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Russian Orthodox Mission and Bible Translation in Russia

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Znamenski, Andrei A., *Shamanism and Christianity. Native Encounters with Russian Orthodox Missions in Siberia and Alaska, 1820-1917.* Westport and London: Greenwood Press 1999. 306 pp., £ 47,00. ISBN: 0-313-30960-4.

Das Gebet des Herrn in den Sprachen Russlands. St. Petersburg 1870. Photomechanischer Nachdruck mit Nachwort herausgegeben von Wolfgang Veenker. Slavistische Studienbücher. Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 1971. 92 pp. ISBN 3 447 01311 7.

Marianne Beerle-Moor (ed.), *The Birth of Jesus Christ in 80 Languages of the CIS.* Moscow: Institute for Bible Translation, Moscow, 2000. 208 pp.

Anita Laakso (ed.), *Ilouutinen Kaikille Kansoille.* Helsinki: Institute for Bible Translation, 2000, 48 pp.

Borislav Arapovic, *Bibliography of Bible translations in the languages of the Russian Federation, other countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States.* Stockholm-Moscow-Helsinki-Alhambra-Colchester-Nanaimo: Institute for Bible Translation, 2003, 374 .p. ISBN 5-93943-065-1.

Since there are comparatively few scholarly works in English on these subjects, I have chosen to present five volumes which can help us gain an excellent insight into different aspects of the topic. However, most of this article will focus on the book by Andrei Znamenski.

Znamenski is an assistant professor of history in the Department of Humanities at Alabama State University, and he approaches the subject of native – missionary encounters as a historian. He essentially raises and answers three questions in his book: 1) why Orthodox missionaries to the Dena'ina Indians in Alaska (outside Russia!) were so successful after 1867 (i.e. after Russia had sold Alaska to USA); 2) why they were almost com-

pletely rejected by Chukchis in north-eastern Siberia; and 3) why the results were mixed in the Altai region.

The first chapter 'Indigenous Landscapes in Siberia and Alaska' is an exploration of the native societies that confronted Russian missionaries. The chapter draws attention to the intimate connections of economic, social, and spiritual life in indigenous traditional societies. Unlike in Western society, in traditional culture these spheres could not be separated. The premise that follows is that one cannot single out native beliefs completely and examine them per se without addressing native environment, economy, and social life (16). The author deals with each indigenous people in a separate section. The Dena'ina, Chukchi and Altaians approached hunting, trapping, fishing, and other daily occupations as both economic and religious activities. The responsibility for dialogue with natural forces on behalf of the whole community lay on shamans. Their primary role was as healers, but that did not exhaust their duties. Not surprisingly, shamans attempted to borrow medicine power from as many sources as possible and were generally open to innovations (p. 36), including both neighbouring bands' beliefs and Christianity. It might be suggested that this stance later served as a background for a dialogue between native beliefs and Christianity.

'Missionary Landscapes in Siberia and Alaska' is title of the next chapter that gives a background to the Orthodox mission in Siberia. It is remarkable that until 1816 monks served as the only source for Russian missions (p. 51). Regular parish (so-called white) priests who were married and have families were considered not to be qualified. To enter the wilderness of the Russian frontier meant hardships. Russian north, Siberia and Alaska symbolised the biblical desert where Jesus went through temptation and here the Russian monks were to prove their asceticism. The severe cold and ice replaced the extreme heat of the biblical desert; here was the testing ground for Russian holy men.

Their missionary journeys reminded of the apostles' journeys and their hardships and perils. Here we can read for example about Father Venedict who came on foot from European Russia to Chukchi country, the place of his assignment. Another, Veniaminov, constructed a greater part of his image and a career as the greatest Russian missionary through his persistent attempts personally to supervise missionary activities in all distant corners of

the Alaskan and eastern Siberian areas. His annual journeys sometimes reached 9,000 kilometres a year (5,600 miles), using canoes, sailing-vessels, reindeer sledges, and sledges drawn by dogs, and sometimes went in snow-shoes, or simply on foot, over immense distances, everywhere Christianising the local inhabitants, erecting churches, establishing mission stations. Because of these hardships and perils and even martyrdom only the monastic, or the so-called black, clergy was considered to be suitable for missionaries. Later, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when the work of evangelisation was turned into a formalised church enterprise, the "desert tradition" did not come to an end.

Before Peter the Great's reign, missionary work on the Siberian and Alaskan borderlands was in many respects a combination of individual church and layman initiatives. The Russian state did not show much consistent interest in the conversion of indigenous peoples of Siberia. There is a purely economic explanation for this lack of interest. Unlike Orthodox Christians, indigenous people of the eastern borderlands until the beginning of the twentieth century carried the burden of an annual fur tribute to the governmental treasury. The enlargement of the Christian population would have decreased the number of tribute-paying groups (p. 55)

Peter the Great changed these conditions by allowing priests to baptise indigenes while retaining them in the tribute category. This practice was introduced in his 1710 guidelines to Philotheus Leshchinskii (1650-1727), a new Siberian metropolitan. Peter the Great was the first czar to issue a specific decree about Christianisation of Siberian peoples, which sent a number of Orthodox missionaries, primarily Jesuit-influenced Ukrainians, to convert "savages" into loyal imperial subjects. The czar instructed Leshchinskii to find, "burn and chop" the local peoples' "false gods," to "destroy their prayer places, and replace them with chapels and holy icons." In December of 1714 the czar issued another regulation, which required burning down "idols and wicked praying sites" of all indigenes in western and central Siberia (p. 56).

The practical goal was the consolidation of all peripheral areas into a single imperial entity. Peter the Great formally abolished the colonial status of Siberia, turning it into a Russian province. His centralisation programme included undermining the power and sovereignty of the Russian church,

particularly independent monastery communities. In 1721, Peter the Great also completely eliminated the autonomy of the Russian church, confiscated all its lands, and established the Holy Synod as a separate imperial department that took full control over Russian Orthodoxy. Catherine the Great continued and completed this programme. By the end of the eighteenth century, the state had totally subordinated the Russian church to the empire. From that time, to test oneself in the "northern desert" stopped being an individual adventure and became a regular job. The formerly spontaneous Orthodox missionary zeal became institutionalised and became a part of the settlement of the eastern borderlands and native Christianisation.

The government and church demanded that native groups go through only formal baptism, symbolising their political loyalty to the czar. A natural result of this policy was the creation of great numbers of pseudo-Christians. Between 1702-1727, Leshchinskii formally converted forty thousand local people, who evidently remained pseudo converts. Similarly, Joseph Khotuntsevski, assigned to eastern Siberia, did in the Kamchatka. However, it appears that by the middle of the eighteenth century state-sponsored missionary zeal had already subsided in both Siberia and other parts of Russia. An imperial decree of 1740 forbade "imposition of baptism" and even asked missionaries to rely on persuasion. During the reign of Catherine the Great, who came to power in 1762, the government started to restrain Russian missionaries and her official regulations such as the 1773 Edict of Toleration not only parted with a policy of violent conversion, but also put missionary work on a low priority list.

The Orthodox Church intensified its missionary efforts after the 1820s and especially during the reign of Nicholas I. The state became interested in genuine Christianisation of the Russian colonial periphery. Yet, the major intention was not language and cultural assimilation. The church began looking for more efficient channels such as the use of native tongues, using the local population in missionary work, avoiding direct attacks on native customs and traditions (p. 58). Glukharev, chief of the Altai mission, and Veniaminov, a famous Alaska mission organiser and future metropolitan, developed some major principles of native evangelisation. They manifested themselves in the *Missionary Instructions* by Veniaminov. The missionaries did not restrict their activities to spiritual enlightening but they supplemented it by social and economic work and even medical performances.

Besides, two major centres for preparation of missionaries and support of missions were founded: the Russian Missionary Society (RMS), founded in St. Petersburg in 1865, and a missionary college founded in 1854 as a branch of the Kazan Orthodox Academy.

Glukharev and Veniaminov, "founding fathers" of the Russian missionary enterprise, pioneered translation of major religious texts into local languages. In its curriculum, the Kazan Missionary Institute reserved a large place for teaching native tongues to would-be missionaries. In the second half of the nineteenth century, one of the professors at this college, Nikolai Ilminskii, undertook an ambitious project of translating Russian Orthodox literature into indigenous languages, including a number of Siberian ones. This more sensitive approach to native cultures and rejection of Russification had official approval but did not enjoy full support of Orthodox clergy and missionary theoreticians. In 1868-1873, Archbishop Veniamin became a vocal critic of tolerant Christianisation and the Ilminskii System and even forbade the use of native language in the education of the Buryat people, among whom he worked. Also Bishop Gurii of Samara and the Kamchatka Bishop Martinian Murativskii fought against the Ilminskii System, since in their view, Orthodoxy existed as the Russian faith. The Russification tendency became noticeable in at the end of the nineteenth and in the beginning of the twentieth century (65). As late as in 1910, during the Siberian Missionary Congress, missionaries still debated whether they should use Russian or indigenous languages for native education. The majority of clerics recognised that failures in evangelisation originated from inadequate use of native languages. Archbishop Makarii stated that the purpose of the mission was the "enlightenment of natives with the light of Christ's teaching rather than Russification".

In the next section, the reader learns about the Orthodox missionaries' cultural understanding and view of the indigenous population. Their missionary narratives, in which they described the indigenes' poor material and social status, reflect their ideas, values, attitudes toward and perception of the indigenous peoples, and their stereotypes. Some of them had a negative stance and could not accommodate themselves to native cultural and physical landscapes. Others gave opposite example. Overall, it can be noted that Orthodox priests did not make the same demands with reference to changing ways of life, as did the Protestant. It also appears that Orthodox mis-

sionaries tolerated compromises with indigenous beliefs because of the ritualistic "traditionalist" nature of Orthodoxy itself. As a result, the sudden collision of cultures did not occur.

After these two broad introductory chapters, the author deals with each indigenous people in a separate section. Chapter 3 deals with the process of how Orthodoxy became Dena'inas religion ('Orthodoxy Becomes a Native Faith: Dena'ina Encounters with Russian Missionaries, 1849-1917'). Before the 1880s, Russian Christianity had played a marginal role in their worldview, but under the new circumstances of social and administrative power vacuum in the wake of the demise of Russian and indigenous structures after Alaska purchase in 1867, the Dena'ina used Orthodoxy as a convenient device to reinforce their identity before the advancing Protestant culture of the white majority. By the turn of the twentieth century, the entire Dena'ina population formally belonged to Orthodoxy. However, while they used local chapels, brotherhoods, and Orthodox rituals for the construction of their social structure and identity and accepted much of the Orthodox tradition, they ignored elements not reconcilable to their own culture. For example, many of them did not know the common prayers and "prayed in their own way when in church" (p. 117). The Kenaitze (the Russian name for the Dena'ina) creatively adjusted Orthodox beliefs for their own needs and even adopted Russian church brotherhoods as part of their social and political structures. Orthodoxy became a native church of popular Indian Orthodoxy, within which Christian and "shamanistic" values were merged to the point that they became inseparable (p. 105).

Chapter 4 with the title 'Unresponsive Natives: Chukchi Dialogues with the Russian Mission, 1840-1917' analyses the reasons why the Chukchis rejected the missionaries. Not many know that these "Apaches of Siberia", as two American writers metaphorically called them at the turn of the century, maintained semi-independent status within the Russian empire until 1917. These indigenes, who numbered only about twelve thousand at the close of the nineteenths century, were the only Siberian group that did not pay obligatory tribute to the imperial authorities. They were self-sufficient and in his interpretation of the Chukchi relationships with missionaries, the author relies on the model of cultural and political "middle ground" (p. 139). Under these circumstances, native peoples were frequently able to dictate their own terms of the cultural dialogue and use the middle ground

to create a cultural space for themselves and to enjoy sovereignty. Yet, to reduce the Chukchi's general lack of interest in Orthodoxy to the expansion of their reindeer economy would be simplification of the whole picture. The other circumstances were the weak imperial presence, competition between the empire and the United States in the region, the strong positions of the maritime Chukchi as middlemen traders, and Russian dependence on indigenes for food supplies (p. 177). All those circumstances together increasingly diminished the influence of the Christian message on the local people, and allowed the Chukchi to maintain their beliefs.

Chapter 5 describes the half-hearted reception of Orthodoxy by the Altaians ('Dialogues about Spirit and Power: Altaian Natives and the Russian Orthodox Mission, 1828-1917'). Altai is like the "Palestine" of Inner Asia. For centuries this small area, located at the intersection of the Russian, Chinese, and Mongolian borders, was a place where Orthodox, Old Believer, Lamaist, and shamanist traditions interacted with each other. This makes Altai extremely attractive for scholars who research religious syncretism (p.193). Unfortunately, until recently scholarship had hardly addressed this topic. The founder of the Altai Orthodox Mission was Father Makarii Glukharev. According to the author, he has been neglected and Western audience still hardly knows about him while everybody knows about St. Innocent. But it was Glukharev who was the theoretician of the missionary work, whereas St. Innocent was more of a practical worker and administrator. Glukharev's successors turned the propagation of the Gospel among Altaians into a huge religious enterprise, the largest of the Russian missions. The Altai mission relied strongly on indigenous clergy, more than half of the mission priests were natives (p. 205). Indigenous responses to the mission were uneven. In the northeastern areas, the response was more positive, whereas in the southwestern it was often negative. Northeastern Altaians were connected with the Russians by close contacts and the political subordination to Russia added to their decision to maintain a dialogue with Orthodoxy. Though it did not have legal and administrative tools to impose its will on the natives, the Russian church represented a symbol of imperial power. To be associated with this power could be helpful both for economic and social and for psychological reasons. Missionary reports indicate that "articrafts" and rituals of Orthodoxy such as icons, candles, religious ceremonies, and processions found an active response among natives because they resembled elements of Altaian tradition.

Unlike their northeastern fellow tribesmen, the southwestern Altaians maintained their traditional beliefs until about the 1890s. It was not only nomadic life-style and lack of tight contacts with the Russians that made pastoralists immune to the message of Orthodoxy; historically, before becoming Russian imperial subjects, Altaian nomads had to suffer severe religious persecutions from the Dzhungarian Federation. The latter was a typical oriental despotic state, which widely used violence to implant Lamaism in the Altaian society by punishing and executing native shamans. The Dzhungarian did not succeed in their attempts to crush native beliefs. Stories about resistance of shamans to Lamaism occupy a significant place in the Altaian oral tradition. It appears that this tradition nourished among the nomads a strong negative stance against any religious imposition. However, in 1890s travel and missionary accounts start to portray a different picture. The sudden influx of the Russians produced a cultural shock and resulted in a radical reshaping of the entire native life (p. 228). Altaian shamanism experienced a crisis. Ethnohistorical studies on other indigenous peoples show that under similar circumstances, native groups usually developed cultural responses tinged with religious revitalisation and millenarianism. The southwestern Altaians were no exception. In July 1904 a native shepherd, Chet Cheplan, and his adopted daughter, Chugul, envisioned a rider on a white horse dressed in white. This rider announced the return to the earth of the legendary Oirot Khan, the Altai messiah, who would free the Altaians from the power of the "white czar" and restore the old life. This prophecy and the ensuing cult became known as Burkhanism. According to Cheplan, the new Supreme Deity of the natives, Burkhan, sent his messiah, Oirot Khan, to the earth to help native nomads retain their ways and lands. The message stirred great activity in the area. Up to four thousand native people conducted regular pilgrimages to the Tereng Valley to hear the new prophet and learn about his message. One of the most notable aspects of the prophecy was its severe attack on shamanism. The Burkhanists chased away shamans and burned down their drums, ritual outfits, and skins of sacrificed animals. The speed with which the Altaians transformed shamanic beliefs into the new religion was striking. Although the Burkhanists apparently borrowed some concepts from Orthodox Christianity as well as from Russian schismatics (Old Believers), a significant number of their specific rituals came from neighbouring Mongolian Lamaist tradition (p. 231), and even many "positive" elements of the traditional shamanistic religion. The Altaian nomads, however, did not align them-

selves completely with the spiritual power of this reformed cult. After its heyday was gone and Oirot Khan failed to materialise, Burkhanism stopped attracting overwhelming support. Some nomads switched back to shamanism, which they had earlier denounced; others went further, converting to Christianity.

In his conclusion the author states that both the nature of indigenous beliefs and surrounding social, political, and economic circumstances shaped the character of native-missionary dialogue in Alaska and Siberia. Methods practised by Orthodox messengers developed within a lenient tradition brought to life by Glukharev and Veniaminov and the native educator Ilminskii, the founding fathers of the Russian missionary enterprise. All three insisted on using indigenous languages and native clergy to convey the Christian message. Ilminskii promoted education of natives in their indigenous languages, and Veniaminov's *Missionary Instructions*, which restrained missionaries from Russification, received the approval of church and secular officials.

Briefly, Znamenski is in this book interested in two things: what cultural constructions native peoples offered in response to missionary activities and what specific historical changes undermine the vitality of some cultural patterns and give rise to others. He belongs to those who see the native-Russian missionary encounters as a complex process of intercultural exchange. He relies on the "ethnicity as strategy" approach that stands as a promising method for understanding native dialogues with western culture. This approach stands in contrast to those works that directly or indirectly try to portray missionaries as either civilisers and cultural heroes or colonisers.

This book is not an attempt to write the Russian Orthodox Church mission history. However, the rich bibliography at the end and the notes at the end of each chapter offer reference to this kind of literature. Znamenski's volume, tailor-made for students of Orthodoxy, late Imperial Russian history and culture, and the anthropology of northern native peoples, is the first work of its kind in English. It is an authoritative contribution to ethnohistory, well grounded in anthropological literature. The book contains 3 maps and 19 photos.

Languages in Russia 1870 and 2000

The book, *Das Gebet des Herrn in den Sprachen Russlands. St. Petersburg 1870*, written in German, contains the Lord's Prayer (Our Father) from the Gospel of Matthew 6:9-13 in the whole of 108 languages of the Russian empire of that time.

The first part of the book, until the page 47, consists of a survey of the languages, classified in different language groups and subgroups, like the Altaic, Kaukasian, and other, with a short presentation and description of each people group and language. Though the criteria for classification of the languages can still be used today, the names for some of the peoples and languages are antiquated. For example: Wotjak and Wotjakisch is Udmurt today, Tscheremiss is Mari, etc, whereas the name for the Ukrainian language reflects the official policy of Russia of that time: "*Kleinrussisch*" (Minor Russian). The following pages contain the Lord's Prayer in 108 languages. Some of the samples are taken from Prince Lucian Bonaparte's collection (pp 20 and 21).

To see nearly 15 different alphabets (from the Cyrillic to the Latin, Chinese, Mongolian vertical, Georgian, Arabic, Greek, etc) one can imagine what an achievement it must have been for the printing technique in 1870. Hermann Dalton, who compiled the book, writes about the difficulties on page 90. The book was published as a miscellany in honour of Georg Freiherrn von Meyendorf in connection to his 25 years jubilee as the chairman of the St Petersburg's Evangelical Bible Society. Because of this, Dalton did not manage to include the Lord's Prayer in additional 20-30 languages from the Caucasus and Central Asia that he received afterwards (p. 91). All of the prayers are rendered in the original alphabet but some are even transcribed into Latin (like the Kumyk on p. 59) or Cyrillic alphabet (like the Chagataic and Tajik on p. 86).

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19. Baschkirisch (vergl. Erl. № XVII).

Atabûs bsnûm, sirâ bardur goklärda, jalturar ssänin atün; gam gelür padschalükin ssänin; wa bulur iriklikin ssinin bässalän guklärda wa dshirlärda; ikmäk bisniki nabaka birgändjur bisga asir; wa galgul banlärda birätschaklärmûsi amma bisdâ dashdalmis birätschak kimssämärmissa; wa shitäklâma bisni bassbassaga, amma gutkar schaitandan. Amün.

20. Kumükisch (vergl. Erl. № XVIII).

هاى بزم كوكدەكى آتابز آتاك سنى مبارك بوسون سنى پچقلغنك كلسون كوكده بردە
سنى مرادنك بولسون كوندلك ايتمك بزنى مزكه بر بوكون بورچلربزنى بزدن گچ نيچيك
بزده بورچلولربزدن گچربز بزين سيناب قارامه يمانليقدن قوتقار پچقليق سلطانليق
عجدليك آبدغدجه سنى كيدر

Transscription.

Hại bizim kọkdạgí atabịz, atịn sẹnî mụbarák bosún, sẹnî paččalịqịn gẹlsún kọkdạ́ yerdá, sẹnî murádịn bolunsun, gunlịk ẹtmẹkbizní bịzá bir bu gun, borčlarịbịznẹ́ bizdạ́n gẹč nẹčik bíz dạ borčlularịbịzdán gẹčẹrbíz bịzín sịnáb qaráma yamanlịqdán qutqár, paččalịq sultanlịq majîdlík abadyáča sẹnikídir.

20a. Nogaisch (vergl. Erl. № XVIII).

اوڭن آتامز آدڭ مقدّس اولسون پادشاهلغڭ كلسون كوكده مرادڭ نيچه ايسه يرده
دخي بويله اولسون هر كونكي اتمكمزي بزه بوكون وبر و بزه بورچلرمزي باغشله نيچه كه
بز دخي بزه بورچلو اولانلره باغشلادرز هم بزي امتحانه صالمه امّا بزي برامزدن قورتار
زيرا پادشاهلق وقدرت وجلال ابدا سنكدر آمين

Page 59 from *Das Gebet des Herrn in den Sprachen Russlands. St. Petersburg 1870.*

In Slavic languages, the prayer is rendered in "*Altslawonisch*" (Old Church Slavonic), "*Slawonisch*" (Church Slavonic), "*Altrussisch*" (Old Russian), "*Grossrussisch*" (Great Russian, i.e. Russian), "Kleinrussisch" (Minor Russian, i.e. Ukrainian), "*Weisrussisch*" (White Russian), and in Polish, Serbian, Czech and Bulgarian.

On page 81, there are three different versions of the prayer in Swedish! The first one renders the Lord's Prayer text from the Bible printed in Turku (Åbo) 1855. The other two versions are dialects from the islands Nukkö and Runö in Estonia. The Swedish inhabitants there are described as "*der Inselschweden: Eibofolke, oder die Schweden an den Küsten Ehstlands und auf Runö*" (p. 43).

The three versions are as follows:

1) *Fader wår, som äst i himlom: Helgadt warde ditt Namn. Tillkomme ditt rike. Ske din wilje, såsom i himmelen, så och på jorden. Gif oss i dag wårt dageliga bröd. Och förlåt oss wåra skulder, såsom ock wi förlåte dem oss skyldige äro. Och inled oss icke i frestelse; utan fräls oss ifrån ondo. Ty riket är ditt, och magten, och härligheten, i ewighet. Amen.*
2) Dialect from Nukkö. *Fader wår, sum är ude himmelen: helgat ware titt namn, tekúme titt rike, ske tin wille såsum ude himmelen så ock uba jorden. Wår dagliga brö gif os i-da, ock ferelåt os wåra skylder, såsum och wi ferelåte tom os skyldige äro; ock inled os ent i frästelse; utan fräls os från ondt, ty riket är titt å magten å härliheiten i ewiheit. Amen.*
3) Dialect from Runö. *Daddan won, som er e himmon! Hélit ware titt namne! Tílkume titt rîk. Skéje wil'jan suasom é himmon sua å upa jôrdu. Gé oss dâ uart dâgli bré. Å forluot oss uar skûldo, suasom å wi förluot teim som oss ira skilde. Å inlej oss äte uté fristelse, utan fräls oss fruom allt šl'imt. Rîka ér titt å machto å herrliheito e éwiheito. Amen.* (p. 81).

Exactly 130 years later, two similar books appeared. The book edited by Marianne Beerle-Moor, *The Birth of Jesus Christ in 80 Languages of the CIS*, is a compilation of the birth story of Jesus as recorded in the Gospel of Luke 2:1-20. It presents the translation of this text in 80 languages of Russia and the other countries of the former Soviet Union. However, not all languages of this vast area are represented but "only" those into which the Bible is being translated by the Institute for Bible Translation (p. 9). This is one of the reasons why there are only four alphabets. The other is that many of the languages have switched to the Cyrillic alphabet during the last century. If Kalmyk, for example, was written with Arabic characters in 1870, it is written with Cyrillic in 2000 (p. 113). Bashkir was written with Latin characters, today it is written with Cyrillic (p. 97). There are many more examples. For this reason it is interesting to compare this book with the one from 1870 (see above).

It is especially interesting to note that the account of Jesus' birth is the first literary text ever published in eleven of the languages (however, some of the languages have had primers and grammars). In 33 languages this text is printed for the first time, and 24 languages have never had any Bible text printed before. The Christmas story in Greek, Church Slavonic, Russian and English are also included.

The translations are arranged according to the classification of languages used in the *Linguistic Encyclopedic Dictionary*, Moscow, Soviet Encyclopedia, 1990 (p. 10). Bibliographical references are given for the 48 texts taken from Bibles, New Testaments and Gospels of Luke already Publisher by the Institute for Bible Translation. For each language, information is also given about the status of the Bible translation, population of the ethnic group and the location where the language is spoken. Many of the illustrations in the book consist of paintings by national artists designed specially for this book. This publication has a Russian ISBN (5-93943-004-X) and a Swedish (91-89122-46-1), which indirectly indicates that the Institute for Bible Translation began its work "27 years ago" (p. 9), i.e. 1973 in Stockholm.

The book edited by Anita Laakso, *Ilouutinen Kaikille Kansoille* (Glad Tidings to all Nations, ISBN 952-9790-59-7), written in Finnish, is very similar but it includes 17 Finno-Ugric languages only. The illustrations are also different. On pages 42-43 there is a map showing where these languages are spoken and giving the information about the population, according to the 1989 census. A bibliography of Bible translations into the Finno-Ugric languages is on pages 44-46.

For those who wish to know more about Bible translations in the different languages of Russia and other countries of the former Soviet Union, the new work by Borislav Arapovic, *Bibliography of Bible translations in the languages of the Russian Federation, other countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States*, is very helpful. The Bible was translated comparatively late into most of the languages of the Russian Empire and those of other Slavic Orthodox countries, partly because the liturgy uses the Slavonic Bible translation and partly because, for various reasons, the church hierarchy resisted translation into the vernacular.

According to the data gathered in this bibliography, until the communists seized power in October 1917 the whole Bible had been translated and published in 11 languages, the New Testament on its own in 8, and separate books of the Bible in 25, i.e. in 44 languages of the region in question (p. 202).

By the year 2003 in 17 languages of the region the whole Bible has been translated and published, in another 19 there is a complete New Testament, in yet 44 more languages individual books of the Bible, and in 8 languages portions of Bible book, making a total of 80 languages – of possibly 150 or so languages (p. 201).

In addition to the bibliographic data, the bibliography briefly introduces each language with a basic summary of the people, the dialects, the scripts in use and religious adherence. The second part of the bibliography comprises facsimile reproductions of some title pages and textual portions of translations in each of the languages noted in the bibliography. In order to make this bibliography accessible to those who cannot read Russian, the following are provided in English: the table of contents, with the English variant of the names of the languages, and the names of the books of the Bible in both Russian and English.