

MAY MEETING

The May meeting opened with a report from William Grimes and Isabel Leonard on their visit to Croton-on-Hudson, New York, to attend the meeting of the Board of Directors of the American Translators Association. Copies of the NETA News for May were distributed to the Board to give them an idea of our activities and programs. The unexpected result was an invitation from ATA President Roy Tinsley to Ms. Leonard asking her to serve as guest editor of the ATA Chronicle and assume responsibility for producing an upcoming issue. Ms. Leonard accepted this invitation, and we now have an opportunity to show the ATA membership across the country that the NETA is willing to help.

As announced in the May News, nominations were accepted for next year's NETA officers. Only one candidate was nominated for each office, as follows:

- President - William J. Grimes
- Vice President - Alice Berglund
- Secretary-Treasurer - Rudolph Heller

Along with the election next month, dues will be payable for the next six months. The fact that we have been fortunate to obtain meeting space at Harvard essentially free of charge means that we do not need to raise the dues. Hence, \$5 will be expected from all members, including those who have joined during the last month or two.

A petition was circulated for gathering signatures for ATA chapterhood; 20 signatures of active ATA members in New England are required. There were not enough active ATA members present to make the quota; those who were not present are requested to look at the article on ATA chapterhood in this issue of the NEWS.

A panel discussion was then held, dealing with the topic of translator qualification. Moderated by Dr. Samuel Stone, the panel consisted of Bodo Reichenbach, David Tornquist, and Robert Silverman. Addressing himself to the answers provided by Henry Fishbach in the ATA Chronicle, Mr. Tornquist pointed out that if the free-lance translator were to limit himself to accepting only those assignments with which he or she was intimately familiar, the pickings would be rather slim. Part of the challenge and interest of being a free lancer is the fact that one is faced with a broad spectrum of topics which the individual must research thoroughly before translating an assignment. On the other hand, Mr. Tornquist said, it is certainly the translator's obligation to inform his client of any words or concepts that are unclear or which cannot be found by the most diligent research; pretending to be perfect by omitting unknown words or just plain guessing are bound to create more problems than simply admitting that a problem exists. As for the translator having a knowledge of the target language equal to that of educated speakers of that language, Mr. Tornquist would like to see an even higher standard for translators. The fact that NETA has now made it possible

for him to meet and consult with other translators in his area was stressed by Mr. Tornquist; he also look forward to the dictionary exchange program that will be in effect soon.

One item that had been overlooked in Mr. Fishbach's answer, Mr. Tornquist felt, was experience, which he called on the the most important factors of all.

Dr. Stone dealt with the question of how a translator should prepare for his career. A study of English composition, even creative writing, would be valuable, he said. At the same time, translation is not a process of word-for-word conversion from one language to another. Dr. Stone illustrated the problem of translation with several examples of texts translated by individuals with an inadequate knowledge of the source language, target language, or both. Latin is a valuable tool for the translator, he said. This assertion was attacked by several members of the group, some feeling that using a dictionary would yield the same results as a knowledge of Latin, while others pointed out that translation involves transfer of phrases and ideas, not words. Dr. Stone went on to say that there are many ways of getting an elementary grasp of a new subject; reading a classic article in the

field, a basic text, or (in the case of French) the Cassege series of books that cover an enormous range of topics in 125 pages or so.

Mr. Reichenbach dealt with qualification and training, reminding the group that it is sometimes possible to be as badly off for being overqualified, as for being underqualified. One can train for a long time and still not be very

good in a field. Then again, who ever sets out to become a technical translator anyway, he asked. Most of those present agreed that they had just "fallen into it". Reichenbach suggested that those who showed a penchant for translating early in life should be channeled into a course of education that would expose them in other fields as well, so that they would be trained either as translators with a good technical background or as engineers who could read foreign languages. Mr. Tornquist suggested that translators are people who want to spend their entire lives learning; indeed, it is necessary to do so if one is to keep up with the jobs offered, which often lie in areas where few experts yet exist.

Mr. Silverman felt that a knowledge of either mathematics or chemistry would make about 50% of all scientific literature accessible to a translator who had to do work in a given area. His solution would be to obtain the books used in courses in these subjects and read them without actually taking the course.

It was decided to discuss the letter from Rudolf Kroha to Professional Translator at the next meeting. (see TOPIC in this issue).

At the June meeting's translation roundtable, the language will be Russian; Alicija Kawecky will lead the discussion.

About a dozen persons expressed interest in attending the Dictation Workshop to be held on May 16. A report will appear in next month's News.

 JUNE MEETING: TUESDAY JUNE 1, HARVARD
 SCIENCE CENTER, ROOM 110 (NEAR MEMORIAL
 HALL, FACING HARVARD YARD). TRANSLATION
 ROUNDTABLE: 7 PM; MEETING PROPER: 8:15 PM.
 The July meeting (July 13) and August meet-
 ing (August 10) will be held here as well
 ... and the building is air-conditioned!

TOPIC

The January-February 1976 issue of Professional Translator, the publication of the Guild of Professional Translators, carried as its lead article a letter from Rudolf Kroha, entitled "Let Us Not Drift". Since this letter deals with the relationship among the working translator, the language teacher, and the ATA, and since Mr. Kroha resigned from the ATA and from his seat on its Board over the issues he discusses in the letter, we have reprinted the letter in this issue of the NETA News to familiarize everyone with it. A number of the points he raises would, I think, serve as topics for discussion at our next meeting.

ATA CHAPTERHOOD

Bill Grimes reported on our application to the ATA Board of Directors for acceptance as an ATA chapter. After some discussion, the Directors essentially reminded us of the terms of the ATA Bylaws, whereby every member of the chapter must be a member in good standing of ATA (although this might be amended when the bylaws are revised so that only the officers of the chapter would have to be ATA members), and we must support our application for chapterhood with the signatures of 20 active members in good standing of the ATA residing in the geographic area to be covered by the chapter (= New England). A petition form was accordingly passed around at the May NETA meeting; however only 10 qualified individuals were present at the meeting. The courses now open to us to collect the other 10 signatures are (1) ask all active members of the ATA who are NETA members to either (a) come to the June meeting and sign the petition or (b) mail to the secretary the form of words shown below with their signature; (2) encourage NETA members who are not ATA members to join and apply for active status (address shown below); (3) as a last resort, send a mailing to ATA members in New England who are not members of the NETA.

The proper form of words is: "I the undersigned am a voting member (= active member) in good standing of the American Translators Association (ATA) and intend so to remain. I hereby petition for the establishment of a New England chapter of the ATA which shall abide by the Bylaws of the New England Translators Association (NETA) attached hereto."

The address of the ATA is: P. O. Box 129, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520.

MONEY

Semi-annual dues of \$5 per member will be payable at the June meeting. If you cannot attend this meeting, please mail your check, made out to the New England Translators Association, to Rudy Heller, NETA Secretary, 30 Lincoln St., Newton Highlands, MA 02161.

If you have joined the dictionary pool and paid \$2 you owe a balance of \$3, payable by a separate check please, as above.

MAY NETA NEWS

Some extra copies of this priceless document are available, since the copy-offset machine apparently did a Sorcerer's Apprentice and spewed out more than we had ordered and paid for. Additional copies may be picked

up at the June meeting for such purposes as you think proper (I had recruiting in mind).

WIE FUNKTIONIERT DAS?

Surprisingly, my reading of "Outils du Traducteur" articles (known to America readers by that ugly term "Resource Aids") in translator periodicals has never turned up a mention of one of the most valuable works a technical translator may have, namely "The Way Things Work". Firstly, this two volume book published by Simon and Schuster, and priced \$9.95 + \$9.95 when I bought it five years ago, is the easiest access I have ever found to an understanding of the technology of everyday appliances and basic industrial processes: its language is straightforward without being patronizing to the intelligent layman, and every page is illustrated. Secondly, since this work is an extremely competent translation of the German "Wie Funktioniert Das?", (a one-volume consolidation of the former two volumes "Wie Funktioniert Das" and "Und Wie Funktioniert Dies?") one can learn how to translate technical material from German by using the original and English versions as a parallel text. Thirdly, the two can be used as reference material in translating technical articles. In my earlier days of translating from German, I would make a habit to read through entries in the German volume, mentally translating tricky bits into English, and checking my ideas against the printed English. Sometimes this preparation alone was sufficient for translating the text.

It later occurred to me to inquire whether the German had been translated into other languages. A letter to the publishers, Bibliographisches Institut AG, 6800 Mannheim 1, Postfach 311, produced the addresses of the publishers of the French, Dutch, Spanish, and Portuguese editions.

I ordered "Comment Ça Marche" from the Librairie Dunod, 30 Rue St-Sulpice, 75278 Paris CEDEX 06 (price for both volumes 59 FF) and found it useful as far as it went but drastically reduced in scope from the German (about 140 articles as opposed to about 240). An inquiry to the Portuguese publishers (Editora Renes Ltda., Av. Nilo Pecanha, 50 gr. 1001, Rio de Janeiro, ZC-P, Brazil) yielded the information that the Portuguese version is entitled "Enciclopédia de Tecnologia", comes in two volumes corresponding to the first German volume, and costs \$11 including mailing to the U.S. Their choice of title reminds me of an article with appeared some time ago in Saturday Review by a senior editor at Simon and Schuster on the importance of choosing a catchy title. He illustrated his point with "The Way Things Work". A practically identical text came out in Britain at the same time (the translation was prepared by an American-British team, unidentified) under the title "Encyclopedia of Technology" (if my memory serves me correctly). The author reported that the American version sold extremely well (235,000 copies of Vol. I and 76,000 of Vol. II, I discovered from a recent telephone call to S & S) while the British version had lagged.

Revenons à nos moutons. The publishers of the Dutch and Spanish editions are, respectively: Verlag Het Spectrum N.V., Park Voorn 4 De Meern, Utrecht, Holland, and Editorial Planeta, Fernando Agullo, 12, Barcelona 6, Spain, but I have not checked directly with the publishers.

PERIODICALS OF INTEREST TO TRANSLATORS - cont.

Title	#issues /year	Price /year	Address	Boston Avail.	Comments
Informations terminologiques		50 FB each	Bureau de terminologie du Parlement européen, CP 1601 Luxembourg	Leonard	[On order - coming.]
Vie et Langage		23 FF	Larousse, 17 rue du Montparnasse 75280 Paris		Unhappily ceased publ'n with No. 273 of Dec/74; back issues worth looking at. Articles in French on various aspects of Fre lang incl neologisms/regionalisms
La Clé des Mots	11	320 FF	CILF, 105-ter rue de Lille F-75007 Paris	Leonard has more info.	Complément permanent aux dictionnaires sci. et tech., cette revue compte -150 fiches de terminologie par mois, sélectionnées à partir d'une centaine de périodiques. Traductions en langues étrangères, définitions, contextes...
ASLIB Technical Trans.Bull.	1?	£ 7.33	ASLIB, 3 Belgrave Sq., London SW1X 8PL	Leonard	[Will consider subscribing in May]
Traduire					Revue off. de la Soc. Fr. des Trad.
Le Linguiste					Organ of La Chambre Belge des trad's, inter's et phil's.
Translation Inquirer			NY Chap.of Amer. Medical Writers Assn.		From 1959-1969, this org. published, with support of ATA. Medium for consultation on questions of term'y.
Van Taal tot Taal				[Leonard-inquiry pendg]	Journal of Nederlands Genootschap van Vertalers

Scientific periodicals appearing in more than one language: Kerntechnik (G-E, at MIT, excellent), Airport Forum (G-E), Milliande? Textiles (G-E), Mikrotechnik (G-F-E), Siemens Review (G-F-E, separate editions), World Construction (multilingual ads), Interavia (separate editions, E-F-Sp and (?) G), Endeavour (G-E, ICI).

→→→READER! PLEASE SEARCH YOUR BOOKSHELVES/FILES/LIBRARIES FOR MORE INFO AND INFORM ISABEL LEONARD. WE WANT TO MAKE THIS A COMPLETE LISTING FOR PUBLICATION IN THE ATA CHRONICLE.

P.S. Kamkin has free 33-p catalog of newspapers & magazines from the USSR in a wide variety of tech. and non-tech. fields. Most are in Russian and other SU languages (Armenian, Kirghiz, Ukr., Azerb....). For the technical translator, there are translations into Russian of U.S. journals e.g. oil, electronics, civ.eng.

P.P.S. Since the above table was set up, further periodical information has come in from group members. It will be published in our next issue.

Those who pride themselves on keeping their French bang up to date may obtain, free of charge, from the Secrétariat Permanent du Langage de l'Audiovisuel, O.R.T.F., 116 Avenue du Président Kennedy, 75016, Paris a charming little booklet entitled "Le bon usage du vocabulaire des métiers et des professions de l'audiovisuel." It is a list of *terms corrects* followed by the equivalent *terms incorrects*, the latter being, of course, English or next thing to it. Definitions are supplied.

Even more interesting is their (also free) "Télélangage", a two-weekly one-page publication which explains and comments on new words and chastises the francophone world at large for mispronunciations and its use of *anglicismes approximatifs et pompeuses impropriétés*. I have selected some terms likely to trap the unwary French-to-English translator.

Informel is now also a noun, meaning an informal meeting.

Le quart monde. "Aujourd'hui, comme beaucoup de pays du tiers monde se sont enrichis par le pétrole, il convient de classer à part les vrais pauvres, comme le Soudan. Il faut donc distinguer: les pays hautement industrialisés, le Tiers Monde (qu'on peut appeler aussi "en voie de développement"), le Quart Monde qui vit (mal) de l'assistance internationale et de ses maigres exportations. Since English (eventually) accepted "third world" it seems that the only translation possible is "fourth world".

Au niveau de is turning up in the place of *pour, dans, sur, au sujet de, en ce qui concerne...* *Télélangage* quotes *une opération au niveau du coeur* where the context made it clear that a cardiac graft was involved. The present writer has frequently come across this expression in medical writing, and would probably translate the above as "a heart operation"; similarly *douleur au niveau du ventre* would be "stomach pain".

Menu is being used, improperly, to replace *ordre du jour, programme, plan, sommaire*, etc. Unless the author of the original is deliberately being incorrect, it is clearly incumbent upon the translator to give the correct meaning (agenda, plan, etc.)

Chuter is coming into (over)use as a more expressive synonym for *tomber*.

Exaction is (improperly) acquiring the sense of "excess," "violence," "barbaric act." Example: *Les exactions des terroristes ont fait soixante-quatre morts*.

Intervenir is misused in the sense of "to occur", e.g. *Une vote est intervenue en conclusion des débats* - the discussions ended with a vote.

Since I wrote the above, a new fund of French neologisms has appeared in *Lebende Sprachen*, provided with context, definitions, and *Übersetzungsvorschläge*. Perhaps we can come up with some suggested translations!

I should like to express my complete agreement with Mr. Abilock's evaluation of the ATA Chronicle, as reported in the excellent summary of his statement. When I was a member of ATA a few years ago, I found the Chronicle to be thin in content, full of advertisements, poorly edited and frequently juvenile. It could in no way be compared to such serious professional journals as META, Babel or Tra-duire (the organ of the Société Française des Traducteurs). Furthermore, the leadership of the Association at the time was, in my view, so agency-oriented, so politically timorous, so devoted to vindictive in-fighting and so shamelessly manipulative of the membership that I think we would now do well to approach the question of affiliation with all circumspection. I am glad to see that -- for other valid reasons -- this appears to be the consensus of NETA.

Yours sincerely,
Joan Pinkham

WORK

(From the Incorporated Linguist, Spring 1976.)

The International Monetary Fund, with Headquarters in Washington, D.C., has a career opening for a Translator with ability to perform competent translation into English from French and Spanish. Academic qualification and/or experience in the field(s) of economics, law, finance, banking, monetary theory, and international trade are useful. Salary range \$14,300-\$18,000 net of income tax, + generous fringe benefits.

An address in London is given for applications. U.S. candidates should probably contact the IMF in Washington, or perhaps try going through one of the ATA members who works for the IMF.)

ELECTRONICS ABBREVIATIONS

If you thought OPAL was a kind of semi-precious stone, capitalized for some mysterious reason, learn that it stands for "operational performance-analysis language". These and other gems, if you'll excuse the pun, are to be found in a listing xeroxed by Robert Abilock from Electronics, copies of which will be displayed for the taking at our June meeting. I note with curiosity that three of the acronyms listed are spelt with initial cap only: "Earom (electrically alterable read-only memory), Laput (light-activated programable [sic!] uni-junction transistor) and Usart (universal synchronous/asynchronous receiver/transmitter). We are familiar with acronyms being reduced to all-lower-case (laser, radar) but only those in very common usage. Bad enough that our language should be loaded with acronyms and initialisms, but worse that they should try to masquerade as proper nouns. Has this alarming trend been picked up from the French (Otan, etc.)?

NETA News is the newsletter of the New England Translators Association. This edition was prepared by I. Leonard and W. Grimes, P.O. Box 55, Hingham, MA 02043

LET US NOT DRIFT

Rudolf Kroha

In an article filling almost an entire recent issue of the "ATA" Chronicle*, president Roy Tinsley attacked all my suggestions advanced to improve the working translator's lot. I was subsequently denied the right to have my reply published in the Chronicle. I have ceased to be a member - and consequently also a director - of the "ATA" but I have not given up the struggle for economic justice and am hereby presenting some thoughts which hopefully will give pause to my colleagues in the profession.

*Newsletter of the American Translators Association

All working translators in America owe a great debt of gratitude to Roy Tinsley for finally removing the mask from the "ATA" and for revealing its true identity as a Translator Teachers and Employers Association. The three or four individuals who have manipulated "ATA" policies for years have now obviously made the deliberate decision to dump the working translator and to stop pretending that they care about his well-being.

In a letter dated 21 December addressed to me, Roy Tinsley writes: "As long as you and others like you insist on working as translators at any rate you can get I see little hope for doing anything about the situation. As I have pointed out before, no one gives a tinker's damn about whether translators eat or not And there is no reason why they should. I do not lose any sleep at night worrying about whether Philadelphia garbage collectors are underpaid or overpaid, or whether the falling price of blubber is bankrupting many Eskimos. Nor have I heard you beating any drums or wailing because university professors are being driven to the economic wall."

The statement is self-explanatory. As to the last sentence: I would beat all drums at my disposal for university professors being driven to the economic

wall if I was president of the American University Teachers Association. Being a teacher you are forgetting Dr. Tinsley that the Association you are head of is supposed to serve translators. If indeed the "ATA" is what, until recently, it claimed to be then you are a displaced person; if you are in your proper place then the "ATA" is a Translator Teachers and Employers Association.

An unreconcilable conflict of interests has arisen between translator teachers (following "ATA" policy) and employers on one side, and working translators on the other, which is beyond repair. It did not have to happen had the "ATA" not refused to work for change. The old policy has been reaffirmed: Keep the market oversupplied with a steady flow of eager young hopefuls and oppose any legal differentiation between professional and dilettante. As soon as the hopes of one batch of graduates are dashed by the harsh reality of a difficult profession, of hunger wages, and of unfair to antisocial treatment, the next batch takes its place still full of hope which will be dashed in due time, and so ad infinitum. An economic cannon-fodder supply arrangement. The scheme supplies employers with cheap labor and offers supplemental employment to language teachers. An unholy alliance has come into being under the aegis of the "ATA" legitimizing a parasitic existence of employers and teachers at the cost of the working translator. Facts and figures supporting the claim of economic hardships American translators are subjected to can be found in: A STATUS REPORT FOR 1974 by Richard Relac published in THE FEDERAL LINGUIST, Vol. 6, No. 1-2.

This is not to point an accusing finger at anybody in particular (excepting the "ATA") because the problem lies in the competitive free market system being wrongly applied to a service; the resulting economic

and psychological hardships only follow from understandable if base human motives and instincts.

Language teachers who have a legitimate interest and place in our profession have been misused by a master stroke of the "ATA" "brains" to serve as a tool for the supply of cheap labor instead of for the legitimate training and testing of translators. But that much needs to be said to teachers who do or would like to train translators under conditions maintained by the "ATA": Even if you caution your charges in advance that their labors will not bring them employment you cannot even claim the moral absolution due the romantic fanatic who led the Charge of the Light Brigade, you are knowingly sending them to the economic slaughterhouse.

As exaggerated as the above claims may sound in the description of an admittedly very simplified model of reality, working translators who know the market will confirm its essential validity. The conditions described apply to almost all contracted and subcontracted government translation work excepting that generated by the Department of State and by international organizations, and to a not insubstantial percentage of private agencies all over the country; in addition, many salaried translators are forced to work for wages as low as those paid clerks without special qualification. Thus more than half of all translators in the country are forced to work under conditions which are best described as sweatshop conditions.

The true magnitude of the problem (relatively speaking) also qualifies Dr. Tinsley's statement that nobody is forced to work for hunger wages as sheer demagoguery. He is telling a drowning man that he finds himself in this predicament because he just is not self-reliant enough: to try to help him would incur the wrath of the people who put Dr. Tinsley into the presidency, and of his teacher colleagues who, in the hope of saving their shrinking job market, are pining to train translators even if the whole world spoke but a single language.

My insistence that the problem needs to be dealt with is also one of the reasons why my reply to Dr. Tinsley's article was denied publication in the Chronicle. To admit that much could discourage the youngsters and reduce the supply of cheap labor.

A second statement objectionable to the "ATA" concerns the "ATA"-administered testing program. When conceived we hoped that it would eventually become a tool for segregating the qualified from the unqualified. But the "ATA" now opposes mandatory certification because the government employers and private agencies

would then have to pay certified translators a living wage while under existing conditions they can get away with letting them starve. The now voluntary testing program which has been refused recognition by all government translation agencies has been reduced to an intellectual exercise. The true purpose of setting up a testing program was to secure comparatively competent - in addition to cheap - labor. The diploma gained has in real life the value of a Boy Scout badge. A testing program makes sense only if there is a chance (and the will) to eventually make it a qualifying condition of entry into the profession. "ATA" policy precludes this from ever happening.

In a letter previous to the one cited above (this was probably before the hard line decision was taken) Dr. Tinsley promised: "Negotiation, cooperation, bargaining and compromise. I'll scratch anyone's back who will scratch mine in return." This is another demagogic statement designed to raise the impression that the "ATA" is "doing something" for the working translator. We have, years before Dr. Tinsley appeared on the scene, tried this approach. It just does not address itself to the cause of the problem and cannot therefore remedy it. Market forces regulate translator wages and it is precisely these market forces which "ATA" policy manipulates to keep the working translator hungry indefinitely. There is no point in pressing the U.S. Joint Publications Research Service, for example, to raise its rates in a way which would make any real difference: they cannot do it because they would lose out in competition with private agencies and nobody can expect JPRS to commit suicide.

Name calling won't do it, attributing guilt won't do it, organizing will. The above does not mean that I am denying legitimacy to the "ATA". It is legitimate in the sense that the American Manufacturers Association is legitimate. Just as nobody expects the latter to stand up for the interests of workers, so translators should never expect the "ATA" to work for their long-term interests.

For better or for worse, the American translator interested in bettering his lot now has no place to go but to the Guild of Professional Translators in the hope that intelligent strategy will accomplish what the representatives of interests alien to ours, and associated in the "ATA", never intended to achieve in the first place.

Стелл московской литературно́й молодёжи - Пильняк старший /он начал печататься ещё до февральской революции/ и пока - самый заметный. Он явно посеян А.Белым, но, как всякой достаточно сильной творческой особи, - ему хочется поскорее перерезать пуповину, почему в посвящении к последней своей повести он пишет: "Ремизову - мастеру, у которого я был подмастерьем"; это - только инстинктивная самозащита от Белого.

Ценно у Пильняка, конечно, не то, что глину для лепки он берёт не иначе как из ям, вырытых революцией, и не его двухцветная публицистика, но то, что для своего материала он ищет новой формы и работает одновременно над живописью и над архитектурой слова; это - у немногих.

В композиционной технике Пильняка есть очень своё и новое - это постоянное пользование приёмом "смещения плоскостей". Одна сюжетная плоскость - внезапно, разогвanno - сменяется у него другой иногда по нескольку раз на одной странице. Приём этот применялся и раньше - в виде постоянного чередования двух или нескольких сюжетных нитей /Анна плюс Вронский; Кити плюс Левин и т.д./, но ни у кого - с такой частотой колебаний, как у Пильняка: с "постоянного" тона - Пильняк перешёл на "переменный", с двух-трёхфазного - на многофазный. Удачнее всего - это в одной из первых его повестей /"Иван да Марья"/.

В последних вещах Пильняка - интересна попытка дать композицию без героев: задача, параллельная Толлеровскому "Masse Mensch". Поставить в фокусе толпу, массу - можно, так же, как можно стены отливать из бетонной массы вместо того, чтобы складывать из отдельных кирпичей. Но для отливки бетонных стен - нужен стальной каркас. А у Пильняка никогда не бывает каркаса, у него сюжеты - пока ещё простейшего, беспозвоночного типа, его повесть или роман, как дождевого червя, всегда можно разрезать на куски - и каждый кусок, без особого огорчения, поползёт своей дорогой. Вот почему пока не удалась ему попытка сконструировать бессюжетно-безгероичную повесть /"Третья столица"/: как автор ни подчёркивает "героев нет" - а повесть всё-таки оказывается, не из бетона, а из кирпичей, не из человеческой массы, а из людей.

Языка нашей эпохи - быстрого и острого, как код - Пильняк, кажется, ещё не услышал: в его вещах, особенно последних - синтаксис карамзинский, зыбучие пески периодов. Читать их вслух - мог бы только воздушный насос: никакого человеческого дыхания не хватит. Может быть, чтобы укрепить эту периодическую топку, автор прибегает к разным эпатантным типографским трюкам - которые после таких же трюков у Белого едва ли кого эпатируют. Я помню: один современный дирижёр в городе Пензе рассказывал оркестрантов разными этакими ромбиками, ступеньками и полукругами ... чтобы сыграть попури из "Демона". Но ведь у Пильняка - не попури, у него есть слова, есть оригинальный композиционный приём - и пензенство его вещи только портит.

Новая русская проза - "Русское искусство", I, 1923 г.

TRANSLATION ROUNDTABLE - JUNE

Just to simulate a real translation assignment, we have provided a tenth-generation Xerox to work from. Send your translations to Alicija Kawecky, 3 Bates Street, Burlington, MA 01803 by Friday, May 28 so they can be copied for distribution to the other Roundtable participants.