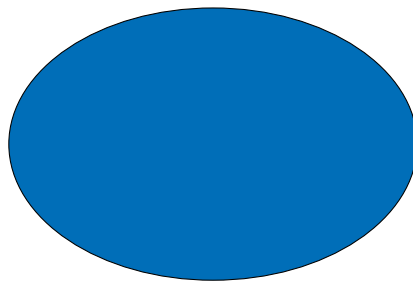


FOUR CENTURIES

Russian Poetry in Translation



№ 23, 2020



Four Centuries. Russian Poetry in Translation

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Contents

Preface. The <i>Four Centuries</i> library	5
--	---

XIX

Aleksandr Pushkin – Александр Пушкин	
<i>Szibériai bányamély</i>	6
<i>Во глубине сибирских руд</i>	6

Translated into Hungarian by Aladar Halászi
Перевод на венгерский Аладара Галаси

Aleksej Khomjakow – Алексей Хомяков	
<i>Gyermekeimhez</i>	7
<i>Детям</i>	7

Translated into Hungarian by Maya Tsesarskaya
Перевод на венгерский Майи Цесарской

Mikhail Lermontow – Михаил Лермонтов	
<i>Magányosan járom az utamat</i>	8
<i>Выхожу один я на дорогу</i>	8
<i>A kőszirt</i>	9
<i>Утес</i>	9
<i>A vitorlás</i>	9
<i>Белеет парус одинокий</i>	9

Translated into Hungarian by Aladar Halászi
Перевод на венгерский Аладара Галаси

XX

Igor Severyanin – Игорь Северянин	
<i>Koronázok</i>	10
<i>Сонет (Я коронуюсь утром мая)</i>	10
<i>Hatvad a tűz</i>	11
<i>Запад погас ...</i>	11

Translated into Hungarian by Aladar Halászi
Перевод на венгерский Аладара Галаси

Osip Mandelstam – Осип Мандельштам	
<i>To a Man Who Acted a Spaniard ("A Riddle Unravelled")</i>	12
<i>Актеру, игравшему испанца («загадка и разгадка»)</i>	12
<i>If I'm honest with you ...</i>	12
<i>В половине второго ...</i>	12
<i>To be like a toy ...</i>	13
<i>Вы хотите быть игрушечной ...</i>	13
<i>Blok is our master ...</i>	13
<i>Блок — Король ...</i>	13
<i>I'm closer to Acmeists near the Winter Palace ...</i>	13
<i>Но в Петербурге акмеист мне ближе ...</i>	13
Translated into English by Alistair Noon	
Перевод на английский Алистера Нуна	
Lydia Chukovskaya – Лидия Чуковская	
<i>Bajban, bápatomban ...</i>	14
<i>Я не богу молюсь ...</i>	14
Translated into Hungarian by Maya Tsesarskaya	
Перевод на венгерский Майи Цесарской	
Aleksandr Makarov-Krotkov – Александр Макаров-Кротков	
<i>Wiersze</i>	15
<i>Стихотворения</i>	15
Translated into Polish by Jerzy Czech	
Перевод на польский Ежи Чеха	
References	22

The choice of colours for different languages is just random and has nothing to do either with national flags or national traditions.

The Four Centuries Library

Dear Friends,

Thank you very much for reading our magazine. Concurrent with the *Four Centuries* journal, Perelmuter Verlag is also creating a library of Russian poetry in translation – the *Four Centuries Library*. The ambitious goal of this project is to collect books, periodicals and other papers with Russian poetry, old and new, translated into different languages, and finally to donate the collection as a whole to a university or public library. You can join me in my efforts to implement this idea by sending your donations in the following categories:

- Monographic poetry collections by separate poets translated into different languages;
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Please, send your donations to:

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The list of all the gifts with the names of the contributors will be published in *Four Centuries*.
Thanks a lot for your support in advance!

Yours,
Publisher

XIX

Aleksandr Pushkin (1799–1837)

Александр Пушкин (1799–1837)

Magyarra fordította Aladar Halászi

Translated into Hungarian by Aladar Halászi

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Szibériai bányamély

Szibériai bányamély
nem töri meg kitartásotok,
gyötrelmek nem múlt el még,
ám eszméinkkel szárnyalhattok.

Hű nővér bajban a remény,
lenn, a sötétben örködik ő
vidámságot és kedvet keltvén,
míg eljön a kívánt idő.

A barátság és szeretet
áttör hozzátok a záron,
mint sötét börtön vermetek
is beengedi szabad hangom.

Bilincs hull, omlik a börtön,
a szabadság és hű társatok
majd a kapuknál köszön,
s átadja megőrzött kardotok.

Aladar Halászi, 1940, was born at the village of Szabolcs in Hungary. He graduated from Sáropatak Comenius College as a teacher and got a degree at Debrecen University. Before retirement he was teaching Hungarian literature and language at a secondary school. He has published lyric poetry, short stories, essays and journalism, as well as translated from Russian, English, and German into Hungarian. In 2018 he had the honour to be awarded the Knight of Hungarian Culture title.

Aleksej Khomjakow (1804–1860)

Алексей Хомяков (1804–1860)

Magyarra fordította Ceszárszkaja Maja

Translated into Hungarian by Maya Tsesarskaya

© Maya Tsesarskaya, translation, 2020

Gyermekeimhez

Mily jó volt egykor, éjszaka közepén
Benézni hozzátok... Hogy szerettem én
Vigyázni szép gyermeki álmotokat,
Figyelni szép angyali arcotokat,
És kérlelni, szeressen Urunk;
Meghatottan keresztet vetni s aztán
Eltöprengeni, milyen nyíltak s tiszták
A gondtalan lelkek, s ott, mellettetek
remélni, hogy ti is boldogok lesztek
Soká... Mily csodálatos érzés!
Benézek én most is, de rút sötétség
Vesz körül és fojt, a kis ágy üres rég,
Kialudt a gyertya a szent kép előtt,
A játékok közt a pók hálót szőtt,
És úgy összeszorul a szívem!
Ó, gyermekeim! éjszaka közepén
Én érettem is, ki annak idején
Fohászkodott értetek, jámbor imát
Most mondjátok úgy, ahogy éveken át
Én kérleltem, szeressen Urunk.

Maya Tsesarskaya was born in 1951 in Zhitomir. In 1973 after graduating from the Leningrad Polytechnical Institute she left the USSR for Hungary. In 1985 she finished Higher Translation Courses at the University of Budapest. Her Russian translation of István Bibó's book *The Jewish Question in Hungary after 1944* was published in Moscow in 2005. Her first collection of poems *Love in a Bottle* published the same year included her first poetic translations into Russian. She was the editor and translator of the book *In Memoriam Nyugat* (2009) devoted to the most influential literary journal in Hungary in the first half of the 20th century. Maya worked a lot in several city theaters as an interpreter and translator. Her translations of János Pilinszky's poems in 2012 was the first book of the series launched by Vodoley Publishing House. © Maya Tsesarskaya translation, 2020.

Mikhail Lermontow (1814–1841)
Михаил Лермонтов (1814–1841)

Magyarra fordította Aladar Halászi
Translated into Hungarian by Aladar Halászi
© Aladar Halászi, translation, 2020

Magányosan járom az utamat

Magányosan járom az utamat,
fénylik rajta a kő a ködben.
Csendes az éj. Hallik az Úr szava,
csillagok is beszélnek közben.

Milyen ünnepélyes, csodás az ég!
Föld issza fényét, ahogy ragyog ...
Nekem mért fáj minden? Miért nehéz?
Mit remélhetek, kívánhatok?

Az élettől már semmit se várok,
csöppet se bánt, mit is tehetnék.
Nyugalmat keresek, szabadságot,
feledni, aludni szeretnék! –

De nem feküdnék a hideg sírba ...
Az ember végül megpihenne,
hogyan keble életerővel bírna,
s a sóhaj halkán szólna benne.

Bárcsak éj s nap mindig kényeztetne,
szerelmemért édes dalt zengne!
Jó volna, ha örökké zöldellne
az árnyas tölgy, susogna, lengne.

A kőszirt

Magányos felhőcske éjszakázott
hozzásimulva a kősziklához,
de útján kora reggel tovalebbsz
játszva, szökellve az égi gyepen,
ott hagyva nyirkos lábnyomát
az öreg szirt repedéseiben.
Hallgat a szikla, mély ereiben
magányában csöndesen sírdogál.

A vitorlás

Magányos vitorlás fehérlik
a nagy tenger kék kódében.
Messzi földért lelke miért izzik?
Mit hagyott szülőföldjében?

Hullámok játszanak, szél sövölt,
az árboc nyög, recsegve dől.
Óh, nem a boldogságáért fut,
nem is boldogsága elől.

Azúrkék a tenger alatta,
arany napsugár felette,
de lázad és vár a viharra,
nyugalmat benne lelhetne.

Igor Severyanin (1887–1941)
Игорь Северянин (1887–1941)

Magyarra fordította Aladar Halászi
Translated into Hungarian by Aladar Halászi
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Koronázok

Májusi reggel, koronázlak
az ifjú, fényes nap alatt,
tavasz, menny küldött, hozsannázlak,
neked a csillogás maradt.

Jázmin, kamilla és nefelejcs,
ibolya, gyöngyvirág, orgona ...
Ilyen érzést adott az élet,
hogy koronázzalak boldogan.

Költő jön s szól, nem katonásan:
„Légy méltó örökös utánam;
bíbor palástot meg jogart

– én mindezt izgatottan várom –
adok neked, hisz trónt akarsz,
és koronád most meg is áldom.

Hamvad a tűz

Hamvad
a tűz
harmat
oltja
csend ül
mezőn
őrt áll
a fűz
bokor
zörög
roppan
a jég
morog
dörög
az ég
ködkürt
harsan
sírbolt
mint folt
lapul.

Osip Mandelstam (1891–1938)
Осип Мандельштам (1891–1938)

Translated into English by Alistair Noon © Alistair Noon, translations, 2020

To a Man Who Acted a Spaniard ("A Riddle Unravelling")

Each night, this Spaniard goes
to his aunt's last rites in Zaragoza.
She's lifeless. He's sad he's lost her.
But he still doesn't lower his nose.
He has a quick smoke in her crypt,
and then nips home forthwith.
"Who's this!?" he asks as he grips
his girl's hair, "this guy you're with!
I haven't come home by chance!
My attendance at funerals is nil.
I don't even have any aunts.
I smoked all my cigs in Seville,
I swear by the hair of Beardozza,
the moustache of Bombarozza!"

A Riddle Unravelling is a comedy by Vladimir Trakhtenberg (1860–1914), performed in 1909 and 1917, hence the uncertainty about the poem's dating. The poem is addressed to the actor Sergey Antimonov (1880–1954). Poem dated 1909 (?).

**

If I'm honest with you,
at half-past two
the alphabet's hard
on the waiting bard:
few responses about
and no way out.

A.G. Mets suggests this poem alludes to a tradition of poets reading their poems according to the alphabetical order of their surnames. The poem was written, apparently, at one of Vyacheslav Ivanov's Tower meetings of poets. Poem dated 14 March 1911.

**

To be like a toy, that's what you'd change,
but your clockwork is totally broken.
No soul will dare to creep within range
of your cannons without a good poem.

Written in Anna Akhmatova's poetry album, and responding to a line of hers: "But I've turned into a toy" (from a 1911 poem beginning "They're leading hobby horses down the avenue" and forming part of the cycle *At Tsarskoye Selo*). Poem dated 1911.

**

Blok
is our master,
the wizard of sin.
Shock
and disaster –
the jewels of our king.

Alexander Blok (1880–1921), the leading Russian poet of his generation. This poem is one of several by various hands gathered at the Vienna, a St. Petersburg restaurant, who elected Blok as their "king". Poem dated 10 December 1911.

**

I'm closer to Acmeists near the Winter Palace
than ones with Romantic white faces in Paris.

According to Akhmatova, Mandelstam first met Nikolai Gumilyov (Akhmatova's first husband, one of the leading Acmeists and to become a close friend of Mandelstam's) in Paris. Gumilyov was wearing a top hat and had a powdered face, like a *pierrot*, a Parisian pantomime figure. Poem dated 1912 (?)

[Alistair Noon](#)'s translations from the Russian include Pushkin's *Bronze Horseman* (Longbarrow Press), Anna Akhmatova (www.balticsealibrary.de) and Osip Mandelstam (various online and print magazines). From German he has translated WW1 Poet August Stramm (Intercapillary Space) and contemporary poet Monika Rinck (Barque Press). A first full-length collection of his own poetry, *Earth Records*, appeared from Nine Arches Press in 2012 and has been shortlisted for the Michael Murphy Memorial Award.
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Lydia Chukovskaya (1907–1996)

Лидия Чуковская (1907–1996)

Magyarra fordította Ceszárszkaja Maja

Translated into Hungarian by Maya Tsesarskaya

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Bajban, bánatomban, ahogy kérlelem,
Imám holtaknak szól, nem az istennek.
Isten gőgös, ő szóba sem áll velem.
Isten nem ismer, ti meg ismertek.

Aleksandr Makarov-Krotkov
Александр Макаров-Кротков

Na polski przełożył Jerzy Czech
Translated into Polish by Jerzy Czech
© Aleksandr Makarov-Krotkov, poetry.
© Jerzy Czech, translations, 2020

* * *

o nie
o tym
nie napiszę

o tym
też nie

wielu jeszcze
żyje

niestety

2011

* * *

pieniądze
albo
życie

prawosławie
albo
śmierć

2012

* * *

co za szczęście
Boże
co za szczęście

że nie będę mógł
uczestniczyć
w tej zachwycającej imprezie
nie zobaczę
tych uroczych ludzi

Boże
co za szczęście

czy naprawdę
na nie zasłużyłem?

2012

Literat

nie grzeszy smakiem

za to
węch nigdy go nie zawodzi

2012

* * *

kiedyś
i on
był człowiekiem

ale
to mu
w niczym nie przeszkadza

2012

* * *

no a jeszcze

a to
jeszcze
nie wszystko

2016

* * *

trzeba zacząć
nazywać rzeczy

tylko
te imiona

ktoś je pamięta?

2016

* * *

który to już raz
pytam
który już raz

odpowiadam
mam nadzieję
nie ostatni

2016

* * *

– no ile można

– a można?

2016

* * *

w gruncie rzeczy to samo

ale przecież
nawet to
nie jest takie straszne

jeśli odwrócisz
głowę

2017

* * *

patrzac na to
powiedzial
no pomysl

ale sam
nie pomyslal

nie wiedzial
dlaczego mialby
pomyslec

2018

* * *

kiedy
w koncu
nadeszla pora

zgromadzeni
wyrazili
swoje watpliwosci

na szczescie
nikt
nie ucierpial

2019

* * *

jak cenna jest
kazda sekunda

najzwyczajniejszego
trawienia czasu

zaraz
nadejda tamci

a ja
w zanadrzu

mam jeszcze
taką możliwość

nic nie rozumieć

2019

* * *

wiem
czy nie wiem

tak
czy tak

robię tak
jak wiem

2019

* * *

jestem realistą
żądam niemożliwego

potem wracam

a tu
rozbite koryto

2019

* * *

a potem

gdzie tam
potem
jakie jeszcze
może być
potem

skoro
nawet teraz

2019

* * *

to cudownie
cudowniej już nie można

jak to
no a pamiętasz?

e nie
to całkiem
co innego

2019

* * *

nie takie rzeczy
już widziałem

ale takich to nie

2019

* * *

patrz
patrz

widzisz?

postaraj się
zapamiętać

może nawet
będziesz miał
komu opowiedzieć

2019

Aleksandr Makarov-Krotkov (1959) graduated from the Moscow State Institute of Culture in 1982. His first poems were published in the mid-1980s in samizdat and in magazines abroad, such as *Kontinent* and *Muleta* (Paris). Since 1989 he has been publishing his poems in Russia. He is the author of seven collections of poetry, and contributed to literary magazines both in the original and in translation into different languages. He is the winner of some international poetry festivals. He is living in Moscow.

Jerzy Czech (1952) is a Polish poet, critic and translator. He graduated from Poznań University, where he worked later as a researcher and a librarian. He started his literary activity as an author of satirical poems in the press of *Solidarność* as well as other underground magazines. His first books were published underground under the pseudonym of Jan Poznański. He is well-known as an author of the song texts for Polish musician and song-writer Przemysław Gintrowski, as well as translator of Russian literature. More than 60 times plays of Russian writers in his translation have been staged and produced for radio and TV. A collection of his poems written in Russian was published in 2014. He is living in Poznań.

References

If you want to delve deeper into the work of a poet or translator featured in this issue, some of the previous issues of *Four Centuries, Russian Poetry in Translation* may certainly be worth looking into! Here are the references you will need.

Poets

Lydia Chukovskaya

- № 23, 2020, translated into Hungarian by Maya Tsesarskaya

Aleksej Khomjakow

- № 22, 2020, translated into Hungarian by Maya Tsesarskaya
- № 23, 2020, translated into Hungarian by Aladar Halász

Mikhail Lermontov

- № 9, 2014, translated into English by Robert Chandler
- № 9, 2014, translated into German by Christoph Ferber
- № 9, 2014, translated into Romanian by Leo Butnaru
- № 9, 2014, translated into Hungarian by Maja Cessarskaja
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- № 16, 2017, translated into Dutch by Paul Bezembinder
- № 23, 2020, translated into Hungarian by Maya Tsesarskaya

Aleksandr Makarov-Krotkov

- № 23, 2020, translated into Polish by Jerzy Czech

Osip Mandelstam

- № 1, 2012, translated into English by Alistair Noon
- № 3, 2012, translated into English by Ian Probst
- № 4, 2013, translated into English by Ian Probst
- № 5, 2013, translated into English by Tony Brinkley and Raina Kostova
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- № 6, 2013, translated into Bulgarian by Maria Lipiskova
- № 6, 2013, translated into Serbian by Mirjana Petrovic
- № 9, 2014, translated into English by Ian Probst
- № 11, 2015, translated into English by Tony Brinkley
- № 14, 2016, translated into English by Eugene Dubnov, John Heath-Stubbs, and Chris Arkell
- № 15, 2016, translated into English by Tony Brinkley
- № 23, 2020, translated into English by Alistair Noon

Aleksandr Pushkin

- № 1, 2012, translated into Italian by Giuseppe Ghini
- № 9, 2014, translated into German by Christoph Ferber
- № 23, 2020, translated into Hungarian by Aladar Halász

Igor Severyanin

- № 18, 2017, translated into English by Vadim Vozdvizhensky
- № 23, 2020, translated into Hungarian by Aladar Halász

Translators

Jerzy Czech

- № 23, 2020: Makarov-Krotkov

Aladar Halász

- № 23, 2020: Lermontov, Pushkin, Severyanin

Alistair Noon

- № 1, 2013: Mandelstam
- № 5, 2013: Blok
- № 23, 2020: Mandelstam

Maya Tsesarskaya

- № 5, 2013: Tyutchev, Tsvetaeva
- № 7, 2014: Koltsov, Nadson
- № 9, 2014: Lermontov
- № 12, 2015: Tyutchev
- № 22, 2019: Khomjakov
- № 23, 2020: Chukovskaya, Khomjakov

Poem titles / first lines in Russian

Lydia Chukovskaya

- Я не богу молюсь ...

Aleksej Khomjakov

- Детям

Mikhail Lermontov

- Белеет парус одинокий ...
- Выхожу один я на дорогу ...
- Утес

Aleksandr Makarov-Krotkov

- «нет / об этом...»
- «жизнь...»
- «какое счастье...»
- «литератор...»
- «когда-то...»
- «ну / вот еще...»
- «пора / назвать вещи...»

- «в который раз...»
- «- сколько же можно?...»
- «примерно то же...»
- «подумаешь...»
- «когда / все-таки...»
- «как дорога...»
- «знаю ли...»
- «выходя...»
- «а потом...»
- «вот уж / чудесно...»
- «видел...»
- «смотри...»

Osip Mandelstam

- Актеру, игравшему испанца («загадка и разгадка»)
- В половине второго ...
- Вы хотите быть игрушечной ...
- Блок — Король ...
- Но в Петербурге акмеист мне ближе ...

Aleksandr Pushkin

- Во глубине сибирских руд ...

Igor Severyanin

- Сонет (Я коронуюсь утром мая)
- Запад погас ...