Book Reviews

Dictionary of Russian Technical and Scientific Abbreviations. Compiled by Henryk Zalucki. Elsevier Publishing Company, Amsterdam, London, New York (1968). 387 pp. $16.50.

The English-speaking reader who has managed to learn enough Russian to follow the literature in his field encounters another barrier that often prevents him from understanding the text: modern, technical Russian is filled with abbreviations, acronyms, and telescoped words. Very often, these obscure but important groups of letters are ignored by dictionary compilers. It is therefore a pleasant surprise to have in hand the recently published *Dictionary of Russian Technical and Scientific Abbreviations*, compiled by a Polish engineer with a strong interest in linguistics and lexicography.

Russian nuclear engineers save space and effort, using, for instance, instead of the mouthful expression *teplovydelyayushchii element* (heat-releasing or fuel element), the acronym *tvel*, unlisted in most technical dictionaries. On the other hand, the name of The State Publishing House of Literature on Nucleonics, "*Gosatomizdat*," may be more easily recognized because the elements of the components are visible: *gos* for *Gosudartsvennoe* (state), *izdat* for *izdatel'stvo* (publishing) and *atom*—well, for an old friend in every language; it is even spelled the same way in Russian characters.

Soviet research institutes have complicated-looking names, usually starting with NII which stands for Scientific Research Institute. This is followed by the designation of the scope of the institute and often by the name of a famous scientist or politician, after whom it is named. The declined form of the proper name often bears only a slight resemblance to the original; therefore, it is not easy for the beginner to realize that *imeni Gor'kogo* means "*named after Gorkii.*" The resulting acronyms are then pronounced as a word, as NASA, rather than AEC, in which each letter is pronounced separately.

Also of special interest for nuclear engineers are the names of national and international organizations, e.g., International Atomic Energy Agency (*MAGATE*) and the Dubna Institute (*OIYaI*), which sounds more Hawaiian than Russian. The name of this institute is given in the dictionary as "*United*," rather than *Joint Institute for Nuclear Research*, as it is generally known. Surprisingly, USAEC (*KAE-SShaA*) and its Soviet counterpart (*GKAE*) are not listed in the otherwise very complete compilation.

It would be very desirable if the translated names of the Soviet and Eastern European research institutes, laboratories, and organizations could be standardized. Several American groups, such as Battelle Memorial Institute and Georgia Institute of Technology, have examined this problem. A consistent listing of the institution, based on this dictionary and on some earlier collections, would be a great help to American readers of the many translated Soviet journals, *Nuclear Science Abstracts*, *Chemical Abstracts*, and the abstracts of Soviet and Eastern European technical literature prepared by the Joint Publication Research Service of the Department of Commerce, etc. The reader wants to know where the work has been carried out and often needs the correct name of the laboratory to request a reprint.

The less-experienced American reader of Russian scientific material may run into difficulties with abbreviations of well-known units. The Russian alphabet has no *w*; therefore, the Cyrillic *B* (*V*) stands for volt and *BT* (*VT*) must be used to designate watt. Therefore, I would advise the novice reader of Russian scientific texts to get hold of this dictionary, in addition to his regular one, and check every new term, abbreviation, and acronym until he is sure of the meaning.

Browsing through the book, one is rewarded by nuggets of unexpected information. Where else could you find out that *MIG* stands for *Mikoyan i Gurevich*, an aircraft designed by A. I. Mikoyan and M. I. Gurevich.

The Elsevier Publishing Company has an excellent record in the area of glossaries and dictionaries; its series of specialized multilingual dictionaries include one on atomic energy, with brief definitions of the terms.

The work is well printed, with the terms given in heavy characters. It contains the complete Russian expression and its English equivalent; its usefulness is further extended by giving also the German translation. The compilation will prove itself a valuable tool for engineers and scientists interested in the Russian technical literature.

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About the Reviewer: Francois Kertesz is presently very active at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, where he has been a member of the staff since 1951, in coordinating the operation of various information centers not only within the Laboratory but nationally as well. A native of Roumania, Dr. Kertesz completed his graduate studies at the University of Paris. In addition to information retrieval, his interests are in high-temperature corrosion, reactor materials, and the chemistry of photographic emulsions. His linguistic ability is outstanding.

Modal Approximations: Theory and an Application to Reactor Physics. By Weston M. Stacey, Jr. MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass. (1967). 119 pp. $6.00.

During my career as a college teacher, I have been called upon by the college to read and evaluate any number