Blake Among the Slavs: A Checklist

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Checklists

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In the summer of 1973, when work took me to Åbo, Finland, I paused to relish the bizarre neo-classical splendors of Leningrad, and while I was there I went to the enormous M. E. Saltykov-Shchedrin State Public Library, where Lenin had worked. It is an enormous building, housing, it is said, some 20,000,000 works, and is rather difficult of access, partly because the entrance is hard to find. Inside, one is asked for a pass—or at least I assumed that is what we were asked for. My daughter, who speaks some Russian, managed to get us in touch with Miss Fanny Barnofsky, who very kindly took us up to the catalogues. I had hoped to look up Blake, but I was prevented by my total ignorance of the Russian alphabet from even finding the correct drawer. I was about to give up in self-distrust, when the head of the catalogue department came up to help me and, on finding that I just wanted to discover what non-English works they had on William Blake, very generously said that he would have such a list compiled for me. On my protesting (not very convincingly, I fear) that I couldn't possibly allow him to undertake so much labor on my behalf, he told me patiently that this was a normal service of the library and that, if I would simply leave my address, the list would be sent to me. I acquiesced joyfully (having no fruitful alternative) and went off to be shown the extraordinary riches of the library in loving detail by Miss Barnofsky.

In due course, a long list of works in the Saltykov-Shchedrin Library followed me to Toronto. I had intended to use the titles to amplify the revised Blake bibliography, but many of the titles proved to be irrelevant for that purpose—being transliterations of single poems, reviews, and the like. However, it appeared to me that most of the titles were quite unknown to Western Blake scholars (or at least to me) and that such a collection of Blake studies in Russian and other Slavic languages might be very difficult for a Western scholar to reproduce by other means, as I can testify from repeated attempts to do so.

I am, of course, only the instigator of the information here. The bibliography was apparently compiled by M. V. Brestskina (Bibliographer of the Saltykov-Shchedrin Library), approved by P. S. Bogomolova (Head of the Bibliography Department), sent to me by I. F. Grigor'eva (Chief of Foreign Acquisitions & International Exchange), transliterated and translated in Toronto by Lisa Schneider (and a little by Sarah Bentley), and the whole put into sensible order (so far as the Slavic parts are concerned) by my friend and colleague Professor Drest Rudzik. In particular, the Slavic conventions for representing titles, identifying journal volume-numbers, etc., are considerably different from those in the West (or at least in English), and often I could not distinguish between a publisher and a journal title, or between a volume-number and the number of pages in an article. For all such details I have depended upon my learned friends, though doubtless my misunderstanding of their patient explanations has created some needless confusions. For all this help I am profoundly grateful. The most extraordinary generosity seems to me to be that shown by the staff of the Saltykov-Shchedrin Library.

In the following list, the primary organization is by language, the sub-headings being Translations and Criticism. Under these sub-headings, the order is chronological. Note that almost all essays published in 1957 were probably bicentennial in inspiration. Naturally all the information has been transliterated. Because some of these languages may be as puzzling to others as they are to me, the titles have often been translated within square brackets as well.

In terms of historical development, the Saltykov-Shchedrin Blake collection in Slavic languages reveals very clear patterns. There are eight Russian works in the pre-Communist era (mostly 1896-1917), five in the Stalin years (1929-1945), a sudden dozen in the bicentennial year (1957), and thereafter a small but steady stream (thirty), including three books devoted entirely to Blake. The most prolific translator of Blake into Russian is clearly S. I. Marshak, and the most productive Blake scholars are T. N. Vasil'eva, A. A. Elistratova, and E. A. Nekrasova.

In other Slavic languages (Belorussian, Czech, Polish and Ukrainian) plus Estonian, Georgian, Latvian, Lithuanian, and Rumanian, the first Blake publications come in 1957-58 (nineteen), with a trickle thereafter (four). Of course, for these languages, especially Czech, Polish, and Rumanian, the Saltykov-Shchedrin is likely to be less comprehensive and representative in its holdings than for Russian works; it is notable that Estonia and Lithuania, with five or six works each, are republics near Leningrad, whereas all the other languages have only one or two.

These lists of Blake works in the Saltykov-Shchedrin State Public Library suggest to me that there are probably numerous writings about Blake published in the Communist world which are unknown to Western Blake scholars but that many of them are probably somewhat ephemeral, translations of individual poems, bicentennial essays, and the like. I should welcome more information about such works and exchanges of information with scholars in Russia.

1 Note that the question of how to transliterate is sometimes a difficult one and that, for example, the same letter may apparently be transliterated as "B" or "V"—or at least it was by my learned friends.

2 With further friendly assistance by and through Professor Thomas Minnick.

3 I was subsequently sent a List of Literature on William Blake’s Life and Work Published in the Russian Language after 1917 in the Lenin State Library of the U.S.S.R. (Moscow) compiled by Kushnereva and forwarded by Kopylova of the Department of Bibliographical Information. The Moscow list contains three translations (1900-1965) and twenty-one works of criticism.
The M. E. Saltykov-Shchedrin State Public Library
REFERENCE AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DIVISION

William Blake
A List of Translations of his Poetry, and Critical Literature, in the Languages of the U.S.S.R. and Foreign Languages (English, French and German Excepted), a Fond4 of the Public Library.

Leningrad, 1973

RUSSIAN

A. Translations

"[Cradle Song.]", Tr. K. Balmont. Detskoe Ochenie
[Children's Literature], (May, 1900), pp. 222-223.

"[The Tyger", "Mockeries.""] Tr. K. Balmont.
Ezhemesyatnie Sochinenie [Monthly Review], XI
(1900), 246-247.

"Radost'-Ditia [Infant Joy]", "Malen'kii mal'chik
potoriavshiisia [The Little Boy Found]", "Malen'kii mel-chik naidennyi [The Little Boy Found]", "Kolybel-naia pesnia [Cradle Song]", "Noch [Night]", "Taina liubvi [? The Secret of Love]", "Tigr [The Tyger]", "Kniga Tel [The Book of Thel].
Tr. K. D. Balmont. Is chudezemnykh pesnei [From Foreign Poets], (1906), 4-22; (1909), 4-22.

"[The Little Vagabond.]", Tr. S. I. Marshak. Argua,
III (1917), 89.

"Song of the Flower, from Milton."] Tr. S. I. Marshak.
Russkaia Myal', Books 3-6 (1918), 135-136.

"[To See a World in a Grain of Sand.]", Tr. S. I.
Marshak. Snazila, XI-XII (1943), 146.

"[The Poison Tree.]", Tr. S. I. Marshak. Britanskii
Sotsiizik [British Ally], XXXV (1944), 8.

[Poems.] [English Ballads and Songs.] Tr. S. I.

"[From William Blake.]” Tr. S. I. Marshak.
Inostrannaiia literatura [Foreign Literature], X
(1957), 193-206.

Includes "Life and Death [?"]", "Infant Joy",
"The Fly", "The Poison Tree", "The Tyger",
"Gwin King of Norway", "Introduction" (to
Innocence), "To Evening", "The Wild Flower's
Song [? from Milton]", "A Dream", "Holy Thursday"
(from Innocence), "Holy Thursday" (from
Experience), "The Chimney Sweeper", "The Little
Vagabond", "The Garden of Love", fragments from
The Marriage, excerpts from "Auguries of
Innocence", "The Crystal Cabinet", excerpts from
"the Everlasting Gospel".

"[From William Blake, 1757-1827.]” Tr. S. I. Marshak,
with an Afterword by N. Balashov. Ogontek, L
(1957), 31.

Includes "Laughing Song", "The Little Black
Boy", epigrams.

"[The School Boy.]", Tr. S. I. Marshak. Literaturnaiia
Gazeta [Literary Gazette], (3 July 1965).

[Songs of Innocence: "Laughing Song", "On Another's
Sorrow", "Spring"; Songs of Experience: "A Little
Boy Lost", "The Human Abstract"; poems of 1793-
1811 (from the Notebook); (Pickering MS:)
"Mary", "Long John Brown and Little Mary Bell";
excerpts from "Auguries of Innocence."] Tr. S. I.
Marshak, with a preface by V. Zhirmunskii.

Apparently reprinted in the next work.

[Translations [Selections].] Tr. S. I. Marshak. Preface
by V. Zhirmunskii. Moscow: Khudozhestvannaiia
Literatura, 1965. 182 pp., portrait.

Includes V. Zhirmunskii, "[William Blake (1757-
1827)]", pp. 5-34. The poems are from Poetical
Sketches, Songs of Innocence and of Experience,
the Prophecies, and aphorisms. Evidently first
printed in the previous work.

"[The Fly.]", Tr. G. Kapronov. Komameolete Tatarii,
(26 Feb 1967).

"[The Tyger" and "To See a World in a Grain of Sand."]
"Tr. S. I. Marshak. [Masters of Russian Poetical
285-286.

"[A Cradle Song and "The Tyger.""] Tr. K. D. Balmont.

"[William Blake.]", Tr. S. I. Marshak in [Collected

[Songs of Innocence: "Introduction", "The Lamb",
"Laughing Song", "Night", "A Cradle Song",
"Infant Joy", "On Another's Sorrow"; Songs of
Experience: "Holy Thursday", "The Fly", "The
Tyger", "The Little Vagabond", "London", "The
Human Abstract", "The Poison Tree", "A Little
Boy Lost"; and excerpts from the Notebook, the
Pickering MS, The Marriage, and Milton.) Tr.
S. I. Marshak. [The Tree of Freedom]. (Moscow,
1972.) Pp. 48-82.

B. Criticism

["Artist, Poet and Madman: The Life of William
Blake."] Tr. from the English [of Allan
Cunningham, Lives of British Artists]. [Telescope],
(1834), Chapter 22, pp. 67-97.

Vasil'eva, T. N. "[Blake in Correspondence with his Friends and Contemporaries]." [Problems in Romanticism and Realism in Foreign Literatures of the 18th-20th Centuries]. (Kishinev, 1972). Pp. 3-51.

BELORUSSIAN

A. Translations

"[Excerpts from 'Aurguries of Innocence' and Songs of Experience]" Tr. I. Semishen. Literatura i Mastatstva [a newspaper], (30 November 1957).

B. Criticism


CZECH

A. Translations

"[Night (from Innocence), 'Holy Thursday' (from Experience)]." Tr. K. Puras. Komjaunimo Tiesa [Komaonol Truth], (29 November 1957), [newspaper].

"[The Tyger]." Tr. A. Churginas. Literatura ir Menas [Literature and Art], (30 November 1957).

"[One word cannot express....]." Tr. A. Churginas. [Sword and Sickle.]" Tr. A. Churginas. 398-399.


ESTONIAN

A. Translations

"[Lafayette]. With notes on the author by the publishers.]" Tr. R. Sepp. Noorte Khiaia [The Voice of Youth], (28 November 1957).

"[London]." Tr. L. Metsar. Edasi [Forward], (1 December 1957).

"[The Husbandry of] Urizen, 'This city and this country has brought forth many mayors', 'Laughing Song', 'The Fly', 'The Tyger]." Tr. R. Sepp. [Looming], XII (1957), 1867-1869.


LATVIAN

B. Criticism


Dzene, L. "[The Joyful and Anxious Artist.]" Cina [Battle], (28 November 1957).

LITHUANIAN

A. Translations

"[Night (from Innocence), 'Holy Thursday' (from Experience)]." Tr. K. Puras. Komjaunimo Tiesa [Komaonol Truth], (29 November 1957), [newspaper].

"[The Tyger]." Tr. A. Churginas. Literatura ir Menas [Literature and Art], (30 November 1957).

"[One word cannot express....]." Tr. A. Churginas. [Sword and Sickle.]" Tr. A. Churginas. 398-399.


POLISH

B. Criticism


RUMANIAN

B. Criticism


This bibliography deals with all doctoral dissertations concerning Blake and his work between the years 1964-74 and part of 1975. Entries are taken from the Fine Arts, Music, Religious Studies, and Language and Literature sections of Dissertation Abstracts and Dissertation Abstracts International, 1964-1976. All the information for ordering any dissertation directly from this bibliography is given below with each entry, except in rare cases in which it must be ordered directly from the University. In these cases, of course, no Xerox order number is given. The list is arranged chronologically by the date of the dissertation, and alphabetically within each year.

1963


1964

Dorffman, Deborah. The Development of William Blake’s Reputation as a Poet in the Nineteenth Century. Yale University, 1964. [Not listed in DA]

* As editorial assistant for the Newsletter in 1974-74, Judith Wallick Page made substantial additions to the checklist.

1965


1966


1967
