

## Introduction to the First Edition

Светлой памяти моих дедушек  
И. Мардера и А. Савранского

С. Мардер

**Aim and orientation:** *A Supplementary Russian-English Dictionary (ASRED)* contains important words and expressions not found in either of the two dictionaries most often used: A. Smirnitsky's *Russian-English Dictionary* and M. Wheeler's *The Oxford Russian-English Dictionary*. It is primarily designed as a companion and supplement to these, although it may, of course, be used independently. It is in no way intended to *replace* these dictionaries or compete with them. It should be added that those not familiar with these two dictionaries will not be disadvantaged in using *ASRED*.

It is reasonable to ask: "Why a dictionary supplement and not a 'proper' dictionary?" To state the obvious: dictionaries need supplements from time to time. Dictionaries are not like yearbooks in that, as a rule, many years pass before a particular edition is updated, notwithstanding reprints "with minor corrections." Perhaps surprisingly, even supplements have suffered the same fate, if to a lesser degree. Witness the generally excellent *Novoye v russkoy leksike. Slovarnyye materialy*, under the capable editorship of N.Z. Kotelova. The most recent edition of this continuing series, dated 1989, contains material gleaned during September-December 1984!

*ASRED*, therefore, builds upon what already exists; the guiding principle throughout has been not to "reinvent the wheel" but rather to fill an alarming — and exasperating — gap between what has been recorded thus far and what it is possible to record. The new material cited here is voluminous enough, even without citing material from Smirnitsky or Wheeler. To have included the old as well as the new would have resulted in either an unwieldy single volume or a cumbersome two-volume dictionary. I was not in favour of this, preferring a single volume of manageable size which concentrated exclusively on previously uncited material. Only time will tell what proportion of the entries in

*ASRED* will one day find their way into standard dictionaries.

Any scholarship should be characterised by completeness and balance. In *ASRED* the two have a special significance. The notion of completeness in a dictionary of a living language is a contradiction in terms: a language is constantly evolving, and the process is only complete when it dies.

Even a meticulously developed and rigorously executed selection process has a certain randomness about it, and the role of serendipity cannot be discounted. By its very nature it will yield results that are weighted. If *ASRED* has any bias at all, it is towards those areas of linguistic usage which have received the greatest prominence over recent years. The various linguistic forces at work result in a certain unevenness when one examines a synchronic slice of the language: some categories of words are scarcely noticeable, others abound. Here one has in mind terms which are a consequence of recent extraordinary political events, terrorism on a global scale, drug trafficking, technological developments, concerns about the conservation of natural resources, the spread of AIDS, and many other areas which are refashioning the world and thus its languages. For example, the impact of computer technology on everyday life has been phenomenal. How could any dictionary of the modern language not record even some examples of its terms in widespread use?

*ASRED* also pays particular attention to the spoken word. This is amply illustrated by many thousands of words and expressions which bear stylistic labels denoting more relaxed forms of speech: colloquial, vernacular, vulgar, taboo and slang.

*ASRED*, as a supplement, functions in various ways. First, it contains of course neologisms. These are of two types: Russian words, expressions and phrases which have recently come into the language, and new mean-

ings for old words. The correlation between the two types is approximately three to one. It could have seemed preferable to have two different dictionaries, since the two types of neologisms do not sit together easily. But though the logic of a separate-dictionary approach is recognised, it was felt that for the sake of convenience the two books should be combined into one. A system whereby each type of neologism would be separately identified was also considered, but rejected owing to the infliction on the user of an unwieldy critical apparatus. The other major category of entries in *ASRED* is important and previously unrecorded usages of a non-neologistic nature. Such items make up roughly one-third of the total. The justification for including such material is that their meanings are not always immediately obvious. Consider the Russian treatment of the adverbial expression “at the turn of the century” — **на рубеже ны́нешнего столéтия, or в конце́ XIX—нача́ле XX вéка**. Neither of these equivalents is a neologism. Whether through accident or design, neither is found in either Smirnitsky or Wheeler. This example should not suggest that such entries are a feature of bookish language alone, for they are not; indeed, they may be found in any speech register, as the following and previously unattested examples bear witness:

**белоголо́вый орла́н** ‘bald eagle; American eagle’;  
**За информа́цией обра́щайтесь:** ‘For further information contact: ’;  
**кля́тва на кро́ви** ‘blood oath’;  
**ма́чта освеще́ния** ‘streetlight’;  
**нараста́ть лавиноо́бразно** ‘to snowball’;  
**первопресто́льный** ‘venerable’;  
**переохлажде́ние** ‘exposure (to cold weather)’;  
**распростра́ниться подобно э́пидемии** ‘to spread like wildfire’;  
**ро́зенкрейцер** ‘Rosicrucian’;  
**уко́рбченна́я па́ртия с пере́ходом подáчи** ‘tie-breaker (in tennis)’;  
**что́бы вы ло́пнули от за́висти! or за́видуйте!**  
 ‘eat your heart out!’

*ASRED* is both derivative and non-derivative. It is derivative in the sense that it continues a tradition in bilingual lexicography which goes back many years. Successive Russian-English dictionaries owe a tremendous debt to their predecessors, and I now publicly wish to acknowledge my debt to Professors Smirnitsky and Wheeler; it is no exaggeration to say that without their painstaking labours *ASRED* could never have

come into existence. The non-derivative nature of this book is at the same time its greatest strength and its greatest weakness. In the euphoria associated with assembling a previously undocumented corpus of information lies the dual risk of including nonce words or of elevating to the status of genuine words lexical entities which have yet to prove themselves. The spectre of over-inclusion also looms large. These and other problems have had to be addressed and solved. It is my ardent belief that, its shortcomings notwithstanding, *ASRED* offers the user something new and exciting through its presentation in a convincing form of previously undocumented material in a bilingual dictionary.

**Sources:** The lexical material found on the following pages has been culled from a variety of sources both oral and written but throughout the work the primacy of the *spoken* word remains paramount. In cases of conflict or doubt, the authority of a living source of the language has generally been preferred over a written source, although both have been referred to extensively. More specifically, *ASRED* has drawn its material from the Russian writings of Soviet and non-Soviet authors; from a wide range of Russian newspapers, magazines and journals; from phonograph records and audio recordings; from radio and television programs and films. Modern technology and recent political developments have also made possible an exciting new source of information in the form of an electronic link to the Soviet Union and a global forum and messaging facility via satellite linkup.

I have been particularly merciless and unrelenting in my exploitation of native informants with a view to challenging traditional interpretations and resolving conflicting interpretations of lexical facts. One ignores at one’s peril such a rich living source of often undocumented linguistic information. In the conclusions I have reached I am, however, neither judgmental nor prescriptive.

**Structure:** Anyone familiar with either Smirnitsky’s or Wheeler’s dictionaries should find the “interface” employed in the present work to be “user-friendly.” It is true that, structurally, *ASRED* does differ in minor matters of detail, but there is nothing which requires explanation here since such divergences from the two standard Russian-English dictionaries are self-evident. In several important respects, however, the structure of entries in *ASRED* is different from those in Smirnitsky’s or Wheeler’s dictionaries, as will be seen from the following brief comments.

\* \* \*

**Illustration by example:** *ASRED* contains copious examples of authentic illustrations of usage. These take the form of short phrases or mini-dialogues which serve to highlight lexical definitions; not infrequently, I have preferred to demonstrate rather than describe.

**Cross-referencing:** Extensive use has been made of cross-referencing. Such references are prefaced by “*Cf.*” (compare) followed usually by synonyms, but occasionally also by antonyms and related words. For example:

**психиатри́чка** | **а** (<психиатри́ческая больни́ца>), **и**, *f. (coll.)* nuthouse, funny farm, loony bin, madhouse (= *mental institution*). (*Cf.* **дурдо́м**; **психбольни́ца**; **психи́чка**; **психу́шка**; **шиза́рня**)

When entries are cross-referenced in close proximity, in order to avoid tedious repetition of material an entry is given with an equals sign followed by a reference to the primary listing. For example:

**психи́чка** | **а**, **и**, *f. (coll.)* **1.** = **псих. 2.** (<психиатри́ческая больни́ца>) (*vernac.*) = **психбольни́ца.**

An example of related entries are the following, all types of cigarettes: **беломо́рина**; **казбе́чина**; **кенти́на**; **ло́рд**; **при́мина**.

When synonymous entries are further apart, an identical entry is given in full for all synonyms if it is no more than one or two lines. In the case of longer entries involving synonyms to be found elsewhere in the dictionary, the primary entry is given only once. For example, the four lines of definition and explanation in the entry **очередно́й синдро́м** are given only under the entry for **очередно́й**; under **синдро́м** the user will find the appropriate reference to **очередно́й** (*See очередно́й*).

Cross-referencing is extensive but not exhaustive. Usefulness has been the main criterion.

**Exceptional entries:** As a guiding principle, *ASRED* does not duplicate information actually contained in Smirnitsky or Wheeler. There is, however, one notable exception. Where in a few instances it was felt that something significant could be added, this has been done. A case in point is the Russian equivalents for

‘mitten’. Both Smirnitsky and Wheeler give entries for **ва́режка** and **рукави́ца**. Unfortunately, however, on the basis of available information in those dictionaries, the user, on comparing the entries, would have to conclude that they are absolute synonyms. To be sure, there is indeed a certain amount of semantic overlap here, but there are nevertheless features which it is important for the user to note in order to distinguish between **ва́режка** and **рукави́ца**. In *ASRED* these two words are entered and cross-referenced, and a clear indication is given on how they should be distinguished.

**Complex entries:** Any entry composed of more than a single word may be termed a complex entry, and there are many such entries in *ASRED*. These combinations may take various forms, but the commonest are adjective + noun, verb + noun and noun + noun. After a considerable amount of experimentation and consultation with the book’s main intended users (students!), it was decided that, in the case of two-word combinations, entries should be given for both elements rather than for just one. There are several compelling reasons for this. First, it is often illogical to list all adjective + noun units consistently under either the adjective or the noun, or verbal phrases under the verb. Users may know one but not the other, and sometimes neither. A typical example is **тра́вить ба́йки**. Would users look this up under **тра́вить** or under **ба́йка**? Some would choose the former, others the latter. Secondly, extensive cross-referencing which sends the user on journeys of many pages to find the target definition considerably reduces the overall usability of a dictionary, and it is precisely the opposite effect, surely, which is desired. Thirdly, given that a noun may be associated with more than one adjective and an adjective used with more than a single noun, if a policy of listing adjective + noun combinations blindly adheres to listings under only one or another of the components, the wider context of combinability is lost. Fourthly, when an adjective + noun collocation is listed under both components, the user is “enticed” into seeing the components as part of a larger listing and thereby gains an appreciation of a family of usages. From a technical point of view it is a simple matter to list a complex entry under both elements despite the fact that this adds to the length of *ASRED*. In the case of entries of three or more words (*e.g.* a proverb or saying), readers need to look up the first significant noun, adjective or verb in the expression.

**Stylistic renderings:** Every effort has been made to ensure that English renderings are given which are genu-

inely helpful to users not only in understanding and interpreting a Russian usage, but also in reflecting the appropriate stylistic nuance. Often, of course, I have had to resort to paraphrase or a rather pale English gloss. I warmly invite those users with more convincing renderings than the ones provided to share such knowledge with me.

**Semitechnical terminology:** There has been a conscious effort to avoid exotic, highly technical terminology which would be of little interest to the overwhelming majority of users. A large number of semi-technical terms *are* cited, however, since they are so common in everyday use. A case in point is the word **застáвка**. The usual dictionary definition ('illumination') is of little relevance to television viewers, and thus *ASRED* attempts to redress the balance. The same could be said about many computer terms in widespread use, and so the user of *ASRED* can expect to find the commonest of these (*e.g.* the Russian equivalents of 'word processor', 'floppy disk', 'disk drive', 'micro-computer', 'backup', *etc.*) Clearly, if a specialist or translator is interested in an exhaustive list of computer terms, then a computer dictionary is the source to consult and not the present work.

**Abbreviations and acronyms:** In adhering to a principle of strict alphabetical arrangement of material, abbreviations and acronyms are incorporated in the dictionary proper rather than listed as an appendix. Such listings are given with an explanation of their source. In addition, citations are given for words derived from abbreviations. A few examples:

**бомж** (<лицó) без определённого мéста жительства), *indecl., n.* **1.** (*offic.*) of no fixed abode or address (*i.e. person does not hold an internal passport*). **2.** (*coll.*) vagrant, layabout, loafer, idler; down-and-out, vagabond, tramp, hobo, bum. **3.** (*coll.*) scrounger, sponger, bludger, freeloader, parasite. (*Cf.* бич; гулевáн; камышáтник; ленивáя жóпа; летúн; небокоптíтель; подшибáла; прилипáла; прихлебáла; слоня́ла; стригúн; тúник; тúnчик; чужеспíнник; шалопúт; шалыгáн; шаромы́га; шаромы́жник)

**ГАЙ** [*pron.* га-й́] (<Госудáрственная автомо-бильная инспекция), *indecl., f.* **1.** МОТ

(Ministry of Transport), Department of Motor Vehicles; traffic control. **2.** сотрудник Г. traffic (enforcement) officer. (*Cf.* гайшник)

...

**гайшник** (<ГАЙ), *a, m.* (*coll.*) traffic (enforcement) officer, traffic cop. (*Cf.* автоинспектор; госавтоинспектор; свистóк; сотрудник ГАЙ; стóп-старшина́; сыч; *cf. also* ГАЙ; доро́жная поли́ция)

**гайшн|ый** (<ГАЙ), *adj.* (*coll.*) traffic (officer's); ~ая машинá traffic officer's car.

**иксти́шк|а, и,** *f.* (*comp. sl.*) IBM PC/XT. (*Cf.* писи́шка; эйти́шка)

**Etymologies:** In an effort to keep the presentation of lexical material as uncluttered as possible, I have reluctantly decided against giving etymologies. However, I have included some which may have exceptional value or interest for the user. A few examples are the following:

**клубни́чк|а, и,** *f.* (*coll.*) titillating, erotic, salacious or pornographic work, pornography, 'dirty', 'blue', adult or stroke magazines, books, films, *etc.*; cheesecake; smut (*the Russ. word received wide currency following its appearance in N. Gogol's Dead Souls in 1842 and was immortalised in the following words spoken by Nozdryov to Chichikov: «А какой, если бы ты знал, волокита Кувшинников!.. Поверишь ли, про-стых баб не пропустил, это он называет: «попользоваться насчет клубнички»».*) (*Cf.* непристойный журна́льчик; порнографиче-ский журна́льчик)

**копенга́ген:** не к. (*jos.*): я в э́том вопро́се не к. I (really) don't know anything about such things; ask me another (*from a pun by the Soviet clown Bim to his fellow clown Bom (cf. компе-тентен 'competent' vs. Копенга́ген 'Copenhagen')*); in the same exchange between the two popular clowns фу́ро́р 'furore' is used instead of фу́же́р 'tall wine glass'; *cf.* я, ко́гда был в Па́риже, ко́ньяк це́лыми фу́ро́рами пил).

**молда́вск|ий:** «~ая пирамидка» 'Moldavian pyramid' (*Soviet version of the pyramid version*)

*of the Rubik cube; the prototype was invented by A. Ordynets from Kishinev in 1983; consists of ten small pyramids and four octahedrons capable of producing more than 20 million colour combinations).*

**Slang — yes!, a dictionary of slang — definitely not!** *ASRED* contains a large number of words which carry stylistic labels denoting more relaxed forms of speech ((*coll.*), (*vernac.*), (*sl.*), (*taboo*)). Of these, a very small percentage is slang which is in general use. Indeed, the very use of the qualifier “in general use” is something of a contradiction in terms; by its very nature slang is ephemeral or geographically specific, and the exceptions to this (*e.g.* **бабки** ‘bread’, ‘dough’, ‘brass’) only prove the rule. In addition, *ASRED* contains a certain amount of non-standard, non-literary usage. No particular category of words has been specifically excluded, and thus the dictionary contains a small amount of obscenities and racial slurs. Such cruder forms of expression are included for the sake of completeness, since whether we like it or not they are part of the word-stock of the language.

**Pronunciation vs orthography:** It will come as no surprise to users to be told that Russian pronunciation is not entirely phonetic. A dictionary, however, is an inappropriate place to go into the elements of Russian diction and pronunciation in any detail. In the present work a compromise has been struck. It is assumed that the user has mastered the rudiments of Russian pronunciation, and so any highlighting of such elements here would be misplaced. This extends even to the pronunciation of words containing silent consonants (*e.g.* in the words **лестница**, **сердце**, **солнце**). However, there are other less obvious cases of divergence between the spelling of a particular word and its pronunciation. For example, it takes a certain level of sophistication to enable the speaker to pronounce **компьютер** correctly. Is it **компью[те]р** or **компью[тэ]р**? Whenever it was considered necessary, assistance has been provided, in this case [**те** *pron.* тэ]. Another example is the pronunciation of the word **бортинженер**. Assistance is given in the form of [**тин** *pron.* тын]. Such comments refer largely, although not exclusively, to words of foreign origin. It was felt, however, that to adopt such a policy throughout the dictionary would have resulted in a very considerable increase in the density of entries, thereby reducing their

readability, and would have proved both intrusive and counterproductive. As a consequence, such indications of phonetic aid, which number rather more than a thousand, are limited to Russian headwords and do not appear in the body of entries.

**Stress:** In accordance with usual practice, primary stress is indicated in all polysyllabic words, but stress in monosyllables is, as a rule, not indicated unless it is important as a component of phrasal stress. Secondary stress is indicated in headwords only (*e.g.* **элекстрокардиограмма**).

**The language in flux:** Variants provide a fascinating insight into how a language evolves and any language contains an enormous amount of them. There has been an attempt in the present work to record at least some examples. Here one has in mind a category of competing forms among which no clear winner has yet emerged. A case in point is ‘walkman’ (also known as ‘walkabout, walkaround, (*AM/FM stereo*) radio cassette player, personal stereo, personal cassette player (PCP)’; undoubtedly, other synonyms also exist. Russian terms thus far attested to in both speech and writing include the following: **во́кмен; деби́льник; магни́тофо́н-пле́йер; пле́ер; пле́йер; ра́дио-убо́кман; стереопле́ер; эго́ист**. It was felt that, although the situation, clearly, is still crystallising, the variants should nevertheless be documented so that there is some record of them.

**New meanings for old words; new words for new concepts:** *ASRED* contains a very large number of neologisms, which fall into two basic categories. The first contains extensions of the meanings of existing words and expressions through the means of semantic shift. For example, the expression **бортовой журнал** is recorded in Wheeler’s dictionary as ‘(ship’s) log-book’. It is significant to note, however, that in February 1991 the Soviet press reported that Aeroflot had begun the publication of an “in-flight magazine.” It referred to this publication as **бортовой журнал**. This usage has now received widespread currency. A second category of neologisms is characterised by resourcefulness of a different magnitude. An association by the name of «**Мапүлечки Москвы**» (‘Solo Fathers of Moscow’) has been in existence for at least two years now. **Мапүлечка** is a stunning example of a linguistic blend (<**маму́лечка** + **папу́лечка**>).

**Some statistics:** *ASRED* contains approximately 350,000 words which make up over 29,000 total entries. Of these, single-entry headwords and headwords with multiple sub-listings are approximately evenly divided. The largest single headword entry contains 57 sub-entries. In its formatted state *ASRED* takes up four megabytes of disk space.

\* \* \*

I am very conscious of the many imperfections in *ASRED* and patiently awaits users' (preferably) constructive criticisms and suggestions for improvement. Those fortunate enough to have access to a computer mailing facility with access to the Internet may wish to send email messages to [marder@kauri.vuw.ac.nz](mailto:marder@kauri.vuw.ac.nz). "Snail" mail may be sent to the address given below.

*Stephen Marder*  
*Russian Section*  
*School of European Languages*  
*Victoria University of Wellington*  
*P. O. Box 600*  
*Wellington, New Zealand*  
*Facsimile + 64 4 712 070*  
*Telex NZ 30882*

*December 1991*