

## **SPb Bibliotheca Biblica and Department of Biblical Studies in 2007/08.**

### **Transportation and correspondence.**

All the books sent by mail in parcels, boxes or sacks from one to 12 kg were well received. The custom regulations now permit sending book packages to 15 kg by weight. There is only one limitation: no financial documents are to be enveloped. In this case the package becomes an object of custom's interest that produces a long official process and rather high taxes.

Some losses were found in mailing periodicals by a single issue; no clear reasons can be fixed. So it seems preferable to send an annual set together or collect separate issues somewhere in Europe (Jena) for further mailing in large parties.

The Library uses now the Faculty's portal, its address: [www.philarts.spbu.ru](http://www.philarts.spbu.ru) + Bibliotheca biblica. All the materials are in Russian; however the most part of the book catalogue is exposed also.

### **Books.**

During the year 300 volumes are received and catalogued.

The total number of volumes is 18.000, including 3.500 periodicals and 2.500 in Russian.

New book shelves are ordered sufficient for 7-8 thousand volumes.

### **Library work.**

The work of cataloguing is done by Natasha Vasilieva, who combines her librarian duties with education as a four year student of the Department. Another librarian, Lidia Lukintsova, makes her postgraduate curricula; her duty is processing the periodicals.

In present academic year the total number of regular readers were about 200, that is four times more than in the previous one; most of them were outsiders. They are postgraduate students of faculties of Philology, Philosophy, History, Oriental Studies, and Theological Academy, pedagogical and scholarly centers.

### **Teaching.**

After Dr. Jenny Heimerdinger's visit as lector of the NT Greek (2006, October-December) the course of the NT Greek was composed by Ekaterina Druzhinina and given by her at the first time for the students of the second year education; it produced expected results for improving NT teaching. Besides, during a year I have been reading the Gospel of John with senior students.

Only two students have graduated from the Department after five-year education; one of them has already began his work in the Russian Bible Society as theological consultants of the OT translation project into Yakut language; and both are enrolled for the master program of the Biblical Department.

In 2008 five people will be enrolled to the Department for bachelor's curricula and probably 10-12 – for master's one. Those who come from other institutions have some knowledge of Greek, so they want to improve it and take lessons in Hebrew. They attend most courses of bachelor's curricula. These outsiders have usually diplomas of the Free Institute of Theology and State Pedagogical University. Theological Seminary and Academy of the Russian Orthodox Church have no State accreditation, so their diplomas are not valid for the University, and some people from these institutions attend our program as auditor students (volunteers).

In December the entire list of bachelor and master's curricula of the Department with necessary commentaries were published in the form of two booklets. They are used by students in course of passing exams and play an important role of advertising material. They are displayed on the Faculty's web portal also.

The Faculty does not give money for invited professors, so this way of teaching is lost for indefinite time.

### **Stuff.**

There are no changes in stuff. In September 2008 two budget places of senior lecturers are expected to be added to the Department.

### **Scholarly activities.**

As in previous years the Bible Seminar had its monthly sessions; among speakers were teachers of the Department Adel Nemirovskaya, Alexander Sizikov, Anatoly Alexeev, and guests Alexander Tarasenkov (Baptist Un-ty), Anton Tikhomirov (Lutheran Scholl of Novosaratovka), Dariush Peliak (Roman-Catholic Seminary).

In March the Annual conference of the Faculty had in its schedule the section "Bible and Christian Literature" with three sessions of 8-10 speakers each. The papers of Annual Conference 2007 will be published in September as separate book; the lectures given by Ulrich Luz and Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr in 2003 will be included.

Members of the Department were also active in other scholarly events in SPb, other cities and countries.

In April students (bachelors) and masters took part in the Annual Faculty Student Conference. Some of the papers were published in a special booklet by the Faculty. I give headlines of the annual students' works:

- The Birthright in Old Testament and folklore
- Psalms 135 in Qumran (textual study)
- Two Russian OT Translations for Jews (1862, 1895)
- The First Hebrew-Russian OT Lexicon (1878)
- Melchizedek in the Slavonic Explanatory Palaeia
- NT in "Pilgrim's Progress" by John Bunyan (1678)
- Legeon in Mk 5.9 (review of comments)
- Text of Transfiguration Scene in Synoptic Tradition
- Fragment of Sinai Codex in SPb Public Library
- On the new edition of the Byzantine text of John's Gospel (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2007);
- Apocryphal Acts of Thomas (review)
- Michael Psellus' comment on Ct 2.6
- The use of the NT in Russian Baptist Liturgy

Some students take part in summer archeological expeditions in Northern Black Sea region where antique Greek as well as Jewish remnants exist. We hope next year to send some of them to Palestine for this purpose; talks on the subject were initiated with the Hebrew University, the American and British Archeological Institutions in Palestine.

Two persons who graduated last year and combine today their master's program with work in Russian Bible Society (Mrs. Violetta Danko and Miss Alexandra Mashtakova) gave evidence of good qualification and full capacity for Bible work. Miss Alexandra Mashtakova gave the basic course of Hebrew for outsider masters. Besides, together with some members of the Department they successfully worked in the field of lexicography; Faculty charged the Department to prepare the religious vocabulary for great Modern Russian lexicon. The payment for this work is rather generous; and it is very important since the average salary of junior members at the University is about only one hundred Euros per month. As for masters their income is one third of the sum.