's article "On the Boundaries of Khudozhestvennyi Translation" continues to ask well-worn questions about *tochnyi* (accurate) and *vol'nyi* (free) translation. Sokolova notes that translation is a secondary activity (267), (although, unsurprisingly, to substantiate this notion, she cites a source from thirty years prior [268]). Interestingly, Sokolova admits that Lermontov's "Over all the summits. . ." has very little in common with Goethe's „Über allen Gipfeln“ and states the same about the translations of Zhukovskii (268) and, while Marshak, Zakhoder, and A. N. Tolstoi perpetrate their own *vol'nosti* with children's literature, these are somehow forgiven (269) while Nabokov's are not (270). To investigate the self-sufficiency of translation, Sokolova uses Durs Grünbein's „Transsibirischer Ozymandias“, ostensibly a translation of Percy Bysshe Shelley's 1817 poem written in October and November of 1989 during the fall of the Berlin Wall, published in *Schädelbasislektion* (1991) and *Falten und Fallen* (1994) (271), and awarded the Büchner Prize in 1995 (Ryan 47) (for Shelley's ST and Grünbein TT, see Appendix VI). As Judith Ryan explains in "Deckname Lyrik': Poetry after 1945 and 1989,"

Grünbein lets a poetic monument speak in a grotesque transformation of its own voice. The monument is Shelley's poem . . . translated with a paucity of articles and endings . . . The traveler from an antique land speaks here like a refugee from Soviet Russia. . . . The poem's well-wrought form contrasts with the tourist's primitive command of German grammar and syntax. On one level, his message about the ruin of the mighty is undercut by his faulty speech; on another, the

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<sup>1078</sup> «Ментальность. Коммуникация. Перевод.»

poem suggests that we would be ill advised to imagine ourselves the tourist's superior because we have better mastery of German.

It is thus very appropriate that, precisely because German is the weakest of all my languages (and, because presumably the Shelley ST seems sufficient to literary critics, no English translation appears to exist), I have produced a translation of Grünbein's poem (Sokolova includes her own interlinear, but not quite literal [273], as well as *khudozhestvennyi* [276-277] translations into Russian and my reader is invited to try his own hand using Appendix VI).

### **Transsiberian Ozymandias**

"I met a *tourist* from his antique land  
He says: There in the desert ever stand paired  
Huge and hollow trunks of stone. What more, there near them  
Half in sand a sunken ruined *mug* lies still. Its grin  
Speaks volumes of all cold command and narrow lip is ice  
Showing so well the artist with all zeal acquainted  
That it remains now, printed in dead matter yet,  
How hand here changed and how the heart here painted;  
And on the pedestal the sentence stays in stone:  
'My name is Ozymandias, *Tsar of Tsars*:  
See all my works now, all you mighty, then despair!'  
There's nothing else around. To the decay  
From the colossal wreck, all desolate and bare,  
Stretches the flat and lonely sand far there." (emphasis added)

In effect, Grünbein's poem is an excellent example of the effective translation:<sup>1079</sup> First, the poem uses intertextuality to unapologetically appropriate Shelley's text. Second, Grünbein does this visibly, drawing attention to his own rhetorical moves: as Sokolova notes, he includes the entire ST with the translation as an epigraph (274). Third, Grünbein demonstrates both forceful and visible resistance to both the canonical text and what it represents in its new context, "the end of communism in Eastern Europe" while making further intertextual connections to fallen statues and deserts in other German poems (Owen 120).

On its surface, the translation reproduces the content of Shelley's poem (in fact, Sokolova argues that it is a *tochnyi* (accurate) translation [272]). However, its resistance is evident: Grünbein's Ozymandias is not merely Soviet; from the very title he is "Transsiberian," immediately inviting the image of the Transsibirskaia magistral' whose 9,300 kilometre tracks stretch from Moscow to the Sea of Japan. In addition, there is a curious reframing: whereas in the ST the words of the "traveller" (and within it, the words of Ozymandias) are enclosed in quotation marks, Grünbein encloses the entire poem in quotation marks (274) putting it at an additional remove of appropriation (as if it has been overheard), while the words quoted in the ST are not enclosed in quotation marks despite being direct speech, shedding doubt on their veracity. There are three other pointed intrusions into the fabric of the ST: First, the *traveller* from the antique land becomes a *tourist* from *his* antique land (whether the land in question is East Germany or the U.S.S.R. itself is irrelevant because *tourist* implies a capitalist mode of leisurely travel). Second, Grünbein replaces Shelley's *visage* with the German *Visage* which is a slang word meaning *mug* (Sokolova 274). Third (and this is the most obvious difference), *king of*

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<sup>1079</sup> Before the obvious objections regarding the limitations of the poetic form are raised, I must add that Grünbein ignores the rhyme scheme of the ST thereby subjecting his translation to the same requirements of (for instance) a lyrical prose translation.

*kings* becomes *Zar der Zaren* (rather than *König der Könige*), driving the point home with its cornucopia of allusions to Soviet monuments, pedestals, grandpa Lenin, and so forth. It is disappointing that Sokolova chooses to evaluate the poet's "subject of poetic reflection" as "quite *transparent*";<sup>1080</sup> in fact, Grünbein's poetic conceits are anything *but* invisible, and yet Sokolova disregards the poem's resistancy, preferring to use the example as means of discussing the *form* rather than content of the translation (275); she concludes her article not only with a rather fluent translation of Grünbein's poem into Russian (276-277), but also with K. D. Bal'mont's c.1893-1896 *vol'nyi* (and equally fluent) Russian translation as a rebuttal. Interestingly, Bal'mont's version includes the phrase "tsar' tsarei,"<sup>1081</sup> but, unlike Grünbein's swipe at the U.S.S.R., the question of whether the reference is to Tsar Aleksandr III, to tyranny in general, or just a tribute to Shelley remains unexplained. "Transsiberian Ozymandias" remains in excellent company of translations, whether interlingual or intralingual, such as Dmitrii Prigov's 1998 *Evgenii Onegin Pushkina* (*Pushkin's Evgenii Onegin*) that uses Jakobsonian intralingual translation to decanonize the classical novel in verse by not only maintaining the rhythm and scansion of the ST (Grekov n. pag.), but also by rewriting it in Lermontov's "romantic" style while substituting all adjectives and epithets with only two Lermontovian adjectives (*bezumnyi* [insane] and *nezemnoi* [unearthly]), while reproducing in facsimile the *samizdat* properties (such as typewritten text on thin tissue paper) of Prigov's Soviet-era draft (Berg n. pag.). The result (I have translated an excerpt provided on the website of the publisher Krasnyi matros) is maddening, exhilarating:

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<sup>1080</sup> «Предмет поэтического осмысления весьма прозрачен» (275)

<sup>1081</sup> «царь царей» (276n1)

Appearances' insane assortments  
His insane tenderness of eyes  
With Olga his insane deportment  
In his insanity's full guise  
She in insanity's unable,  
To worry not, insane, unstable  
She is by an insane ache grand  
As if it is an insane hand  
Insanely heart like chasm spacious  
Insane under her rushes, peaks  
Insanely then our Tania speaks  
Insanity for him quite gracious  
Insanity! Why to complain?  
Insanity he can obtain!<sup>1082</sup>

### One Step Forward, Two Steps Back

Prigov's appropriation of Pushkin was acknowledged as an avant-garde achievement, but, while it was not universally admired. In contrast stands the popular work of Dmitrii Puchkov whose nickname "Goblin," earned during his years of work with the St. Petersburg *militsia* (police) as a duty officer in prison, as a director of an *operchast'* (work with prison investigations and informants), and finally a criminal investigator ("Pro militsiiu" n. pag.), would

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<sup>1082</sup> «Его безумным появлением / Безумной нежностью очей / Безумным с Ольгой поведением / Во всей безумности своей / Она безумная не может / Безумная понять, тревожит / Её безумная тоска / Словно безумная рука / Безумно сердце жмёт, как бездна / Безумная под ней шумит / Безумно Таня говорит / Безумье для него любезно / Безумие! Зачем роптать! / Безумие он может дать!» (n. pag.).



stick as a trademark of his translation work. Puchkov's position between the Russian underworld and officialdom is not a coincidence. As Vlad Strukov explains in "Translated by Goblin,"

[i]n the 1970s . . . the Soviet state heavily censored foreign films. Translation was used as a method to 'correct' or 'improve' the ideological message of foreign productions. Films were frequently re-edited, with many scenes lost because of their controversial ideological message; dubbing was used to conceal phrases that were actually pronounced, disturbing the narrative cohesion of films and altering characterization and psychological causes of conflict. (236)

As a result, in the mid-1980s there emerged an underground "market of pirated videos . . . saturated with films that featured low quality translations, normally presented as a monotonous voice-over" (237). After the fall of the U.S.S.R., Puchkov entered the grey area of what is now known as *fandubbing* "to compensate for the distorted impressions left . . . of foreign films that had flooded the Soviet market" (239). In the mid-1990s, Puchkov became famous for his unusual dubs of foreign films, and today he is known for two types of translations: *smeshnye* (amusing) translations released by his studio Bozh'ia Iskra, and *pravil'nye* (correct) translations released by his studio Polnyi Pë; both types of translations are single-voiced. On his website ([www.oper.ru](http://www.oper.ru)), Puchkov explains the differences between the two: On the one hand, *smeshnye* translations are "[p]arodies on domestic film translations performed by Goblin. In the best traditions of home-grown 'translators' whose voices are heard behind the scenes, Goblin runs his mouth with total nonsense, radically changing the dialog and plot of the film."<sup>1083</sup> These translations are similar to

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<sup>1083</sup> «Пародии на отечественные кинопереводы в исполнении Гоблина. В лучших традициях доморощенных „переводчиков“, чьи голоса звучат за кадром, Гоблин несёт полную ахинею, в корне меняя диалоги и сюжет фильма» (n. pag.).

the techniques of *détournement* developed by the Letterist International and Situationist International movements in the West from the 1950s to the 1970s (the most famous example is Michael Hazenavicius and Dominique Mézerette *La Classe américaine* [1993]). Although these translations use the domesticating mode of dubbing, they create *ostranenie* by creating an aggressively-domesticated, rough-edged, and impressionistic interpretation of the ST. On the other hand, *pravil'nye* translations are “[u]nique in their *adekvatnost'* and maximal correspondence to the original text of the film. Obscenity, if it has a place in the original, is translated as obscenity. If obscenity is absent from the original (cf. children’s cartoons, old films), then it is also absent from the translation”;<sup>1084</sup> however, if it is present in the ST, it is replicated in the TT. These translations *may* achieve *ostranenie* by using the scandalous and taboo register of *mat* (Strukov 240), but they more often tend toward domestication in their attempt to recreate a smooth equivalent for the ST; after all, “some people do not just use ‘mat’ . . .—they routinely speak it” (Burak 17).

Puchkov’s translations became very popular, but they soon began to be criticized for the familiar sin of *bukval'nost'* (Shelestiuk 42) by the familiar names of the Russian TS establishment: “[t]he Chair of the Translation and Interpreting Department at the Moscow Linguistic University, Professor Dmitrii Buzadzhi . . . Professor Viktor Lanchikov of the Translation and Interpreting Department at the Moscow Linguistic University . . . and Dmitrii Ermolovich, the famous lexicographer and a professor in the Department of Translation and Interpreting at the Moscow Linguistic University” (Burak 22-23). The critics conceded that

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<sup>1084</sup> «Отличаются адекватностью и максимальным соответствием оригинальному тексту фильма. Нецензурная брань, если таковая имеет место быть в оригинале, переводится как нецензурная брань. Если брани в оригинале нет (см. детские мультики, старые фильмы), значит и в переводе брани нет» (n. pag.).

Puchkov's translations managed to expose the viewer to foreign culture much better than canonical translations; however, they remained nonplussed by the impression that such translations "will inevitably impact . . . the Russian tradition of using obscene language."<sup>1085</sup> As Strukov explains, Puchkov

follows the syntactical structures of the original text . . . For example, he translates the command "Identify yourself" as *bud'te dobry identifitsiruies'* . . . [using] the obvious calque rather than . . . *identifitziuite sebia* or *predstav'tes'*. Puchkov's translations create a special effect of estrangement, or *ostraneni*[ *Je*, since they keep the viewer cognizant of the fact that s/he is experiencing a cinematic work produced in a different culture . . . [and] language is manipulated to achieve certain effects of alienation . . . emulating the distant future, the unreal events of dreamscape or the cultural substrata of the criminal underworld. (240)

Puchkov creates a "postmodernist narrative . . . [where] the difference between 'our word'/'our speech' and 'their word'/'their speech' disappears along with the differences between cultures" (Rulyova 635-636); this is particularly apparent in his presentation of himself "as an unreliable narrator who frequently deviates from his original narrative intention" (Strukov 241). However, this position becomes problematic when the resulting product makes a claim for "postmodern pastiche/parody" (Strukov 241). The imbrication of unlike elements must remain visible to sustain a contrastive narrative tapestry. However, in Puchkov's work such variegation often leans towards the domestic: for instance, in Puchkov's *The Lord of the Rings* "Frodo Baggins becomes *Fedor Mikhailovich Sumkin*, formed from the Russian word *sumka* meaning 'bag,' while the first

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<sup>1085</sup> «неизбежно повлияют и на русскую традицию использования obscene лексики» (44)

name and patronymic refer to Dostoevsky; Gollum is renamed *Golyi* because the original name sounds similar to the Russian word . . . [for] ‘naked’ . . . [and] Gimli [is] changed to *Givi* . . who speaks with a distinctive southern accent” (Strukov 241).

Unfortunately, for all his Bakhtinian polyglossia (246), like so many master projects, Puchkov’s was only initially noble in its intentions, when his “spoof translation of *The Lord of the Rings* . . . defined two targets, one domestic and one foreign: to mock bad post-Soviet film translators who distorted foreign film plots and to dismantle the pathos of neo-mythological Hollywood grand narratives” (Rulyova 626) (Puchkov even produced intralingual translations, as when he reworked Petr Buslov’s gangster film *Bumer* [2003] into *Anti-Bumer* [Strukov 239]). It is not a coincidence that Puchkov’s website lists only six *smeshnye* (amusing) translations and one hundred and seventy-four *pravil’nye* (correct) ones or that the more popular of the two appropriates Soviet TS terminology. What began as an individual fringe experiment in textual resistancy soon became a highly-commercialized performance co-opted by big-name Russian studios. According to Strukov, “Puchkov’s work demonstrates the instability of Russia’s cultural identity in relation to its Soviet past and also the volatile nature of Russia’s democracy after 2000. While in the period of 1995–2005 Goblin enjoyed phenomenal success on the pirated home video market, since 2006 he has become a mainstream figure” (246). Moreover, by its second decade, the content of Puchkov’s work became extremely problematic. In “Piracy and Narrative Games,” Natalia Rulyova explains that,

[i]n a post-Soviet Russian context, piracy, that is, the recycling of images and texts created by other artists, serves to subvert and mock the work of Soviet, contemporary Russian and Western artists, to parody Socialist Realism, Communist ideology, globalization, and Western consumerism. Promoting

cynicism and travesty, Puchkov's narratives can, at the same time, appeal to very base human instincts, playing on xenophobia and aggression. (626)

In "Some Like it Hot," Alexander Burak argues that the *ozhivliash* (livening-up, sexing up) of the ST eventually took Puchkov from a "minoritizing" into a "majoritizing" position that began to argue for its unique correctness (10), especially when Puchkov was willing to perpetuate prejudice for the sake of a good joke. After all, "[a] 'fucker' does not always translate as 'eban'ko,' . . . The translation is domesticating and defamiliarizing at the same time because the mobster Ralph [from *The Sopranos*] is not your typical 'dumb Ukrainian khlopets' [guy]" (22-23). As a result, in their latest incarnation, Puchkov's translations not only mirror "contemporary Russian television, film, and other mass media" in their "intolerance, homophobia, and chauvinism" (630) but virtually serve as a mouthpiece of pro-Putin ultra-nationalism that seeks to upstage and "'domesticate' the Western import" (632). What once held the potential for the recuperative strategy of cultural response and reaction to Russia's Soviet past became an affirmation of its hardline neo-Slavophilist present. However, like Burak I remain hopeful that three types of translation will inevitably emerge as a result of such cultural bubbling: the official "majoritizing" translation, the resistant "minoritizing" translation, and a hybrid "in between" translation, "like *The Sopranos* translation commissioned and shown by the Russian NTV channel" (27).

The three translations I have provided as examples demonstrate the possibility of very different (but syncretic) approaches using the same tools (see Table 11): Grünbein produces a minoritizing, resistant translation that appropriates a foreign text using occasional foreignizing interjections in an otherwise domesticating interlingual translation; Prigov produces a hybrid, resistant translation that appropriates a domestic text by performing Robinson's "radical

**Table 11** Schools of Post-Soviet Translation and Representation of Text

Cause	transmission of the letter (metaphrase)	syncretism	transmission of the equivalent spirit (paraphrase)
Effect	move the reader towards the writer (source-oriented)		move the writer towards the reader (target-oriented)
Translation Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>bukval'nyi</i> (literal)</li> <li>• <i>postmodernisticheskii</i> (postmodern)</li> <li>• <i>smeshnoi</i> (amusing)</li> <li>• <i>analiticheskii</i> (analytical)</li> <li>• <i>ochuzhdaiushchii</i> (foreignizing)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>divergentnyi</i> (divergent)</li> <li>• <i>gibridnyi</i> (hybrid)</li> <li>• <i>zolotaia seredina</i> (golden mean)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>vol'nyi</i> or <i>svobodnyi</i> (free)</li> <li>• <i>tochnyi</i> (accurate)</li> <li>• <i>vossozdaiushchii</i> (recreative)</li> <li>• <i>adekvatnyi</i> (adequate)</li> <li>• <i>khudozhestvennyi</i> (artistic)</li> <li>• <i>pravil'nyi</i> (correct)</li> <li>• <i>sinteticheskii</i> (synthetic)</li> <li>• <i>osvaiuvaiushchii</i> (domesticating)</li> </ul>
Major Proponents and Practitioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boshniak</li> <li>• Sinel'shchikov</li> <li>• Rudnev</li> <li>• Mikhailova</li> <li>• Puchkov (early)</li> <li>• Markstein</li> <li>• Prigov</li> <li>• Makhov</li> <li>• Borisenko</li> <li>• Nemtsov</li> <li>• Azov</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nesterova</li> <li>• Galeeva</li> <li>• Petrenko</li> <li>• Dyachkov</li> <li>• Fer'e</li> <li>• Voinich</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gal'</li> <li>• Vergilesov</li> <li>• Bernshtein</li> <li>• Puchkov (later)</li> <li>• Modestov</li> <li>• Sdobnikov</li> <li>• Petrova</li> <li>• Lanchikov</li> <li>• Troshina</li> <li>• Rarenko</li> <li>• Toporov</li> <li>• Idov</li> <li>• Danilov</li> <li>• Neliubin</li> <li>• Buzadzhi</li> <li>• Chaikovskii</li> <li>• Akunin</li> <li>• Shelestiuk</li> </ul>

domestication” within an otherwise domesticating intralingual translation; the early Puchkov produces a minoritizing, resistant translation that appropriates and *restructures* a foreign text by using foreignizing literalism and by performing radical domestication within a speech act that is both interlingual and intralingual; finally, the later Puchkov produces a majoritizing, fluent translation that appropriates and *remakes* a foreign text by using extreme domestication combined with dynamic equivalence within an interlingual speech act.

### **What’s it Going to Be Then, Eh?**

The question of resistant translation also brings to the fore the question of resistant “original” texts and source literatures. In fact, Berman gives the examples of writers such as Balzac, Proust, and Faulkner, arguing that literary prose (specifically the novel) can often be *a priori* inherently “polylingual” and heteroglossic (296) as far back as Don Quixote’s “plurality of Spanish ‘languages’”) and that such a quality yields a “a certain shapelessness” and “lack of control” that had previously been criticized, but that, in his view grants a richness to what some view as “bad writing” (Berman 287). One example is *Finnegans Wake*, where “the use of other languages is a means of enriching the text, of injecting multiple meanings and connotations, where the monolingual finds few” (Windle 171). I would like to argue that the best twentieth-century example of such an approach can be observed in Anthony Burgess’s *A Clockwork Orange* (1962) and its two very different translations published on the brink of the collapse of the U.S.S.R. As Kevin Windle explains in “The Homecoming of Nadsat,”

The specially-created language spoken by the narrator of *A Clockwork Orange*, Alex, . . . relies to a large extent on Russian loan-words, and takes its name, ‘Nadsat,’ from the Russian suffix meaning ‘teen.’ The English language is enriched by forms such as ‘govoreeting,’ ‘peeting,’ and ‘smecking one’s gulliver off.’” (163)

In fact, the novel relies not only on Russian borrowings but also on punning interlingual cognates such *horrorshow* (good), derived from the Russian word *khoroшо*, and Cockney rhyming slang such as *cutter* (money), derived from *bread and butter*. Here, a sample of Burgess's *ostranennyyi*, hybridized language becomes necessary. (I have **bolded** the words transliterated from Russian and **bolded and italicized** neologisms that exist neither in Russian nor in English.)

There was me, that is Alex, and my three **droogs**, that is Pete, Georgie, and Dim, Dim being really dim, and we sat in the **Korova** Milkbar making up our **rassoodocks** what to do with the evening, a flip dark chill winter bastard though dry. The Korova Milkbar was a milk-plus **mesto**, and you may, O my brothers, have forgotten what these **mestos** were like, things changing so **skorry** these days and everybody very quick to forget, newspapers not being read much neither. Well, what they sold there was milk plus something else. They had no licence for selling liquor, but there was no law yet against prodding some of the new **veschches** which they used to put into the old **moloko**, so you could **peet** it with **vellocet** or **synthemesc** or **drencrom** or one or two other **veshches** which would give you a nice quiet **horrorshow** fifteen minutes admiring **Bog And All His** Holy Angels and Saints in your left shoe with lights bursting all over your **mozg**. Or you could **peet** milk with knives in it, as we used to say, and this would sharpen you up and make you ready for a bit of dirty twenty-to-one, and that was what we were **peeting** this evening I'm starting off the story with. (1; emphasis added)

The heteroglossic composition of the book was complicated by editors' demands for two things: for Burgess to include a glossary that would demystify his fictional slang and the removal of the final, twenty-first chapter of his novel where the protagonist grows up and out of his delinquent and violent predilections. Burgess resisted on both fronts (Windle 164n5) but eventually relented



and came to bitterly regret his decision when Stanley Kubrick omitted the final chapter in its intersemiotic translation to film in 1971, preventing Alex from ever growing up or redeeming himself. Generally speaking, the omission was done to satisfy hardnosed American readers (and it is commonly assumed that this is the edition that Kubrick used); however, I own a 1972 U.K. edition of *CO* that does not include the twenty-first chapter of the 1962 version but includes a Nadsat glossary and a “restored” 2000 edition that includes the twenty-first chapter but omits the glossary. Thus, it is interesting to note that Sinel’schchikov’s translation follows the “censored” version but Boshniak’s translation follows its “uncensored” counterpart (Boshniak used the British ST, Sinel’schchikov the American ST [Windle 170]).

The very close competition between Vladimir Boshniak and Evgenii Sinel’schchikov’s translations<sup>1086</sup> also cannot be disregarded: Boshniak published an excerpt in *LG* on October 17, 1990. His translation must have been nearly complete because it was sent to typesetting on November 22. Four months later, Sinel’schchikov’s translation was serialized in March and April 1991 issues of *Iunost’*. On May 16, 1991, Boshniak’s novel was signed for printing in 300,000 copies by KhL close to the cultural centre of the U.S.S.R., in Leningrad, while a mere four days later Sinel’schchikov’s translation was sent to typesetting while Boshniak’s translation was serialized in the May issue of *Ural* (the second part was delayed by the abortive coup d’état of August 19-21). On July 3, Sinel’schchikov’s novel (subtitled “Confession of a Hooligan”<sup>1087</sup>) was signed for printing in 500,000 copies by a local Litfond on the Soviet periphery in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan), and the second part of Boshniak’s translation came out in the September issue of *Ural*. Glavlit ceased its operations throughout October and became defunct on November 22.

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<sup>1086</sup> Windle notes that before either Boshniak or Sinel’schchikov’s version, A. Gazov-Ginzberg published a Russian translation of *CO* in Tel Aviv in 1975 (166). However, because it was produced outside of the parameters of Soviet composition and publication, it is outside the scope of my discussion.

<sup>1087</sup> «Исповедь хулигана»

The Soviet Union was dissolved on December 26, 1991. However, for all intents and purposes the two books were prepared with the assumption that the U.S.S.R. will continue to exist. In this regard, their front matter is fascinating. Boshniak's translation include a translation of the author's note that, owing to passages like the diplomatic "I would be interested in seeing what influence the book and the [Stanley Kubrick] film would have on Soviet youth,"<sup>1088</sup> and the puzzling contention that "[f]reedom, as we have now seen in the Soviet Union, is sometimes fraught with great inconveniences"<sup>1089</sup> suggests the probability of the short introduction being heavily edited. Particularly strange is the contradiction between the pointed indictment of the *stiliagi* (hipster) counterculture movement as "youth criminality"<sup>1090</sup> and the admission that it was precisely Burgess's encounter with *stiliagi* in Leningrad that gave him the idea of inventing an international slang that would not "date" easily (40). Still, some of Burgess's statements that mirror those he made in the Western press remain, such as the notion that "these very 'orang-orang'"<sup>1091</sup> . . . in a totalitarian government become soulless mechanisms."<sup>1092</sup> In this regard, Boshniak's translator's statement is much more candid, for instance when he notes that Burgess's novel and Kubrick's film had been endlessly discussed by the Soviet press during the Era of Stagnation despite the fact that *not a single work by Burgess had been published in Russian* (5).<sup>1093</sup> More importantly, Boshniak sets up his translation strategy:

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<sup>1088</sup> «Мне было бы интересно посмотреть, какое воздействие книга и фильм окажут на советскую молодёжь» (3).

<sup>1089</sup> «Свобода, как это увидели теперь в Советском Союзе, подчас чревата большими неудобствами» (4).

<sup>1090</sup> «юношеская преступность» (4)

<sup>1091</sup> *People* in Malaysian (3)

<sup>1092</sup> «я не могу не раздумывать о том, что происходит, когда эти самые „orang-orang” . . . в тоталитарном государстве превращаются в бездушные механизмы» (3)

<sup>1093</sup> Viktor Zapol'skii's introduction to Sinel'shchikov's translation is much more forthright in terms of explaining why Burgess's works were previously not published in the U.S.S.R. (3-4).

During translation any possibility of a “mirrored” replacement of Russian “slang” with words borrowed, for instance, from English is excluded . . . Therefore the translator is forced to resort to a rather conventional method, highlighting in the Russian text words related to Russian jargon using the Latin script to, first of all, demonstrate their immediate transfer from the . . . [ST], and, second, to force the reader to slightly puzzle his brain over it. The Latin script is also necessary for these “slang” words to differ as sharply as possible from these same words but found in ordinary, non-jargon speech . . . Recognizing the artificiality of the method of transliteration, the translator attempted not to abuse it, applying “Russian slang” less often than the author does this in the . . . [ST]<sup>1094</sup> (emphasis added)

This is a momentous admission. Just like the passage that Heller forces three translators to recreate owing to the impossibility of preserving both its form and content, Burgess had designed *an entire novel* in such a way that a translator would be forced to begrudgingly admit the occasional necessity of *bukvalizm* (literalism) and recreate to the entire ST by strategically applying domestication and foreignization *even when it goes against his general translation principles*.

The result is spectacular. (I have **bolded** the words given in Latin script and provided them as they were given in the TT and ***bolded and italicized*** neologisms that exist neither in Russian nor in English.)

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<sup>1094</sup> «При переводе исключена любая возможность „зеркальной” замены русскоязычного „жаргона” словами, заимствованными, например, из английского . . . Поэтому переводчик вынужден прибегнуть к достаточно условному приёму, выделяя в русском тексте слова, относящиеся к русскоязычному жаргону . . . латиницей, чтобы, во-первых, продемонстрировать их непосредственную перенесённость из текста оригинала, а во-вторых, заставить читателя слегка поломать над ними голову. Латиница нужна ещё и для того, чтобы эти „жаргонные” слова как можно резче отличались от тех же слов, но встречающихся в обычной, не жаргонной речи . . . Сознавая искусственность приёма транслитерации, переводчик старался им не злоупотреблять, применяя „русский жаргон” реже чем это делает автор в тексте оригинала» (6)

This is the gang: me, that is Alex, and three of my **druga**, that is Pete, Georgie, and Tem,<sup>1095</sup> and Tem was really a dim guy, meaning **glupyi**, and we sat in the Korova milk bar, wiggling our **mozgoi** about how to kill the evening—such a vile, cold, and gloomy winter evening, though dry. The Korova milk bar—this was a **zavedeniye** where they served “milk plus,” though damnn, you probably can’t even remember what kind of **zavedeniya** these were: of course, these days everything changes so fast, forgotten right before your eyes, everyone could **plevatt**, no one even reads the papers these days. Anyway, they served “milk-plus”—that is milk plus a little something extra. They didn’t have a permit to sell alcohol, but there wasn’t yet a law against mixing in a little something from the new **shtutshkek** into good, old milk, and you could **pitt** it with **vellocet**, **drencrom**, and even with one of those **shtutshkek** from which you get a quiet **baldiozh**, and for about fifteen minutes you feel that the Lord God himself with his entire holy legion sits in your left shoe and through your **mozg** shoot sparks and fireworks. Also you could **pitt** “milk with knives,” as we called it, from it you got a **tortsh**, and you wanted to **dratsing**, wanted to **gasitt** someone the whole way, the whole **koldoi** against one guy, and that night, from which I began my story, we were drinking this very thing.<sup>1096</sup>

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<sup>1095</sup> Pun on *тёмный* (dim, not bright)

<sup>1096</sup> «Компания такая: я, то есть Алекс, и три моих *druga*, то есть Пит, Джорджик, и Тём, причём Тём был и в самом деле парень тёмный, в смысле *glupyi*, а сидели мы в молочном баре «Корова», шевеля *mozgoi* насчёт того, куда бы убить вечер — подлый такой, холодный и сумрачный зимний вечер, хотя и сухой. Молочный бар «Корова» — это было *zavedeniye*, где давали «молоко-плюс», хотя вы-то, блин, небось уже запомнили, что это были за *zavedeniya*: конечно, нынче всё так скоро меняется, забывается прямо на глазах, всем *plevatt*, даже газет нынче толком никто не читает. В общем, подавали там «молоко-плюс» — то есть молоко плюс кое-какая добавка. Разрешения на торговлю спиртным у них не было, но против того, чтобы подмешивать кое-что из новых *shtutshkek* в доброе старое молоко, закона ещё не было, и можно было *pitt* его с *велосетом*, *дренкромом*, а то и ещё кое с кем из *shtutshkek*, от которых идёт тихий *baldiozh*, и ты минут пятнадцать чувствуешь, что сам Господь Бог со всем его святым воинством сидит у тебя в левом ботинке, а сквозь *mozg* проскакивают искры и фейерверки. Ещё можно было *pitt* «молоко с ножами», как это у нас называлось, он него шёл *tortsh*, и хотелось *dratsing*, хотелось *gasitt* кого-нибудь по полной программе, одного всей *koldoi*, а в тот вечер, с которого я начал свой рассказ, мы как раз это самое и пили» (9).

Even Sinel'shchikov, who takes an entirely opposite approach<sup>1097</sup> to his translation by using Western slang printed in Cyrillic typeface in his attempt to find “anglicisms to replace Burgess’s Russianisms” (Windle 166), is not immune to Burgess’s syncretist mandate. In a short note within in the introduction to his translation, Sinel'shchikov briefly outlines his strategy: “I . . . unlike other translators<sup>1098</sup> of *A Clockwork Orange*, attempted to invent the ‘nadsat’ language of Soviet teenagers—a melange of youth slang of the 60s to the late 80s, densely peppered with words of English origin”<sup>1099</sup> (qtd. in Zapol'skii 4-5). Aside from its parenthetical explanations, the result is no less spectacular. (I have **bolded** the Westernisms and provided them as they were given in the TT and ***bolded and italicized*** neologisms that exist neither in Russian nor in English.)

This is me—Alex, and over there those three bastards—my **frendy**: Pete (in the Nadsat dialect his name sounds like Peet-or<sup>1100</sup>); Georgie (he’s also Dzhosha-narkosha<sup>1101</sup>) and Kir (Kirilla-debilla<sup>1102</sup>). I know that amongst themselves they call me Alik-shalik<sup>1103</sup> or shakalik,<sup>1104</sup> whatever you like better. We’re sitting in the ***Koroviaka*** milk bar, **drinking, toking** and **tinking** about what kind of thing to pull off, so that this wonderful, frosty evening wouldn’t be wasted. The cooperative ***Koroviaka***—the place of our usual hangout, a **pleis** is a **pleis**, no worse and no better. Like everywhere, here they **serv** kick-ass synthetic milk,

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<sup>1097</sup> Windle complains that Sinel'shchikov “greater concern for the spirit than the letter of the original frequently leads him to lose sight of the original altogether” (182); however, he recognizes that “Both translators are, in fact, deeply engaged in the development of a linguistic medium for the often disaffected young people of their own country in the 1990s, rather as the ‘Youth Prose’ writers, e.g. Aksenov and Gladilin, were in the 1960s” (182).

<sup>1098</sup> Unlike Boshniak, that is; there were no other translators.

<sup>1099</sup> «„Я . . . в отличии от других переводчиков «Заводного апельсина», попытался придумать «надсадский» язык советских тинэйджеров — смесь молодёжных сленгов 60-х — конца 80х годов, густо пересыпанных словечками английского происхождения”» (4-5).

<sup>1100</sup> Pun on *nudop* (faggot)

<sup>1101</sup> Pun on *druggie*

<sup>1102</sup> Pun on *moron*

<sup>1103</sup> Pun on *mischievous*

<sup>1104</sup> Little jackal

crammed with invisible white powder that cops and those wise-guys from control-inspection committees would never know as a shiv, unless they themselves try it. But they prefer **viskar'**-water under a blanket. . . The brand-name cow drink is truly good. After each dose for about fifteen minutes you see a sky in diamonds, on which god is fucking his angels, and the saints fight to decide which of them is going to be the Virgin Mary. . .<sup>1105</sup>

Both translations have their advantages. For one thing, they both “reflect a modern, and often vulgar idiom,<sup>1106</sup> Boshniak's to a slightly greater extent than Sinel'shchikov's” (Windle 174). Sometimes, literary links are hit-and-miss: Boshniak makes intertextual use of a Tolstoy reference (179), but both translators fail to make anything of the Schiller reference in Burgess's text (179-180). Boshniak's version is an unapologetic appropriation that makes effective use of foreignization<sup>1107</sup> using the Latin script in the Russian TT, counterbalancing it with the domestication based on genuine Soviet youth slang words such as *baldiozh* (a far-out trip), *tortsh* (a high), *gasitt* (to put out [someone's lights]) and more common slang such as *blin* (damn) and

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<sup>1105</sup> «Это—я, Алекс, а вон те три ублюдка—мои фрэнды: Пит (на насадском диалекте его имя звучит как Пит-ор); Джорджи (он же Джоша-наркоша) и Кир (Кирилла-дебила). Я знаю, что меня они между собой зовут Алик-шалик, или шакалик, как вам больше нравится. Мы сидим в молочном баре “Коровяка”, дринкинг, токинг и тинкинг, что бы такое отмочить, чтобы этот прекрасный морозный вечер не пропал даром. Кооперативная “Коровяка”—место обычной нашей тусовки, плейс как плейс, не хуже и не лучше любого другого. Как и везде, здесь серв обалденное синтетическое молоко, напиханное незаметным белым порошком, который менты и разные там умники из контрольно-инспекционных комиссий никогда не распознают как дурик, если только сами не попробуют. Но они предпочитают вискарь-водяру под одеялом. . . Фирменный коровий напиток поистине хорош. После каждой дозы минут пятнадцать видишь небо в алмазах, на котором трахается бог со своими ангелами, а святые дерутся, решая, кто из них сегодня будет девой Марией. . .» (8).

<sup>1106</sup> The word *трахать* (fuck, screw) came into the lexicon of Soviet print only in the late 1970s with the publication of the Russian translation of Heller's *SH* in 1978 (Matveev n. pag.).

<sup>1107</sup> Windle makes a very interesting point about the “psychology of reading”: “a degree of *ostranenie* may be achieved in the first few pages, after which the reader might simply cease to notice the script, or would do if Boshniak's method comprised only accurate transliteration. The effect would then be purely visual, and the device, once familiar, would become transparent, before being rendered invisible”—and the same can also be said of the ST. Windle notes that “[t]his difficulty is by-passed, however, and *ostranenie* maintained, when the translator follows the author's practice of truncating Russian words . . . or forming Russian-English compounds (Russian stem, English suffix), which may be better suited to the purpose” (168).

*kolda* (a gang). Boshniak also retains numerous resistant references to the Soviet *status quo* with relation to historical revisionism (“nowadays everything changes so fast, *forgotten right before your eyes*”; emphasis added) or the new black market burgeoning in the 1980s (“They didn’t have a permit to sell alcohol. . .”). It is extremely interesting that, while Boshniak lets go the categories of equivalence, Windle cannot, concluding that for Boshniak “the correspondence is close, the sense of the original is conveyed, the content is all there. Nothing is missing, nothing added”<sup>1108</sup> (171). This statement simply cannot be reconciled with Boshniak’s heavy modification and “Sovietification” of the ST (171) or Windle’s admission that, while the translators “show themselves to be adroit manipulators” of the TL and are “alert to subtleties of meaning in a difficulty text” (181), they “often appear *imitating Russian life, and the language of the young in their own country, rather than the art of Anthony Burgess*” (184). Sinel’schchikov’s version is less forceful and the parenthetical intrusions that explain the workings of Nadsat take away from its narrative momentum. However, it also counterbalances the foreignization of Western loan-words with domestication based on Russian rhyming wordplay (when Alex introduces his friends) as well as Soviet youth slang words like *tusovka* (hangout) and *obaldennoe* (far-out) and more common slang words like *otmochit’* (pull off) and *menty* (cops). Unfortunately, as Windle points out, Sinel’schchikov’s commitment to a forcefulness of method is weaker than Boshniak’s, and thus the Nadsat in subsequent chapters “thins out” somewhat, whereas Burgess maintains consistent diction (170). However, like Boshniak, Sinel’schchikov builds distinctive Sovietisms into the TT, such as “control-inspection committees” and the “cooperative” (a type of late-1980s business that was an attempt to compromise between free enterprise and government oversight). Sinel’schchikov even manages to work in an obvious

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<sup>1108</sup> Windle often struggles with the idea that an unmarked, “neutral” version of the text “would be less prone to the inexorable progress of stylistic obsolescence” (183). However, he fails to consider two facts: a “neutral” version of *CO* is impossible and if it were possible it would not have the violence and *ostranenie* that define it.

reference to The Beatles' "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds" (1967) that due to the "cultural delay" typical to the U.S.S.R. was all the rage in the 1980s. Sinel'shchikov's translation is not without its issues (particularly with its typically-pathological use of homosexuality, even if in passing). However, both simultaneously-published versions of Burgess's novel reveal the truth of translatorial syncretism: when unilateral equivalence is abandoned, and when an author forces any translator to pursue *ostranenie* by writing *ostranenie* into the marrow of his own text, no translation can be considered to be inherently "worse" or "better."

## Coda

Clearly, not all texts are created equal in their potential for resistancy (whether minoritizing or majoritizing) and this is precisely why I had initially selected Heller's and Vonnegut's novels for my investigation. However, even after one completes a close reading of an ST and its translations there remains the question of paradoxically consistent absurdity that empowers not only texts but their intertextual partnerships both inside and outside of the realm of translation. In this regard, it is interesting to briefly examine a curious parallel between the Vonnegut-Rait collaboration and that of Vonnegut's friend Václav Havel (Rackstraw 215), (the famous Czech playwright, dissident and, eventually, the president of Czechoslovakia and the Czech Republic) and Havel's translator Vera Blackwell. While Vonnegut wrote in U.S. and Rait desperately attempted to squeeze his work *inside* the Iron Curtain at all cost, Vera Blackwell tried to get Havel's work *outside* of it, especially to the U.K. and the U.S. Regardless of the opposite circumstances, both translators had been "muzzled," as Michelle Woods writes about Blackwell: Havel was hounded by the fickle whims of "the state literary and theatre agency, DILIA" (51)<sup>1109</sup> that was very similar to Glavlit and that wanted to simultaneously limit and

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<sup>1109</sup> Gorieva notes that Eastern European nations that sided with the U.S.S.R. after WWII were "artificially implanted [with the] institution of censorship of the Soviet type—an exact copy of Glavlit («искусственно насаждён институт цензуры советского типа — точная копия Главлита») (7).



profit from Havel's creative output, at times being flexible and at other times invasive (41). Echoing Venuti's comment on the capitalist qualities inherent in the bestseller, Woods acknowledges that "[t]ranslation is always done in someone's interest, and generally by those who commission it, rather than those who consume it (65). However, she also cautions against both "simply political" (71) and "simplistic" (73-74) readings of Havel's works and his struggle to get them staged. This double bind is very familiar: putting out a text directly positioned "anti" one thing would "cut off the political reverberations and multivalent meanings it might have for an audience, making them passive consumers of a thought or teachable moment" (44). A more nuanced approach remained necessary.

For Havel, "ideological thinking is hermetic and entropic" (Woods 45), and "a person [who] falls for a ready-made ideological system or 'worldview' . . . will bury all chances of thinking and freedom, of being clear about what he knows . . . he will deaden the adventure of the mind" (Havel, *Letters* 191-192). For Heller and Vonnegut, ideology is a matter-of-fact, banal "sickness" that passes with the changing of the colours on a national flag (*BCe* 605-605), so it becomes essential to identify in their translations the muscle-flexing of imperialist superpowers that, in Havel's words, leads to "a natural tendency to disengage itself from reality, to create a world of appearances" which, under totalitarian conditions, gives rise to "a mere ritual, a formalized language deprived of semantic contact with reality and transformed into a system of ritual signs that replace reality with pseudo-reality" ("Power" 47). This holds true of Vonnegut and Heller's language that characterizes WWII and Vietnam War *us/them* rhetoric in *SF* and *C22*; again in relation to Cold War jingoism, in *CC* and *C22*; and again in the context of "the soulless bureaucratic society of America" (Fiene 182)<sup>1110</sup> in *BC* and *SH*. For Havel, a translation

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<sup>1110</sup> See also Fiene's discussion of Vonnegut's Soviet critics arguing that his satire "is directed *only* at the United States" (174).

that “‘camouflaged’ . . . [a] play, pointedly using Czech reality as a subtext” risked preventing a foreign audience from apprehending “the complexities and nuances of the localized critique” (Woods 3), just like the science fiction genre is not really a “cover” in Vonnegut’s early work, for instance when in *SF* the narrator mentions “[a]n American near Billy [who] wailed that he had excreted everything but his brains” (43) and then reminds us: “That was I. That was me” (430). Brecht stresses the importance of “separat[ing] mimicry [*Mimik*] (presenting the act of observation) . . . from gesture [*Gestik*]” (131). Indeed, a full-blown allegory would not do for any of the writers (Woods 38; Havel 285),<sup>1111</sup> and so they must make an occasional use of emotional memory tempered by metafictional gestures. The notorious Stanislavskian judgment “I don’t believe!”<sup>1112</sup> becomes the credo that all three writers decisively reject, instead accepting the *alienation effect* into their work, breaking all “fourth walls” (Brecht 130) that stand in their way and requiring conscious “[a]cceptance or rejection of the characters’ words” (130). As a result, the text ceases to be “sacrosanct” (130), “timeless,” or “Eternally Human” (135); “theatrical metamorphosis” is no longer “a mystical process” (130); and the human being becomes “a variable which . . . controls the milieu,” *making* history rather than passively *observing* its invariance (135). Havel made extensive use of “‘appellative theatre,’ . . . designed to provoke questions, to unsettle the audience, rather than to provide a didactic answer” (Woods 39). Heller and Vonnegut accomplished the same with their dark, self-deprecating comedy, drawings of wide-open beavers, and liberal use of the word *motherfucker* in literary texts.

Rait failed to unsettle her readers in what Havel called “some indeterminable way . . . full of contradictions” (*Letters* 171) and Vilenskii and Titov succeeded in this task and paid a very different price. Like V/T, Havel infused his plays with criticism of language, “our own

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<sup>1111</sup> See also Brecht’s comments on illusion (132).

<sup>1112</sup> «He бeпю!» See also Brecht’s comments on Stanislavski (132).

propensity to be seduced by language and to use it to gain or cede power” (Woods 39), while, like Rait, Blackwell fruitlessly tried to convince potential buyers that Havel’s plays were not merely political (35). Havel’s plays were naturalized and adapted in the U.K. Vonnegut’s novels were domesticated and tamed in Russia. However, in both cases, the message struggles to survive its medium, as the novelists’ overly frank, disarming diction and Havel’s purposefully long, torturous plays attempt to “pull the audience in, frustrate them, wind them right, get them involved in the constructions of language . . . get them questioning the relationship to language and the everyday” (48). The subversion of banality rules the three author’s work: the mishmash of Hugo’s nonsense dialogue in *The Garden Party* (58-59); the catalogues of penises, hips, waists, or bosoms in *BC*; the machine-like bureaucracy in *PP* and *C22*; the tooth-grinding repetition of the začarovany kruh (cursed circle) in *Memorandum* (Woods 64-65), a version of “Who’s on First?” from hell that resonates with Heller’s own *zacharovannyi krug* in *V/T*’s *C22* (Andzhaparidze 11). Heller and Vonnegut’s maddeningly simplistic description of everyday triteness and horror is always followed by the repetition of a familiar refrain that attempts to compensate for the tendency to censor, reduce, and normalize their work, the exaggerated absurdity of it providing not an escapist, apolitical, nihilist gesture (45; Fiene 170; Brecht 131), but “Beckett’s ‘amplification’ of an ordinary situation” (Havel *Letters* 285), probing the existential questions beneath (Woods 46), pushing us to be “bored to life” (67). Clearly, the three authors were hardly the first (or only) writers to take this approach, and there remains a rich field of investigation, both of the baroque evolution of the genre of black humour and the parallel evolution of schools of translation on either side of various Iron Curtains, particularly in formerly-colonial countries such as Cuba, Laos, and Vietnam and countries relatively far from Western influences, such as China and North Korea. Ultimately, hybridization, syncretism, and

minimization of translatorial violence can only be upheld as “working” if these approaches are tested beyond the boundaries of a discipline long dominated by Western theorists and theories. Such investigation may well reveal new universalities and new distinctions, but above all new ways to think. After all, Vonnegut reminds us, “[t]he opposing forces are . . . those who enjoy childlike playfulness when they become adults and those who don’t” (“Prague” 64). This play, however, must be *conscious*, and the player must “make[ ] it clear that he knows he is being looked at” (Brecht 130; emphasis removed). So it goes.

## Afterword

Some aspects of writing this work have challenged me while others turned out to be outright traumatic. Through my project, I responded to these issues with painting and poetry. I reproduce below one of the poems I wrote in Russian and its subsequent English translation.

Николаю Жекулину

### Блевать или плакать

В Калгари минус  
                    шестнадцать  
                                градусов  
                                        Цельсия.

Три утра.

В квартире холод.

Я читаю:  
                    очерк,  
                                статью,  
                                        рецензию.

Живот сжат  
            (но это не голод.

Если страницы сканировал плохо,  
Я приставляю к экрану глаз близко

                                и на одном вздо  
хе  
                    читаю

на русском  
и на английском  
                    сло

ва  
из  
истории.

Тут не для теоретика садик  
присядешь и сдохнешь—  
кишка тонка.

Здесь не бутафории аллегории,  
а категории фантасмагории  
и кашель кладовщика.

Вот он—  
сам и гнётся и шаркает  
и несёт мне набор букв смело

из Ю оф Эй  
из Ю Би Си  
из Эс Эф Ю  
из Ю оф Ти  
из Вашингтона  
из Квинсленд

документы ЦК РКП(б),  
приказы Народного комиссара обороны СССР,  
дела третьего и первого (от  
и до Иосифа Бродского дела.

На пятидесяти страницах библиографии  
на семидесяти восьми тысячи слов

я как Кронос ем детей полиграфии  
я — демиург канцелярских основ

я — динамическая безэквивалентность  
я — глава вавилонских вельмож  
я — форенизатор душ человеческих  
я — Шлейермахерский негр и святош

Да и что мне Херр  
Шлейермахер?  
я бы Шкловскому руку пожал  
я — не Джейкобсон и не Найда  
я — Штейнера обоюдоострый кинжал

я — буквалист и клептоман  
к власти слов почтения нету  
я — антропофагос и каннибал  
я не выжил бы Лит, но об этом...

Я пишу про условный печатный лист  
и про цирки Госкомиздата,  
про переводчика из совка, что как глист  
жил в кишке интеллекта развратом,

Окаянный как дворовая сучка  
Я в хронолога пыли тону  
ВСЁ ВРАНЬЁ —  
                        ЧТО Ж МОЁ?!  
где ж та штучка

Я не  
глобальный  
гражданин мира  
гордый

Слёзы высохли.  
Прошла тошнота.

Пять утра.

В квартире тепло.

3 марта 2015

**To cry or to vomit**

In Calgary it is Celsius  
                                minus  
                                        sixteen  
                                                degrees.

Three A.M.

The apartment is freezing.

                  I read:  
                                articles,  
                                        essays  
                                                in journalese.

There's a knot in my stomach  
                  ( but it's not hunger's seizing.

If I scanned any pages poorly,  
          I put my eye right up to the gibberish

                                        and on one bre  
          ath  
                  I read  
                                wo  
rds  
          from  
          history

          in Russian  
          and English.

                  This is not a theoretician's garden  
          sit down and keel over—  
                  ain't got the guts.



These are not prop allegories,  
but categories of phantasmagorias  
and the coughing storekeeper, nonplussed.

Here he is—  
bent over and shuffling  
brings to me a collection of letters

from Yew ov Ei  
from Yew Bee See  
from Es Ef Yew  
from Yew ov Tee  
from Washington  
from Queensland

documents of the Central Committee of the Communist Party,  
orders of the People's Commissar of Defence,  
the cases of third and first departments (from  
and to Joseph Brodsky's matter.

Fifty pages of bibliography  
seventy-eight thousand lexical parts

I like Cronos eat sons of typography  
I—a demiurge of clerical hearts

I—dynamic antiequivalence  
I—a ruler of Babylonian lords  
I—a foreignizer of human deliverance  
I—Schleiermacherian negro and fraud

And what is to me Herr  
Schleiermacher?  
I would gladly Shklovsky's hand shake  
I—not Jacobson and not Nida,  
I am Steiner's sharp double-edged stake

I—bukvalist and kleptomaniac  
on authority's words I could piss  
I—anthropofagos and cannibal  
I would not have survived, but of this...

I write of the nominal printed sheet  
and of circuses of Goskomizdat,  
of the soviet translator, who like shit,  
like a worm lived in intellect's gut

of the cheerful quadrille of the Ke Ge Be  
mired in alphabet soups of duty,  
and of the neopseudosocialism  
of the theories of Lawrence Venuti.

Like a junkyard three-legged bitch  
I am drowning in history's dust  
ALL IS LIES—  
                                WHAT IS MINE?!  
where is that tiny hitch

to unlock my conundrum at last—  
that my strongbox stamped confidential  
opens simply like a tin can:

I am not a  
                    proud  
                            global  
                                    world citizen

                            but simply  
            a translated  
man.

Tears have dried.  
                    Passed the nausea.

In Calgary it is Celsius  
                            minus  
                                    sixteen  
                                            deg  
rees.

Five A.M.

The apartment is warm.

I read:  
            articles,  
                    essays  
                            in journalese.

March 6, 2015

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<sup>1113</sup> This edition omits the twenty-first chapter, but includes a Nadsat glossary.

<sup>1114</sup> This edition includes the twenty-first chapter, but omits the Nadsat glossary.

<sup>1115</sup> This edition includes the Nadsat glossary.

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<sup>1118</sup> The author's name in both stories is given incorrectly, as «Трумэн Кэпот».

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<sup>1119</sup> Chapters 1 and 2 from *Something Happened*

<sup>1120</sup> See also *Catch as Catch Can* (99-109).

<sup>1121</sup> Chapter 35 from *Catch-22*. The introduction refers to the novel as «Параграф 22» (*Paragraph 22*) and advertises its upcoming full release from Voenizdat

<sup>1122</sup> Chapter 24 from *Catch-22*. The introduction refers to the novel as «Параграф-22» (*Paragraph-22*) and advertises its upcoming full release from Voenizdat.

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<sup>1130</sup> This collection has been produced in Soviet-era Russia and was therefore subject to censorship (it bears the Glavlit number A 11628 on the copyright page). Because it has been obviously sanitized of any resolutions and directives suggestive of the apparatus of Soviet censorship, it is only of general interest to the student of translation and publishing of the U.S.S.R.

<sup>1131</sup> Tsar Aleksandr I

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<sup>1132</sup> This collection is an excellent source of documents and correspondence originally produced by Glavlit officials and censors. It is also a very good companion to the collections of documents compiled by Artizov and Naumov, and Maksimenkov.

<sup>1133</sup> The last head of Glavlit (1986-1991)—this was a last-ditch attempt to revive the agency before, as Blum puts it, it “died” (555n1).

<sup>1134</sup> Head of Lenoblgorlit, the Leningrad office of Glavlit, (1937-c.1941)

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---. “Tsirkuliarnoe pis’mo. 1923.08.24.” Blium, *Tsenzura v Sovetskom Soiuze* 69-70.

---. “Vsem Gublitam. 1923.12.” Blium, *Tsenzura v Sovetskom Soiuze* 74.

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<sup>1135</sup> Unsigned circulars and bulletins issued by the Moscow head office of Glavlit

<sup>1136</sup> This secret bulletin was sent to Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, and members of the Politburo of the CPSU.

- . "Vsem Gublitam. 'Sov. Sekretno.' Perechen' svedenii, sostavliaiushchikh tainu i ne podlehashchikh raspostraneniui v tseliakh okhraneniia politiko-ekonomiicheskikh [sic] interesov SSSR. 1925.09.07." Blum, *Tsenzura v Sovetskom Soiuzе* 91-92.
- . "Vsem oblastnym otdeleniiam Glavlita. Tsirkuliarno. 1922.11.29." Blum, *Tsenzura v Sovetskom Soiuzе* 35-36.
- . "Vsem oblastnym otdeleniiam Glavlita. Tsirkuliarno. 1922.12.22." Blum, *Tsenzura v Sovetskom Soiuzе* 37-38.
- . "Vsem oblilitam i Glavlitam respublik. Tsirkuliarno. 'Sov. Sekretno.' 1923.08.21." Blum, *Tsenzura v Sovetskom Soiuzе* 68-69.
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<sup>1137</sup> Head of Glavlit (1922-1931)

<sup>1138</sup> Assumed to be the author (Blum, *Tsenzura* 29n3)



- . "O politiko-ideologicheskoi kontrole nad literaturoi v period rekonstruktsii. Iz doklada nachal'nika Glavlita P. I. Lebedeva-Polianskogo na sekretnom soveshchaniia zaveduiushchikh respublikanskimi Glavlitami i Oblkraitami v ianvare 1931 g. (stenogramma). 1931.01." Blium, *Tsenzura v Sovetskom Soiuze* 189-
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<sup>1139</sup> The Leningrad office of Glavlit in charge of ten *guberniia* (provinces) (Blium, *Tsenzura* 76)

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<sup>1140</sup> Head of Lenoblgorlit, the Leningrad office of Glavlit (1933-1934).

<sup>1141</sup> Head of Glavlit (1931-1935)

<sup>1142</sup> Tsar Petr I

- “Postanovlenie Politbiuro TsK RKP(b) o pechatanii knig izdatel'stva ‘Vsemirnaia literatura.’ 27 apreliia 1921 g.” Artizov and Naumov 16.
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<sup>1143</sup> The successor of the merger of *Vestnik inostrannoi literatury* (1928-1930) and *Literatura mirovoi revoliutsii* (1931-1932) and the predecessor of *IL* (from 1955 until present day)

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<sup>1146</sup> The head of Glavrepertkom

<sup>1147</sup> Blium (*Tsenzura v Sovetskom Soiuze* 4n1) provides some revealing commentary on the decree, such as the number of independent publishers, journals, and papers in Russia prior to 1913 and Lenin's particular doublespeak which, in effect, banned all publications except Bolshevik ones.

<sup>1148</sup> Deputy Minister of the Armed Forces of the USSR. Vasilevskii was Marshall of the Soviet Union from Feb. 1943 until Mar. 1943 (when Joseph Stalin was appointed to the same position).

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<sup>1162</sup> Mikhail Gasparov includes the original (unpublished) introduction as appendix III to "Briusov and bukvalizm" (120-124). See also Briusov's (abridged) notes for his first edition of the *Aeneid* (1899) in Gasparov (119-120).

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<sup>1174</sup> A student of the U.S.S.R. will see the first red flag when he reads the first sentence of the introduction: "This book is a translation of a collection of papers published, in commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Revolution, late in 1967 as a special issue of the Soviet journal *Biblioteki SSSR*. . . . I have felt it necessary to edit the original quite considerably . . . because the sheet clutter of patriotic and ideological sentiment . . . acts as a distracting and irritating gloss" (7). Nonetheless, the collection, comprised of translations of six Soviet scholars using almost exclusively Soviet sources, smacks of official propaganda because of the tone it takes and the Soviet clichés it uses. In his 1972 review of the book, Melville J. Ruggles writes that "semi-anonymity is given [to] the six (of the eight in the original text) authors, whose affiliations are cited in *Biblioteki SSSR* but omitted in the edited translation. The two untranslated authors are also unpersoned. With them, 83 footnote citations went down the drain, some junk but many referring to fundamental and important documents in the history of Russian libraries in the Soviet period" (381-382). Ruggles further casts doubt on the definitions that Francis either takes at face value or fails to qualify for the benefit of his readers (382-383). For much more impartial and thorough comparable publications, see Boris I. Gorokhoff's *Publishing in the U.S.S.R.*, Ralph A. Leal's *Libraries in the U.S.S.R.*, and Boris Korsch's *The Permanent Purge of Soviet Libraries*.



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<sup>1178</sup> While this is hardly a reliable source, the handful of biographical details (mostly corroborated by the Shimon Markish article) shed some light on the obscure translator's biography and bibliography.

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<sup>1179</sup> Although helpful in a general sense, this bibliography is not only incomplete and outdated, but also gets many details about translations of Vonnegut's works wrong. The annotated bibliography that follows Donald M. Fiene's "Kurt Vonnegut's Popularity in the Soviet Union" (1977) is much more useful. Susan Farrell's *Kurt Vonnegut: A Literary Reference to His Life and Work* (2008) is another excellent resource, although it does not contain information on translations. Finally, Konstantin Kalmyk's online bibliography of Russian translations is not only the most recent but is also the most thorough and accurate.

<sup>1180</sup> See my note on the 1987 edition in References.

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## Appendices

### Appendix I: Excerpts from Kurt Vonnegut's Letters About His Attempts to Bring Rita Rait-Kovaleva to the United States (1973-1984)

March 10, 1973

To Paul Engle<sup>1181</sup>

That's a strong and attractive letter you wrote to Fedosov.<sup>1182</sup> I'm glad you're on the job. Harvard, Yale and UCLA have so far expressed interest in having Rita visit them. (197)

June 21, 1973

To Donald Fiene

What can we do? We raised the money. We mobilised the academic community to welcome Rita. An invitation was sent to her more than six weeks ago. It was either lost or intercepted, most likely intercepted. When I found out she had never received it, I had Paul Engle send her another one (in the name of the University of Iowa again) about a week ago. Engle told me on the phone that the cultural attache in Washington had told him that there weren't going to be *any* exchanges of writers and translators during the coming year. So there we are, and fuck all. (200)

September 30, 1974

To Mary Glossbrenner<sup>1183</sup>

She [Rait] had been allowed out of the worker's paradise only four times in her entire life. We got to know her during one of those times—in Paris. now she will probably never be allowed out again. She has made friends with too many of the wrong people. I raised money to bring her here for a visit. She is Faulkner's translator, too, and Salinger's. I got her official invitations from Harvard and the University of Iowa and so on. I wanted especially to show her Oxford, Mississippi, Faulkner's home. No soap. (219)

November 16, 1976

To Donald Fiene

The authorities in the Soviet Union, for reasons unknown to me, have been reluctant to let her travel outside of the country. They are sending four translators here next spring, but Mrs. Rait is not among them.

So I am not attempting to put mild pressure on those authorities to let her come her. An invitation from me to her, person to person, has proved futile in the past, and would prove to be futile again. The best advice I have from our State Department and from friends in the Soviet Union is that an invitation must come from an educational institution in order to be considered seriously. (240)

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<sup>1181</sup> "Director of the Iowa Writers' Workshop" (*Letters* 100)

<sup>1182</sup> "Cultural attaché at the U.S.S.R. embassy in Washington, D.C." (197)

<sup>1183</sup> Vonnegut's cousin (219)



November 29, 1976

To Donald Fiene

As for how things go now with Rita: Three weeks ago I sent her a copy of Jill's beautiful new ballet book—airmail, first class. I enclosed a letter telling her that she was about to be invited by the University of Tennessee. Five days ago, a rather mournful letter drifted in from her, asking why Jill and I don't write to her any more.

Stanley Kunitz says they will never let her out. They are afraid she will have too much fun and start talking too much. My spook friend is having lunch with a Russian contact next week. The contact is just back from Moscow, and promises to tell how things really stand with Rita. He has been looking into it hard, he says. (242)

January 16, 1977

To Vance Bourjaily<sup>1184</sup>

I am trying to get Rita Rait, my Russian translator out of Moscow for a brief visit over here. I still don't know when she is coming, or even if they let her out. She has made an awful lot of mistakes over the years—picking for friends people who turned out to be jailbirds later on. (244-245)

December 20, 1980

To Donald Fiene

A lot of hell is being raised about Irina [Grivnina]'s arrest<sup>1185</sup>. . . As for how to get Rita here: I don't think any scheme will work. Too many bureaucrats envy her having so many ardent friends in the outside world. They don't think it's fair. (278)

January 8, 1984

To Donald Fiene

The big news, the incredible news, is that Rita will be here in the United States in April or May. I put her up for the Thornton Wilder Prize for translation, inaugurated last year by Columbia University. She won. And, by God, they are allowing her to come over here to get it. I am also trying to rig things so that she can be made an Honorary Member of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters at about the same time. I tried that before, and failed—but your excellent dossier is still on file. (301)

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<sup>1184</sup> Vonnegut's friend, a fellow infantry veteran, and a teacher at the Iowa Writers' Workshop (Shields 192-193)

<sup>1185</sup> A Soviet dissident who publicized accounts of psychiatric abuses (see James n. pag.) On November 15, 1985, Vonnegut wrote to Donald Fiene: "Did you notice that Rita's friend Irina Grivnina was finally sprung from the Worker's Paradise, and has now taken up residence with her family in the Netherlands?" (*Letters* 309).

**Appendix II:**  
**Passages from *Slaughterhouse-Five* Challenged in**  
***Board of Education v. Pico*, 457 U.S. 853 (1982) (899-901)**

29 “‘Get out of the road, you dumb motherfucker.’ The last word was still a novelty in the speech of white people in 1944. It was fresh and astonishing to Billy, who had never fucked anybody . . .”

32 “‘You stake a guy out on an anthill in the desert – see? He’s facing upward, and you put honey all over his balls and pecker, and you cut off his eyelids so he has to stare at the sun till he dies.’”

34 “He had a prophylactic kit containing two tough condoms ‘For the prevention of disease only!’ . . . He had a dirty picture of a woman attempting sexual intercourse with a shetland pony.”

94 & 95 “But the Gospels actually taught this: Before you kill somebody, make absolutely sure he isn’t well connected . . . The flaw in the Christ stories, said the visitor from outer space, was that Christ who didn’t look like much, was actually the son of the Most Powerful Being in the Universe. Readers understood that, so, when they came to the crucifixion, they naturally thought . . . Oh boy – they sure picked the wrong guy to lynch this time! And that thought had a brother: There are right people to lynch. People not well connected . . . The visitor from outer space made a gift to Earth of a new Gospel. In it, Jesus really WAS a nobody, and a pain in the neck to a lot of people with better connections than he had . . . So the people amused themselves one day by nailing him to a cross and planting the cross in the ground. There couldn’t possibly be any repercussions, the lynchers thought . . . since the new Gospel hammered home again and again what a nobody Jesus was. And then just before the nobody died . . . The voice of God came crashing down. He told the people that he was adopting the bum as his son . . . God said this: From this moment on, He will punish horribly anybody who torments a bum who has no connections.”

99 “They told him that there could be no Earthling babies without male homosexuals. There could be babies without female homosexuals.”

120 “Why don’t you go fuck yourself? Don’t think I haven’t tried . . . he was going to have revenge, and that revenge was sweet . . . It’s the sweetest thing there is, said Lazzaro. People fuck with me, he said, and Jesus Christ are they ever fucking sorry.”

122 “And he’ll pull out a gun and shoot his pecker off. The stranger’ll let him think a couple of seconds about who Paul Lazzaro is and what life’s gonna be like without a pecker. Then he’ll shoot him once in the guts and walk away. . . . He died on account of this silly cocksucker here. So I promised him I’d have this silly cocksucker shot after the war.”

134 “In my prison cell I sit . . . With my britches full of shit, And my balls are bouncing gently on the floor. And I see the bloody snag when she bit me in the bag . . . Oh, I’ll never fuck a Polack any more.”

173 “And the peckers of the young men would still be semierect, and their muscles would be bulging like cannonballs.”

175 “They didn’t have hard-ons . . . Everybody else did.”

177 “The magazine, which was published for lonesome men to jerk off to.”

178 “and one critic said. . . . ‘To describe blow-jobs artistically.’”

**Appendix III:**  
**Censorial Peritexts in *Novyi mir* and *Inostrannaia literatura* (1960, 1970, 1975)**

*Novyi mir*

1960					
Issue	Sent to Typesetting	Signed for Printing	Delay (Days)	Glavlit Serial No.	Items Examined Since Last Issue
January	Nov. 27, 1959	Dec. 30, 1959	33	A 10485 <sup>1186</sup>	—
February	Dec. 24, 1959	Jan. 26, 1960	33	A 00318*	—
March	Jan. 19, 1960	Feb. 18, 1960	30	A 00334	16
April	Feb. 23, 1960	Mar. 21, 1960	27	A 00367	33
May	Mar. 23, 1960	Apr. 26, 1960	34	A 05503*	—
June	Apr. 27, 1960	May 20, 1960	23	A 05526	23
July	May 25, 1960	Jun. 21, 1960	27	A 04166*	—
August	Jun. 24, 1960	Jul. 20, 1960	26	A 04191	25
September	Jul. 25, 1960	Aug. 23, 1960	29	A 05592*	—
October	Aug. 23, 1960	Sep. 20, 1960	28	A 09227*	—
November	Sep. 24, 1960	Oct. 21, 1960	27	A 09271	44
December	Oct. 25, 1960	Nov. 22, 1960	28	A 09299	28

1970					
Issue	Sent to Typesetting	Signed for Printing	Delay (Days)	Glavlit Serial No.	Items Examined Since Last Issue
January	Nov. 20, 1969	Jan. 29, 1970	70	A 01011	—
February	Dec. 29, 1969	Mar. 26, 1970	87 <sup>1187</sup>	A 01030	19
March <sup>1188</sup>	Jan. 23, 1970	Apr. 10, 1970	77	A 01038	8
April <sup>1189</sup>	Mar. 20, 1970	May 19, 1970	60	A 01054	16
May	Apr. 15, 1970	Jun. 8, 1970	54	A 01062	8
June	Apr. 29, 1970	Jul. 1, 1970	63	A 01077	15
July	May 25, 1970	Aug. 6, 1970	73	A 10014*	—
August	Jun. 24, 1970	Sep. 8, 1970	76	A 10026	12
September	Jul. 22, 1970	Oct. 7, 1970	77	A 10033	7
October	Sep. 1, 1970	Oct. 27, 1970	56	A 09661*	—
November	Oct. 8, 1970	Nov. 27, 1970	50	A 09684	23
December	Oct. 30, 1970	Dec. 17, 1970	48	A 10054*	—

\* The variation between the serial numbers indicates the possible involvement of different censors or Glavlit branches.

<sup>1186</sup> «A» denotes publication in Moscow (Gorokhoff 81, 257).

<sup>1187</sup> The examination of the February issue takes extremely long probably due to of the overhaul of the editorial staff following Tvardovskii's departure.

<sup>1188</sup> This issue includes the first part of Rait's translation of *SF*.

<sup>1189</sup> This issue includes the second part of *SF*.

1975					
Issue	Sent to Typesetting	Signed for Printing	Delay (Days)	Glavlit Serial No.	Items Examined Since Last Issue
January	Nov. 22, 1974	Dec. 25, 1974	33	A 02915	—
February	Dec. 19, 1974	Feb. 19, 1975	62	A 02232*	—
March	Jan. 24, 1975	Mar. 26, 1975	61	A 02259	27
April	Mar. 11, 1975	Apr. 14, 1975	34	A 02266	7
May	Mar. 21, 1975	Apr. 23, 1975	33	A 02270	4
June	Apr. 28, 1975	Jun. 13, 1975	46	A 02299	29
July	May 13, 1975	Jul. 11, 1975	59	A 02113*	—
August	Jun. 13, 1975	Aug. 5, 1975	53	A 02318	—
September	Jul. 22, 1975	Sep. 4, 1975	44	A 02334	16
October	Jul 29, 1975	Sep. 12, 1975	45	A 02339	5
November	Aug. 27, 1975	Oct. 23, 1975	57	A 13450*	—
December	Sep. 26, 1975	Nov. 21, 1975	56	A 02357	—

*Inostrannaia literatura*

1960					
Issue	Sent to Typesetting	Signed for Printing	Delay (Days)	Glavlit Serial No.	Items Examined Since Last Issue
January	Nov. 11, 1959	Dec. 31, 1959	50	A 11426	—
February	Dec. 15, 1959	Feb. 8, 1960	55	A 00490*	—
March	Jan. 15, 1960	Feb. 26, 1960	42	A 03136	—
April	Feb. 10, 1960	Mar. 15, 1960	34	A 03170	34
May	Mar. 8, 1960	Apr. 9, 1960	32	A 03205	25
June	Mar. 26, 1960	May 10, 1960	45	A 04060*	—
July	May 9, 1960	Jun. 4, 1960	26	A 06166*	—
August	Jun. 7, 1960	Jul. 15, 1960	38	A 03994*	—
September	Jul. 8, 1960	Aug. 17, 1960	40	A 07290*	—
October	Aug. 5, 1960	Sep. 13, 1960	39	A 07324	34
November <sup>1190</sup>	Aug. 27, 1960	Oct. 18, 1960	52	A 07366	42
December	Oct. 14, 1960	Nov. 25, 1960	42	A 07411	45

<sup>1190</sup> This issue includes Rait's translation of Salinger's *CR*.

1970					
Issue	Sent to Typesetting	Signed for Printing	Delay (Days)	Glavlit Serial No.	Items Examined Since Last Issue
January	Oct. 24, 1969	Dec. 12, 1969	49	A 11797	—
February	Nov. 13, 1969	Jan. 20, 1970	68	A 05555	—
March	Jan. 3, 1970	Feb. 17, 1970	45	A 05763	208
April	Feb. 6, 1970	Mar. 18, 1970	40	A 05974	211
May	Mar. 9, 1970	Apr. 16, 1970	38	A 01273*	—
June	Apr. 3, 1970	May 7, 1970	34	A 06584*	—
July	Apr. 28, 1970	Jun. 4, 1970	37	A 08016*	—
August	May 26, 1970	Jul. 7, 1970	42	A 08059	43
September	Jul 7, 1970	Aug. 14, 1970	38	A 09035*	—
October	Aug. 10, 1970	Sep. 23, 1970	44	A 09171	136
November	Sep. 8, 1970	Oct. 23, 1970	45	A 09293	122
December	Oct. 1, 1970	Nov. 20, 1970	50	A 11234*	—

1975					
Issue	Sent to Typesetting	Signed for Printing	Delay (Days)	Glavlit Serial No.	Items Examined Since Last Issue
January <sup>1191</sup>	Nov. 5, 1974	Dec. 10, 1974	35	A 10434	—
February <sup>1192</sup>	Dec. 3, 1974	Jan. 3, 1975	31	A 09203*	—
March	Jan. 5, 1975	Feb. 7, 1975	33	A 04566	—
April	Feb. 4, 1975	Mar. 12, 1975	36	A 04638	72
May	Mar. 5, 1975	Apr. 9, 1975	35	A 04708	70
June	Apr. 4, 1975	May 13, 1975	39	A 04773	65
July	May 6, 1975	Jun. 12, 1975	37	A 04835	62
August	Jun. 2, 1975	Jul. 9, 1975	37	A 04904	69
September	Jun. 23, 1975	Aug. 11, 1975	49	A 00121*	—
October	Jul. 23, 1975	Sep. 16, 1975	55	A 04998*	—
November	Sep. 5, 1975	Oct. 16, 1975	41	A 00166*	—
December	Sep. 24, 1975	Nov. 14, 1975	51	A 13974*	—

Year	Novyi mir (Average)		Inostrannaia literatura (Average)	
	Time to Examine Single Issue (Days)	Items Examined Per Month by Glavlit Unit	Time to Examine Single Issue (Days)	Items Examined Per Month by Glavlit Unit
1960	29	28	41	36
1970	66 <sup>1193</sup>	14	44	144
1975	49	15	40	68

<sup>1191</sup> This issue includes the first part of Rait's translation of *BC*.

<sup>1192</sup> This issue includes the second part of *BC*.

<sup>1193</sup> Following Tvardovskii's departure, the amount of Glavlit oversight decreases, but issues take twice as long to examine.

**Appendix IV:**  
**Censorial Peritexts in Soviet Translation Criticism (1955-1988)**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Author or Editor</b>	<b>Sent to Typesetting</b>	<b>Signed for Printing</b>	<b>Delay (Days)</b>	<b>Glavlit Serial No.</b>	<b>Print Run</b>
<i>Questions of Literary Translation: A Collection of Articles</i> <sup>1194</sup>	Ed. VI. Rossel's.	Jul. 20, 1955	Oct. 15, 1955	87	A 05327 <sup>1195</sup>	10,000
<i>Introduction to the Theory of Translation: Linguistic Problems</i> <sup>1196</sup>	A. V. Fedorov	—	Mar. 10, 1958	—	III 02365 <sup>1197</sup>	16,000
<i>How to Learn to Understand and Translate a Foreign Text</i> <sup>1198</sup>	Ed. Uvarova, V. P.	Dec. 28, 1966	Nov. 30, 1967	337	AT 00233 <sup>1199</sup>	15,000
<i>High Art</i> <sup>1200</sup>	Kornei Chukovskii	Jan. 18, 1968	Oct. 9, 1968	265	A 09924	25,000
<i>Mastery of Translation: Seventh Digest</i> <sup>1201</sup>	Ed. Polonskaia, K. N.	Dec. 9, 1969	May 20, 1970	162	A 01057	10,000
<i>Language and Translation: Questions of General and Special Theory of Translation</i> <sup>1202</sup>	L. S. Barkhudarov	Oct. 3, 1974	Feb. 12, 1975	132	A 09534	25,000
<i>The Untranslatable in Translation</i> <sup>1203</sup>	Sergei Vlakhov and Sider Florin	Oct. 24, 1979	Mar. 18, 1980	146	—	9,000
<i>Literary Translation and Literary Relationships</i> <sup>1204</sup>	Givi Gachechiladze	Nov. 12, 1979	Apr. 11, 1980	151	A 06073	6,000

<sup>1194</sup> «Вопросы художественного перевода: Сборник статей»

<sup>1195</sup> «А» denotes publication by “national publishers” in Moscow (Gorokhoff 81, 257).

<sup>1196</sup> «Введение в теорию перевода: Лингвистические проблемы»

<sup>1197</sup> «III» denotes publication in Moscow in “fields under Ministry of Culture” (Gorokhoff 257).

<sup>1198</sup> «Как научиться понимать и переводить иностранный текст»

<sup>1199</sup> «АТ» denotes publication in Minsk (Belarus) (Gorokhoff 257).

<sup>1200</sup> «Высокое искусство»

<sup>1201</sup> «Мастерство перевода: сборник седьмой»

<sup>1202</sup> «Язык и перевод: Вопросы общей и частной теории перевода»

<sup>1203</sup> «Непереводимое в переводе»

<sup>1204</sup> «Художественный перевод и литературные взаимосвязи»

Title	Author or Editor	Sent to Typesetting	Signed for Printing	Delay (Days)	Glavlit Serial No.	Print Run
<i>The Linguistics of Translation</i> <sup>1205</sup>	Vilen Naumovich Komissarov	Feb. 15, 1980	Jun. 26, 1980	132	A 11901	4,600
<i>Above the Line of Translation</i> <sup>1206</sup>	Lev Ginzburg	Oct. 27, 1980	Jun. 5, 1981	221	A 06508	10,000
<i>The System of Language and Translation: A Collection of Articles</i> <sup>1207</sup>	Ed. N. K. Garbovskii	Aug. 20, 1982	Jan. 7, 1983	140	Л-95112 <sup>1208</sup>	4,310
<i>Theory of Translation and Comparative Analysis of Languages</i> <sup>1209</sup>	Ed. E. M. Mednikovaia	—	Dec. 26, 1984	—	Л-79952	1,300
<i>Russian Translators of the 19th Century and the Development of Literary Translation</i> <sup>1210</sup>	Iurii Davidovich Levin	Jan. 31, 1985	Jul. 4, 1985	154	M-25088 <sup>1211</sup>	5,300
Declaration of <i>Glasnost</i> (Feb. 25, 1986) <sup>1212</sup>						
<i>Translation—A Means of Mutual Rapprochement between Nations: Opinion Journalism</i> <sup>1213</sup>	Ed. Klyshko, A. A.	Sep. 25, 1986	May 20, 1987	237	—	15,000
<i>If There Were Translators in Babylon: Articles, Reflections, Notes</i> <sup>1214</sup>	Levon Mkrttychevich Mkrtchian	Mar. 9, 1987	Jul. 8, 1987	121	ВФ 01669 <sup>1215</sup>	3,000

<sup>1205</sup> «Лингвистика перевода»

<sup>1206</sup> «Над строкой перевода»

<sup>1207</sup> «Система языка и перевод: сборник статей»

<sup>1208</sup> «Л» denotes publication in Moscow, by “republic and city publishers” (Gorokhoff 257).

<sup>1209</sup> «Теория перевода и сопоставительный анализ языков»

<sup>1210</sup> «Русские переводчики XIX века и развитие художественного перевода»

<sup>1211</sup> «М» denotes publication in Leningrad (St. Petersburg) (Gorokhoff 257).

<sup>1212</sup> At the XXVII CPSU Congress (Gorbachev 7)

<sup>1213</sup> «Перевод — средство взаимного сближения народов: Художественная публицистика»

<sup>1214</sup> «Если бы в Вавилоне были переводчики: Статьи, размышления, заметки»

<sup>1215</sup> «ВФ» denotes publication in Erevan (Armenia) (Gorokhoff 257).



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<sup>1216</sup> «Несгораемые слова»

<sup>1217</sup> «Текст и перевод»

**Appendix V:  
Sexual Passages Omitted from the Russian Text  
of *Breakfast of Champions* (1978)**

Dwayne's monthly orgasm rate on average over the past ten years, which included the last years of his marriage was two and one-quarter. Grace's guess was close. "One point five," she said. Her own monthly average over the same period was eighty-seven. Her husband's average was thirty-six. He had been slowing up in recent years, which was one of many reasons he had for feeling panicky. (BCe 629; cf. BCr 469)

He had a penis eight hundred miles long and two hundred and ten miles in diameter, but practically all of it was in the fourth dimension. (BCe 660; cf. BCr 497)

Dwayne Hoover, incidentally, had an unusually large penis, and didn't even know it. The few women he had had anything to do with weren't sufficiently experienced to know whether he was average or not. The world average was five and seven-eighths inches long, and one and one-half inches in diameter when engorged with blood. Dwayne's was seven inches long and two and one-eighth inches in diameter when engorged with blood.

Dwayne's son Bunny had a penis that was exactly average.

Kilgore Trout had a penis seven inches long, but one and one-quarter inches in diameter.

This was an inch:



Harry LeSabre, Dwayne's sales manager, had a penis five inches long and two and one-eighth inches in diameter.

Cyprian Ukwende, the black physician from Nigeria, had a penis six and seven-eighths inches long and one and three-quarters inches in diameter.

Don Breedlove, the gas-conversion unit installer who raped Patty Keene, had a penis five and seven-eighths inches in diameter.

• • •

Patty Keene had thirty-four-inch hips, a twenty-six-inch waist, and a thirty-four-inch bosom.

Dwayne's late wife had thirty-six-inch hips, a twenty-eight-inch waist, and a thirty-eight inch bosom when he married her. She had thirty-nine-inch hips, a thirty-one-inch waist, and a thirty-eight-inch bosom when she ate Drāno.

His mistress and secretary, Francine Pefko, had thirty-seven-inch hips, a thirty-inch waist, and a thirty-nine-inch bosom.

His stepmother at the time of her death had thirty-four-inch hips, a twenty-four-inch waist, and a thirty-three-inch bosom. (*BCe* 614-615; cf. *BCr* 457)<sup>1218</sup>

The largest human penis in the United States was fourteen inches long and two and a half inches in diameter.

The largest human penis in the world was sixteen and seven-eighths inches long and two and one-quarter inches in diameter.

The blue whale, a sea mammal, had a penis ninety-six inches long and fourteen inches in diameter.

• • •

One time Dwayne Hoover got an advertisement through the mail for a penis-extender, made out of rubber. He could slip it over the end of his real penis, according to the ad, and thrill his wife or sweetheart with extra inches. They also wanted to sell him a lifelike rubber vagina for when he was lonesome. (*BCe* 616; cf. *BCr* 458)

The erection center caused the dorsal vein in his penis to tighten up, so blood could get in all right, but it couldn't get out again. It also relaxed the tiny arteries in his penis, so they filled up the spongy tissue of which Dwayne's penis was mainly composed, so that the penis got hard and stiff—like a plugged-up garden hose. (*BCe* 617; cf. *BCr* 458)

He was a career officer in the Army. He had a penis six and one-half inches long and one and seven-eighths inches in diameter. (*BCe* 621; cf. *BCr* 462)

and men . . . and children (*BCe* 667; cf. *BCr* 505)<sup>1219</sup>

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<sup>1218</sup> Only the first paragraph of this passage survives in the TT, with heavy modifications: «Кстати говоря, у Двейна Гувера были необычайные мужские достоинства, но он этого даже не замечал. Да и те немногие женщины, с которыми он имел дело, были недостаточно опытные, чтобы об этом судить. По мировым стандартам промеры Двейна были выше среднего, тогда как многие из окружающих его мужчин были типичными середняками» (*BCr* 457).

<sup>1219</sup> The passage about Saint Anthony fantasizing about a secular life was censored probably because the faint possibility that homosexuality and pedophilia had been suggested—let alone in the same sentence.

She had thirty-six-inch hips, a twenty-nine-inch waist, and a thirty-eight-inch bosom at the time of her death. Her husband had a penis seven and a half inches long and two inches in diameter. (BCe 710; cf. BCr 544)

My penis was three inches long and five inches in diameter. Its diameter was world's record as far as I knew. It slumbered now in my *Jockey Shorts*. (BCe 725; cf. BCr 558)

But my body took one defensive measure which I am told was without precedent in medical history. It may have happened because some wire short-circuited or some gasket blew. At any rate, I also retracted my testicles into my abdominal cavity, pulled them into my fuselage like the landing gear of an airplane. And now they tell me that only surgery will bring them down again.

Be that as it may, . . . I did not know yet that I had retracted my testicles in all the excitement. I felt only vague discomfort down there. (BCe 729; cf. BCr 562)

**Appendix VI:  
Two Versions of “Ozymandias”**

**“Ozymandias” by Percy Bysshe Shelley (1818)**

I met a traveller from an antique land  
Who said: “Two vast and trunkless legs of stone  
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,  
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,  
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,  
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read  
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,  
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed:  
And on the pedestal these words appear:  
‘My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:  
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!’  
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay  
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare  
The lone and level sands stretch far away.”

**„Transsibirischer Ozymandias“ by Durs Grünbein (1989)**

»Traf ich ein Tourist aus sein antik Land  
Der sagt: In der Wüste steht ein Paar gewaltige  
Rumpfloße Bein aus Stein. Daneben, halb in Sand  
Versunken liegt Visage, ruiniert. Ihr Grinsen  
Kalte Befehlsgewalt und die gefrorne schmale Lipp  
Zeigen wie gut sich Künstler Leidenschaft studierte  
Daß sie erhalten bleibt, geprägt in tote Stoff,  
Wie Hand hier tauschte und wie Herz staffierte;  
Und auf dem Sockel steht geschrieben diese Spruch:  
›Mein Name Ozymandias, Zar der Zaren:  
Seht meine Werke, Mächtige, und dann verzweifelt!‹  
Nichts sonst was ringsum ist. Um den Zerfall  
Von kolossale Wrack, grenzenlos öd und leer,  
Dehnt flache Sand sich einsam weit dahin.«

(rpt. in Ryan 47)

**Appendix VII:**  
**Three Translations of a Passage**  
**from *The Catcher in the Rye***

**An excerpt from «Над пропастью во ржи» by Rita Rait-Kovaleva (1960)**

Но она не пошла в музей. Не захотела идти со мной. Я пошёл один, сдал чемодан в гардероб и опять спустился на улицу. Она все ещё стояла на тротуаре, но, когда я подошёл, она повернулась ко мне спиной. Это она умеет. Повернётся к тебе спиной, и все.

— Никуда я не поеду. Я передумал. Перестань реветь, слышишь? — Глупо было так говорить, потому что она уже не редела. Но я все-таки сказал «Перестань реветь!» на всякий случай. — Ну, пойдём. Я тебя отведу в школу. Пойдём скорее. Ты опоздаешь.

Она даже не ответила. Я попытался было взять её за руку, но она её выдернула. И все время отворачивалась от меня.

— Ты позавтракала? — спрашиваю. — Ты уже завтракала?

Не желает отвечать. И вдруг сняла мою охотничью шапку и швырнула её мне чуть ли не в лицо. А сама опять отвернулась. Мне стало смешно, я промолчал. Только поднял шапку и сунул в карман.

— Ладно, пойдём. Я тебя провожу до школы.

— Я в школу больше не пойду. (134)

Что я ей мог сказать на это? Постоял, помолчал, потом говорю:

— Нет, в школу ты обязательно должна пойти. Ты же хочешь играть в этом спектакле, правда? Хочешь быть Бенедиктом Арнольдом?

— Нет.

— Неправда, хочешь. Ещё как хочешь! Ну, перестань, пойдём! Во-первых, я никуда не уезжаю. Я тебе правду говорю. Я вернусь домой. Только провожу тебя в школу — и сразу пойду домой. Сначала пойду на вокзал, заберу чемоданы, а потом поеду прямо. . .

— А я тебе говорю — в школу я больше не пойду. Можешь делать все, что тебе угодно, а я в школу ходить не буду. И вообще заткнись!

Первый раз в жизни она мне сказала «заткнись». Грубо, просто страшно. Страшно было слушать. Хуже, чем услышать площадную брань. И не смотрит в мою сторону, а как только я попытался тронуть её за плечо, взять за руку, она вырвалась.

— Послушай, хочешь погулять? — спрашиваю. — Хочешь пройтись со мной в зоопарк? Если я тебе позволю сегодня больше не ходить в школу и возьму тебя в зоопарк, перестанешь душить? — Не отвечает, а я повторяю своё: — Если я позволю тебе пропустить вечерние занятия и возьму погулять, ты перестанешь выкамаривать? Будешь умницей, пойдёшь завтра в школу?

— Захочу — пойду, не захочу — не пойду! — говорит и вдруг бросилась на ту сторону, даже не посмотрела, идут машины или нет. Иногда она просто с ума сходит.

Однако я за ней не пошёл. Я знал, что она-то за мной пойдёт как миленькая, и я потихоньку направился к зоопарку по одной стороне улицы, а она пошла туда же, только по другой стороне. Делает вид, что не глядит в мою сторону, а сама косится сердитым глазом, смотрит, куда я иду. (135)

**An excerpt from «Обрыв на краю ржаного поля детства» by Sergei Makhov (1998)**

Даже не пошевелилась. Со мной, видите ли, не желает. В общем, сам побрёл сдал чемодан в раздевалку, потом опять спустился. Она всё стоит у лестницы, но едва подошёл — повернулась затылком. Вот уж в чём искусница. В смысле, хребтиной поворачиваться, чуть только на неё находит.

— Я никуда не уезжаю. Передумал. Короче, прекращай ныть и заткнись, — самое смешное, вовсе уж и не плачет. Но я один хрен сказал. — Пом. Пройдусь с тобой до школы. Давай-давай. А то опоздаешь.

Даже не думает отвечать, и вообще. Вроде как хотел взять её за лапу, но она увернулась. Да всё отворачивается.

— Ты пообедала? Обедала уже?

Нет, не желает отвечать. Вдруг взяла, сняла красную охотничью кепку — ну, которую я подарил — и вроде б швырнула мне прям в лицо. А сама снова повернулась задом. Я аж весь передёрнулся, но ни фиги не сказал. Просто поднял кепку и сунул в карман куртки.

— Пойдём, слышишь? Провожу тебя на учёбу.

— Не пойду я ни на какую учёбу.

Ну как воспринимать эдакие закидоны? Просто постоял минуту-другую. Затем говорю:

— Почему это не пойдёшь? Ты ж намерена участвовать в постановке?

Хочешь ведь играть Бенедикта Арнолда?

— Не-а.

— Нет хочешь. Однозначно хочешь. Давай-давай, пойдём по-быстрому. . .

Во-первых, я никуда не уезжаю, сказал же. Иду домой. Провожу тебя до учёбы — и сразу домой. Сперва заберу с вокзала чемоданы, а оттуда прямо. . .

— Говорю же: не пойду ни на какую учёбу. Ты делай, чего тебе охота, а я ни на какую учёбу не пойду. Вот и заткнись. Первый раз в жизни сказала мне «заткнись». Ужасное слово! Господи, сколь жутко звучит! Хуже самых грубых ругательств. К тому ж всё ещё на меня не смотрит, а всякий раз как вроде бы пытаюсь положить ей руку на плечо, и т.д., прям выскальзывает.

— Слушай, не хочешь пройтись? — спрашиваю. — Давай гульнём до зверинца? В случае разрешу не идти сегодня на занятия, а просто погуляем, перестанешь выкобениваться?

Она по-прежнему со мной не разговаривала, потому опять спрашиваю: (75)

— Положим, разрешу пропустить сегодня уроки да чуток погулять — бросишь дурацкие приколы? Пойдёшь завтра учиться, как хорошая девочка?

— Посмотрю, — говорит. И тут же рванула к чёрту через улицу. Даже не глянула, едут ли тачки.

Иногда прям чокнутая.

Но я не попёрся за ней. Знал: она пойдёт за мной, посему двинул к зверинцу по одной стороне улицы, а Фиби — по другой чёртовой стороне. На меня даже внимания не обращает, но наверно уголком прибабахнутого глаза косится, куда иду, и вообще. (76)

**An excerpt from «Ловец на хлебном поле» by Max Nemtsov (2008)**

Только она по лестнице со мной не пошла. Не хотела она со мной никуда идти. А я один все равно пошёл, и заташил этот чемодан в гардероб, и сдал его, а потом вышел и спустился снова. Она по-прежнему стояла на тротуаре, но когда я подошёл, спиной ко мне повернулась. Она так умеет. Отворачивается от тебя, если ей в струю.

— Никуда я не еду, — говорю. — Я передумал. Так что хватит реветь и заткнись. — Самая умора, что, когда я так сказал, она уже и не ревела даже. Только я все равно сказал. — Давай, пошли. Я тебя до школы провожу. Ну пошли. Опоздаешь.

Она не ответила, ничего. Я как бы попробовал её за руку взять, а она не дала. Все отворачивалась и отворачивалась.

— Ты хоть поела? Ты уже обедала? — спрашиваю.

Ноль эмоций. Она только чего — она мой красный охотничий кепарь сняла, тот, что я ей дал, и чуть ли не в рожу мне пихнула. А потом опять отвернулась. Я чуть не сдох, но ничего не сказал. Только подобрал кепарь и сунул в карман.

— Пошли, а? Я тебя до школы провожу, — говорю.

— Я не *иду* ни в какую школу.

Я даже не понял, чего ответить, когда она так сказала. Только стоял пару минут, как пришибленный.

— В школу *надо*, — говорю. — Ты же в постановке этой хочешь играть, правда? Бенедикта Арнолда?

— Нет.

— Хочешь-хочешь. Ещё как хочешь. Ну пошли, давай, — говорю. — Во-первых, я никуда не еду, я же тебе сказал. Я *иду* домой. Пойду домой, как только в школу тебя отведу. Но сначала зайду на вокзал, заберу чемоданы, а потом напрямиком. . .

— Я сказала, не *пойду* я ни в какую школу. *Ты* куда хочешь, туда и иди, а я в школу не пойду, — говорит. — И сам заткнись. — Это она мне впервые заткнуться сказала. Жуть как звучит. Господи, ну какая жуть же. Фиговой, чем ругаться. И не смотрела на меня по-прежнему, а только я руку ей на плечо положу или как — то, она вырывается.

— Слышь, а погулять не хочешь? — спрашиваю. — До зоосада, а? Если я тебе сегодня разрешу в школу не ходить, а пойти гулять, ты фигнёй этой маяться не будешь?

Она не ответила, поэтому я опять:

— Если я тебе дам прогулять сегодня, и мы пройдемся, ты кончишь фигнёй маяться? И завтра, как нормальная, в школу пойдёшь?

— Может, пойду, а может, и нет, — говорит. А потом как рванёт через дорогу, даже не посмотрела, машины там или как. Совсем чеканутая иногда.

Только я за ней не пошёл. Я знал, что это *она* за мной двинет, и почапал на юг, к зоосаду, по той стороне улицы, что возле парка, а она пошла туда же по *другой*, нафиг, стороне. Даже не смотрела на меня вообще, но я прикидывал: наверно, косяка-то все-таки давит, куда я пойду и всяко-разно. (162)