

# Translators' News

## Institute for Bible Translation

Winter  
2004

www.IBTnet.org



### All people are equal before God - and all languages are equally important

*During 2003 we have celebrated IBT's 30th anniversary in various ways. In this newsletter, several of our national colleagues share stories from their own personal experiences with Bible translation. These were first published in IBT's Russian newsletter.*

#### **When our goal is to translate the Bible into every language, we acknowledge that all people are equal before God**

"In this newsletter some of our 'veterans' say what Bible translation means to them. These are translators and exegetical checkers who have worked for ten or more years translating the Bible into the various languages spoken in the Russian Federation and other CIS countries. They are the very heart of the Institute! The rest of us colleagues in Russia, Finland, Sweden, England, Canada and the United States are really grateful for their loyal work. When we read their good wishes and greetings for our anniversary we feel the respect and love they have for the Bible, for the languages in which they work, and for the peoples who speak these languages. Since

our goal is to translate the Bible into every language, we acknowledge that all people are equal before God, irrespective of whether we belong to a large or small nation. All languages are equally important. One language is not richer or poorer than another since the eternal truths of the Bible can be expressed in every language."



*Marianne Beerle-Moor  
IBT Director in the Russian Federation and the CIS*

#### **It was God's desire that the Institute for Bible Translation should exist**

"Days, years and centuries pass. Nations and countries rise and fall. Ideologies come and go. The world changes. Then we open the Book of Books and realize that noth-

ing changes! It speaks of us sinful people; it speaks of the Lord and the Word that we long to hear, read and understand. Jesus said: ‘If



a man has a hundred sheep and one goes astray, doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the hills and go and search for the one who is lost?' (Matthew 18:12) It was God's desire that the Institute for Bible Translation should exist. Thirty years' work has borne fruit.

In the languages of the small nations in the Russian Federation one translation is being published after another. It will probably take another 30 years to appreciate fully the work done by the Institute's colleagues, those servants of the Truth."

*Peter Yakovlev  
Chuvash translator  
Volga-Urals area*

### **Each word in the Veps Bible is an expression of love for our Lord and for our people**

"We are extremely grateful! Veps has not long been a written language. For the Veps people it has long been the oral tradition and not books and alphabets that mattered. Each word is living history. And so the Veps people appreciate every word in their mother tongue. We have a proverb: 'A bad word injures, and a good word warms.' And the best word is the Bible's Word, the Word that our Lord has given us. We Veps people are pleased and proud that this Word can also be heard in the Veps language. Each word in the Veps Bible is an expression of love for our Lord and for our people. What could be greater than such love?"

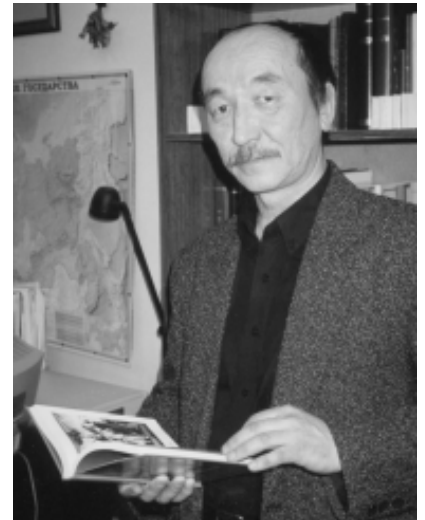
All the Veps people cordially congratulate the IBT colleagues on their 30th anniversary. Thanks to your sacrificial and selfless support and your belief in the possibilities of the Veps language we too are now able to speak with our Heavenly Father in our fathers' language."



*Nina Zaitseva  
Veps translator  
Karelia*

### **I am full of admiration and gratitude for those who made the commitment to the small Altai nation**

"It has been a great honor for me to work with IBT. I am full of admiration and gratitude for those who made the commitment to the small Altai people by organizing the translation of the New Testament into our language. I hope that the New Testament in Altai will draw us closer to the spiritual values of the Christian culture, and that it will become a literary work which ensures that the Altai language will not disappear off the face of the earth."



*Tokshun Torbokov  
Altai translator  
Southern Siberia*

### **When you see a philologist of the Soviet school sitting at the same table as a theologian and a new Christian you are hard pressed to call it anything but a miracle**

"I am convinced that for each and every one who has worked on Bible translation under IBT's leadership the Institute has been not just a workplace but another way of living. In our world, unfortunately, people often live separate lives and you rarely see a philologist of the Soviet school sitting at the same table as a theologian and a new Christian. And when these people are not just meeting but are also working for the same cause then you are hard pressed to call it anything but a miracle, not to be found outside IBT."



*Konstantin Kazenin  
Exegetical checker for Lak (Caucasus)  
and Bashkir (southern Urals)*

### **Only in the mother tongue can the Bible's Truth be revealed**

"Twelve years ago I held in my hand the little book 'Life of Jesus' in Karelian. I still remember how pleased I was.



It seemed like a great light, an answer to my thoughts, a path that led to a high-way. The Word of God - this was just what we needed! I found out where the book came from. The Institute for Bible Translation had published it. Now I myself

take part in the work of translating the Bible, and this year the New Testament in Karelian was published. I have in front of me a pile of letters from the villages where our books have been distributed. They are full of thanks. People are reading the Word of God and they are growing spiritually. Man does not live by bread alone... The Bible must be translated into the mother tongue of every ethnic group. Now I understand that it is only in the mother tongue that the Bible's Truth can be revealed, this truth which is relevant for everyone and which everyone needs. I thank God that the Bible can now be read in Karelian too."

*Zinaida Dubinina  
Karelian translator  
Karelia*

### **My dream is that the Lord's Prayer will be read in Chukchi**

"In 2004 a new church will open in Anadyr. My dream is that the Lord's Prayer will be read there in Chukchi. Thank you very much to the Institute for Bible Translation for helping to translate Luke's Gospel into my mother tongue, the first book of the Bible in Chukchi."



*Ida Kulikova  
Chukchi translator  
North-eastern Siberia*

### **Give me the Gospel in Kurdish!**

"In April 1973 I found Christ and began to read the New Testament in Armenian. I felt that the Gospel was spiritual food which I could not eat alone but which I must share with others. I envied other ethnic groups who had the Gospel in their language, and I began to translate Matthew's Gospel into my mother tongue of Kurmanji-Kurdish. When I read it out to the Kurds they said: 'So the Gospel is available in Kurdish?' But when they saw that it was not a printed book but something that I had



written they were angry and thought I was trying to dupe them. I began to pray: 'Lord, you created everyone, including the Kurds, please give me the Gospel in Kurdish.'

That was my prayer throughout April 1973. The years passed and one day God sent Curt Gustafsson. Through

him I got to know Borislav Arapovic and other IBT colleagues. We began work on a Kurdish translation of the New Testament, which was published in 2000. I am convinced that the fact that the Institute was founded the same year that I prayed to the Lord for the Gospel in my language is no coincidence but an answer to my prayers."

*Nadr Ozmanyany  
Kurmanji-Kurdish translator  
Caucasus*

### **I have found a Book that is the source of spiritual wisdom**



"In the ten years I have worked on the translation my spirit and soul have been enriched. I have found a Book that is the source of spiritual wisdom. There are truths to be found in every Bible verse. The Avar language is very poetic - there are many poems in

our language. The same poetry is in the Bible, and I can often use poetic expressions in my translation work. For me there are three states of mind when I read poetry. First, when something is very well written and clear, it feels as if the soul takes flight and rejoices. Second, when something is more difficult to understand, it is like riding

a horse - it shakes you up a bit. Third, if something is badly written, it feels like stumbling. It's my wish that those who read our translation will feel at least as if they were riding a horse." *Magomed-Kamil Gimbatov*

*Avar translator  
Dagestan, Caucasus*

### **This month's project**

When our Yakut translator, Sargylana, goes to bed far away in Yakutsk, it is time for Nadia to sit down at her desk in St Petersburg to continue work on the translation into Evenki. Our translators live and work in seven time zones in this huge country! When we divided the annual budget for all the translation work by the number of hours, we discovered to our surprise that all the current work on more than 60 languages in the Russian Federation and the rest of the CIS could be done at a cost of just USD 60 or GBP 40 per hour! Please join us by contributing enough to pay for an hour, for part of an hour, or for several hours of IBT's translation work in 2004!

### **In the period September-December 2003 IBT published**

Bibliography of Bible translations in the languages of the Russian Federation, other countries of the CIS, and the Baltic States (limited edition)	20 copies
Altai New Testamen	7,000 copies
Matthew's Gospel in Bashkir	2,500 copies
John's Gospel in Mordvin-Moksha	2,000 copies
Children's Bible in Komi-Permyak	5,000 copies
Bible stories in Udmurt	10,000 copies

### **Soon to be published:**

Luke's Gospel in Chukchi, Children's Bible in Buryat and the New Testament in Ossetic

## *Institute for Bible Translation*

Institute for Bible Translation was founded in Stockholm, Sweden in 1973, its main task being to publish Bibles for "non-Slavic peoples in Slavic countries." In the CIS 130 different languages are spoken. Since then we have worked on Bible translation in more than 80 of these languages. We have printed the Bible or portions of it in over 60 languages, including three whole Bibles, in Georgian, Moldavian and Tajik, and 17 New Testaments. We welcome your support for our continuing efforts in bringing the Word to those in the former Soviet nations. All peoples of the world should have the Bible available in their native language.

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IBT also has offices in Russia and Finland.

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