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LIFE IS LONG WHEN IT IS FULL

About dictionaries, translations and other works by Victor Pogadaev

There are people who are simply unable to sit idle. They are always doing something, either beginning or finishing. Sometimes it's done for increasing the family budget, but more often than not because it's simply interesting.

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A person might rest on his laurels, having compiled five dictionaries – three jointly with colleagues¹ and two independently.² But this does not suit Victor.

He was born in 1946 in a small village in Southern Urals. Having graduated from a secondary school he taught German at junior classes for a year. Then he went to Moscow and enrolled in the Institute of Oriental Languages (now the Institute of Asian and African Countries) at Lomonosov Moscow State University (Indonesian Department), where he studied from 1965 to 1970. In those years he already attended the *Malay-Indonesian readings* with a group of scholars who later formed the *Nusantara** Society. Sometimes he was unable to listen to all the presentations because he had to rush to the railroad station to catch a night train to Vladimir. Or that train he worked as a conductor. Young man simply needed money to supplement a meager student stipend. This kind

* Nusantara is the poetic name of the part of Southeast Asia inhabited by the people of Malay origin.



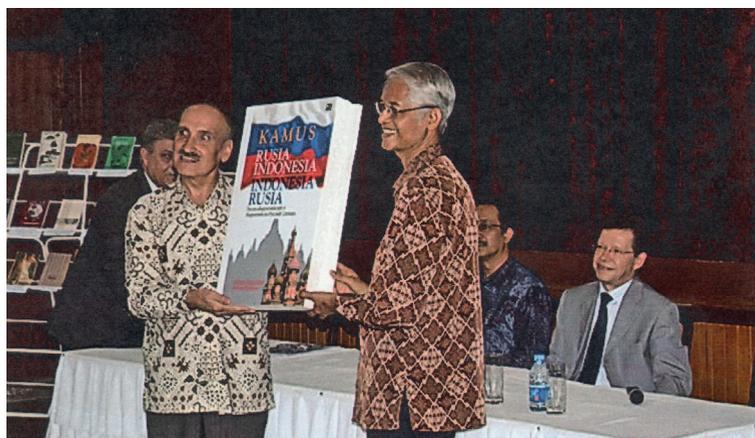
Choir of Malaysian students under the direction of Vladimir Pogadaev singing Russian songs

of enterprising behavior is anything but unusual today, but back then it was a rather rare case.

After five years of studies Pogadaev took up post-graduate course, and then, together with his two colleagues from the Indonesian section, left for Kuala Lumpur. There he spent a year at the University of Malaya, studying Malay language (which since 1970 is also known as Malaysian). Until today there are those who think that *bahasa Malaysia* (that is, Malay) and *bahasa Indonesia* (that is, Indonesian) are practically the same. To feel and understand their differences and catch the shades and nuances of national mentality through the specific features of each of these two languages one has to rub shoulders with quite a few people speaking both these languages.

Back in Moscow one of the post-graduates who had been to Kuala Lumpur, Tanya Dorofeeva, began to teach Malay at her Alma Mater. She continues to do this until today, alongside of colleagues who teach *bahasa Indonesia**. In 1970-1980 the external services of Radio Moscow used to broadcast programs in

* The initial course of the Malaysian/Malay language was introduced at the Military Institute of Foreign Languages and was provided by a textbook compiled by V. Sikorsky and A. Dmitriyev (*Sovremenniy malaiskiy yazyk*) [Modern Malay language], Moscow, VIIYa Publishers, 1967, 158 pp. This book came off the press at the time of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the U.S.S.R. and Malaysia.



Presentation of Russian-Indonesian and Indonesian-Russian Dictionary

the Malay language for Malaysia, apart from programs in Indonesian. Among the translators and announcers were N. Rott, T. Dorofeeva and her pupil E. Kukushkina, who now heads the Department of philology of Southeast Asian countries at the Institute of Asian and African Countries. Like them, Pogadaev became a zealous propagandist of the Malay language. He took part in compiling and editing first the *Malaysian-Russian-English dictionary* (1977) and then the *Russian-Malaysian dictionary* (1986).

In 1975 Victor Pogadaev defended his Ph.D. thesis on *Opposition Parties of Malaysia, 1957-1971* – and fairly soon left for the region again. From the latter half of the 1970s until the late 1980s he held various diplomatic posts first at the U.S.S.R. Embassy in Indonesia and then at the U.S.S.R. Embassy in Malaysia. The knowledge he acquired in these countries helped him a lot during the next decade, when he worked at the Institute of Oriental Studies, RAS, and simultaneously at the Information-Analytical Center of the “Vechernyaya Moskva” newspaper. In that paper he regularly published articles and essays about the culture of Malaysia and Indonesia, and had even prepared a series of interviews with the ambassadors of the ASEAN countries to the Russian Federation. On Saturdays he lectured at the University on the culture and traditions of the peoples of the Malay world. Besides, he was a board member of the “Nusantara” Society. For over forty years it has been bringing together not just specialists on Southeast Asia working in Moscow and St. Petersburg, but many other people who simply wish to learn more about the life of that region. Victor was often busy trying to select a speaker or two who might address the monthly meetings of the society, edited texts for the “Nusantara” collections,³ and looked for sponsors to cover printing



expenses. All these things took up more than enough of his time and didn't bring him a penny.

In 2001 Victor Pogadaev was invited to teach Russian at the University of Malaya where he had studied in his youth. From then on his activity has acquired a genuinely educational character: he introduces the local public to Russia and its culture.

Teaching boys and girls a foreign language which many of them will hardly use in future is not a simple and gratifying labor. In order to induce students to finish a two-year introductory course a teacher should really captivate them. Being well aware of this, Professor Pogadaev carefully chooses the texts about culture, history and everyday realities of his native country. Besides, he also reads *in Malay* a special course on *Russian artistic culture*. The room where he lectures can accommodate 80 people, and it is always full.

The his course includes a short introduction to Russian culture, lectures on folklore and literature, music, fine art, cinema and theater, folk instruments and everyday life of the people of Russia. Some of these lectures have already been published in popular Malaysian magazines.⁴ The Institute of Language and Literature (*Dewan Babasa dan Pustaka – DBP*) at the Ministry of Education of Malaysia intends to publish a full collection of these lectures.

Time and again, local periodicals publish Pogadaev's translations of Russian poetry into Malay. His first attempts in this field go back to 1971 when the *Dewan Sastra* magazine published his free translations of *Midnight in Moscow* and several other verses by Mikhail Matusovsky. Later there were translations of poems by Robert Rozhdestvensky, Bella Akhmadulina (in connection with her appearance at an International Poetry Festival in Kuala Lumpur), and Elena Taneva (who also visited Malaysia for a similar event). He translated the poem *Gamelan* by Konstantin Balmont inspired by reminiscences of the author's travels in Java.⁵ Pogadaev also translated Pushkin's *The Tale of the Fisherman and the Fish* for the collection of *Selected Poetry and Prose by A.S. Pushkin*,⁶ compiled by another professor from Russia, Boris Parnikel,* and wrote a small monograph entitled *The Great Russian Poet Pushkin and the Orient*, which was published by the Center of Dialogue of Civilizations of University of Malaya.⁷

Among the masterpieces of Russian prose translated by Victor Pogadaev is Pushkin's *The Squire's Daughter* (included in the above-mentioned Pushkin's collection), and a story by Leo Tolstoy *Haji Murat* published as a pocket book.⁸

* Boris Parnikel (1935-2004), philologist, scholar of Malay culture of world renown. Late in his life he lived in Malaysia, lecturing on classical Malay literature at the country's biggest universities.



Commenting on the latter work that was printed in two editions, the well-known man of letters and UNESCO prize laureate Aziz Deraman said that the success of *Haji Murat* with the local public was largely due to the fact that *the work had been translated directly from the Russian and the translator succeeded in showing the power, great variety and harmony of the Russian original.*

Another project undertaken and completed by Victor was *The Golden Rose. An Anthology of Russian Literature*, which was received very favorably in Malaysia.⁹ The volume's title comes from the novel by Konstantin Paustovsky. The book introduces the readers to Russian folklore – epic stories, tales, proverbs, limericks, folk songs, and also works by 37 Russian authors. The anthology's range is very wide: from *Yaroslavna's Lament in The Lay of Igor's Host* to Joseph Brodsky, from Pushkin and Lermontov to Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky (excerpts from *War and Peace* and *The Idiot*), from Chekhov to Vampilov, from Bunin to Sholokhov, from Fadeyev to Solzhenitsyn. In a foreword to the *Golden Rose* (which has been published in three thousand copies – quite a big circulation by local measures) the veteran national writer Abdul Samad Said emphasized that *at last Malaysians would be able to get acquainted with the treasure-trove of Russian literature in translations made directly from the Russian, which retained original freshness and live intonation of the original.*

It is a tall order to enumerate all of Professor Pogadaev's pieces in Malaysian mass media (including TV appearances). Here are some titles taken at random: *Russia in Ten Years After "Perestroika"*, *Malay Pantun in Russia,* On the Development of Russian Literature, From Kuala Lumpur to Moscow, Literary Translation: Exact Text or Its Interpretation, Malays in the Eyes of Russians, Forty-six Years of the Russian Language in Outer Space.*¹⁰ He also wrote about the famous Russian lexicographer Vladimir Dal, and about the pioneer of teaching the Malay language in the U.S.S.R. Lyudmila Mervart. And then there is a whole number of "documentary notes" (*catatan dokumentasi*) on contemporary Russian linguists – the late Andrei Pavlenko and Vladimir Makarenko, as well as Natalia Aliyeva and Alexander Ogloblin, all of them lifelong students and teachers of Southeast Asian languages.¹¹

The Institute of Language and Literature is now planning to publish a collection of Pogadaev's articles entitled "Malaysia as First Love" (*Malaysia Cintaku Pertama*). The author shares impressions of his previous trips to the

* Pantun is a genre of Malay folk poetry popular from time immemorial and resembling our limericks.



Victor Pogadaev and Tan Sri Dato' Seri Siti Norma Yaacob, University of Malaya Pro-Chancellor

country and his present stay there; Malaysia's progress; the Russian-Malaysian cultural ties; Islam in Russia and the attitude of our writers to it; Russian studies of Southeast Asia's problems and Russia's policy in the region.

Naturally, Victor also wishes to tell his fellow-countrymen about the lands and peoples close to his heart. Here again, we have to talk about translations. In Soviet times translators working with texts by Asian and African authors had no trouble doing their work, whereas now, in the conditions of "market dictate," even the high quality of the original and translation is no guarantee for publication (to say nothing of a decent royalty). In spite of that, Pogadaev manages to present new samples of Malaysian and Indonesian poetry to Russian readers. His translations appear not only in the St. Petersburg Nusantara collections and such magazines as *Inostrannaya Literatura*¹² and *Aziya i Afrika Segodnya*,¹³ but also in book form. The number of these titles is steadily growing.¹⁴ A recent example is the anthology *Conquering the Peak* (2009), with poems by Kemala, Aziz Deraman, Baha Zain, Hashim Yaacob (Malaysia), Taufiq Ismail, Tariganu, Diah Hadaning and Edi Idawati (Indonesia).¹⁵ Mention should also be made of a philosophical novel entitled *Tales of Ogonshoto*. Originally written by Anwar Ridhwan, it is translated into Russian by Victor Pogadaev, the author's friend from student years.¹⁶

The Moscow journals *Vostochnaya Kolleksiya* and *Aziya i Afrika Segodnya* frequently publish Pogadaev's articles and sketches about tropical fruits, traditions of healing, cooking and textile dyeing in Southeast Asia, about the



popular game of *sepaktakraw*, played with a ball woven of rattan liana, etc. Since no subject is alien or dull to Victor, the *Pocket Encyclopedia of Malaysia* is something he just had to do.¹⁷

Not long ago Pogadaev joined forces with Marat Omarov, song writer from Kazakhstan who came to Kuala Lumpur in 2007. At that time Omarov who had composed a song in honor of the 50th anniversary of Malaysia's independence asked Victor to translate the lyrics into Malay. Since it worked out quite well, Pogadaev decided to translate the lyrics of another song by the same author – *Mecca-Medina*. That one became a real hit. Reaching the top of the charts in November 2007, *Mecca-Medina* was performed on the local TV and at a reception in the residence of the head of government.¹⁸

Finally, let's mention two awards which Victor Pogadaev received for his scholarly and educational projects at the "EXPO-2007" – an exhibit of innovations, inventions and research works organized by his university. His first project was the *Linguistic-Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Malay World* (that is, Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore). It is now prepared for publication by the Moscow "Vostok-Zapad" Publishers. Another project was the translation of the poem *I Seek Eternal Peace* (written by Abdullah Badawi, Prime Minister of Malaysia in 2003-2009) into 80 foreign languages. As the project leader, Victor Pogadaev translated the poem into Russian and organized translations into several languages of Russia (such as Mari and Chuvash), and also into the languages of all CIS countries. A number of his Moscow colleagues translated the piece into Hindi, Khmer, Mongolian, and other languages. In 2008 all translations were published under one cover. Report on this undertaking was included in the Book of Records of Malaysia.¹⁹

"Life is long when it is full," said an Oriental sage. And he was right. ■

NOTES:

1. N. Rott, V. Pogadaev, A. Pavlenko, *Malayziysko-Russko-Angliyskiy Slovar'* [Kamus Malaysia-Russia-Inggeris] [Malaysian-Russian-English Dictionary], Moscow, "Russkiy yazyk" Publishers, 1977, 400 pp.; V. Pogadaev, N. Rott, *Russko-Malayziyskiy slovar'* [Kamus Bahasa Russia-Bahasa Malaysia] [Russian-Malaysian Dictionary], Moscow, "Russkiy yazyk" Publishers, 1986, 504 pp.; L. Demidyuk, V. Pogadaev, *Russko-Indoneziyskiy slovar'* [Kamus Rusia-Indonesia] [Russian-Indonesian Dictionary], Moscow, "Vostok-Zapad" Publishers, 2004, 268 pp.
2. V. Pogadaev, *Indoneziysko-Russkiy i Russko-Indoneziyskiy slovar'* [Kamus Indonesia-Rusia dan Rusia-Indonesia] [Indonesian-Russian and Russian-Indonesian Dictionary], Moscow, "Drofa" Publishers, 2008, 1,136 pp.; V. Pogadaev, *Kamus Rusia-Indonesia, Indonesia-Rusia*, Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2010, 1324 pp.



3. V. Pogadaev worked as an editor on the following collections: *Chelovek iz legendy: K 150-letiyu so dnya rozhdeniya N. Miklukho-Maklaya* [Man from a Legend: To the 150-th Birth Anniversary of N. Miklukho-Maklay] [Malay-Indonesian Studies. Issue 8], Moscow, 1997, 68 pp.; *Natsional'noye stroitel'stvo i literaturniy/kul'turniy protsess v Yugo-Vostochnoy Azii* [National Building and Literary/Cultural Process in Southeast Asia] [Malay-Indonesian Studies. Issue 9], Moscow, 1997, 408 pp.; *Istoriya, filologiya, lingvistika, etnografiya (Malaysko-indoneziyskiye issledovaniya. Vipusk 12)* [History, Philology, Linguistics, Ethnography (Malay-Indonesian Studies. Issue 12)], Moscow, 1999, 192 pp.; *Indoneziyskiy i malayskiy mir vo vtorom tysyacheletii: Osnovnyye vekhi razvitiya. Doklady uchastnikov 11-go Evropeyskogo kollokviuma po indoneziyskim i malayskim issledobaniyam* [The Indonesian and Malay World in the Second Millennium: Landmarks of Development. Reports of Participants in the 11th European Colloquium on Indonesian and Malay Research] [Malay-Indonesian Research. Issue 13], Moscow, 2000, 324 pp.
4. For example: V. Pogadaev, *Perayaan Tradisional di Rusia* [Traditional Festivals in Russia], Dewan Budaya, Vol. 29, # 2, 2007, 58-60 h; *Muzik di Rusia: Dari Balalaika Sampai Rock* [Music in Russia: from Balalaika to Rock], Pentas, 2009, Jilid 4, bilangan 2, 49-55 h.
5. *Tiga puisi M. Matusovsky* [Three Poems by M. Matusovsky], Dewan Sastera, June 1971, h. 53; Bella Akhmadulina, September lagi; Mantera [B. Akhmadulina, September Again; Incantation], Imbauan PPDKL (1986-2002), KL: DBP, 2004, h. 97-98; Elena Taneva, *Burung Gamar*; Jamek; *Aku akan Belajar* [E. Taneva, The Seagull; Jamek; I Will Learn], Imbauan PPDKL (1986-2002), KL: DBP, 2004, h. 300-303; Robert Rozhdestvensky, *Ballada Tentang Warna* [R. Rozhdestvenskiy, Ballade About Colors], Voices of World Poetry. KL: ITNMB & PENA, 2004, h. 63-64; Konstantin Balmont, Gamelan, *Doa Penyair*, Penyelenggara Mohd. Dahri Zakaria, KL: Sastera Enterprise, 2005, 30-31.
6. *Seorang nelayan dan ikan emas* [Skazka o rybake i zolotoy rybke] [The Tale of the Fisherman and the Fish] Alexander Pushkin, Puisi dan prosa pilihan, KL: DBP, 1999, h. 53-90.
7. V. Pogadaev, *Penyair Agung Rusia Pushkin dan Dunia Timur*, Monograph Series, Center for Civilizational Dialogue, University of Malaya. # 6, 2003, 64 h.
8. Alexander Pushkin, *Puan muda menyamar seperti gadis tani* [A. Pushkin, *Baryshnya-krestyanka*] [The Squire's Daughter], Alexander Pushkin, *Puisi dan prosa pilihan*, KL: DBP, 1999, 1999, h. 47-54; Leo Tolstoy, *Haji Murat*, KL: DBP, 2001, 242 h. (edisi ke-2, 2006).
9. Mawar Emas, *Bunga Rampai Sastera Rusia [Zolotaya roza. Antologiya russkoy literatury]* [The Golden Rose, Anthology of Russian Literature], Penyelenggara dan Penterjemah Victor Pogadaev, KL: Institute Terjemahan Negara Malaysia, 2009.
10. V. Pogadaev, *Rusia 10 tahun selepas berakhirnya Perestroika*, Dewan Budaya, KL: DBP, Jilid 24, Bilangan 9, 2002, h. 6-27; Idem, *Pantun Melayu di Rusia*, Dewan Sastera, KL: DBP, Jilid 32, Bilangan 10, 2002, h. 88-89; Idem, *Perkembangan sastera*



Rusia, Dewan Sastra, KL: DBP, April 2003, h. 36-39; Idem, *Dari Kuala Lumpur ke Moscow*, Dewan Bahasa, KL: DBP, Mac 2004, h. 24-29; Idem, Terjemahan Sastra: Teks Padaman atau Interpretasi Teks, Dewan Sastra, KL: DBP, April 2004, h. 29-32; Idem, *Melayu dari Kaca Mata Orang Rusia*, Dewan Budaya, KL: DBP, Jilid 28, Bilangan 10, October 2006, h. 46-48; Idem, *46 Tahun Bahasa Rusia di Angkasa Lepas*, Dewan Bahasa, KL: DBP, Vol. 8, N 1, h. 54-57.

11. V. Pogadaev, Vladimir Dal: *Abli Leksikografi Rusia yang Cemerlang*, Dewan Bahasa, KL: DBP, Jilid 2, Bilangan 2, 2002, h. 60-62; Idem, Catatan dokumentasi: L.A. Mervart (1889-1965), *Jurnal Dewan Bahasa*, KL: DBP, Jilid 40, Bilangan 3, Mac 1996, h. 276-279; Idem. *Catatan dokumentasi: A.P. Pavlenko (1939-1970)*, Ibid., Jilid 40, Bilangan 1, Januari 1996, h. 88-90; *Catatan dokumentasi: N.F. Alieva*, Ibid., 1999, Jilid 43, Bilangan 10, h. 952-957; Idem, Ogloblin: *Abli Bahasa Ungung dari Venice Utara*, Dewan Bahasa, Jilid 2, Bilangan 4, 2002, h. 60-63.; Idem, *Pengkaji Linguistik yang Dikagumi*, Dewan Bahasa, Jilid 3, Bilangan 10, 2001, 60-63 (about V.A. Makarenko).

12. Anwar Ridhwan, *Posle voiny*, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nusantarskiy sbornik [After the War, Indonesia, Malaysia. Nustantara Collection. St. Petersburg, 1996, pp. 76-98; Rahman Haji Yusuf, *Rizbukba, Nusantara. Yugo-Vostochnaya Aziya* [The Red Haired, Nusantara. Southeast Asia. Collection of materials], St. Petersburg, 2000, pp. 95-100.

13. Aziz Deraman, *Chyotki starogo cheloveka* [The Rosary of an Old Man], "Inostrannaya literatura" Publishers, Moscow, 2004, # 2, pp. 140-146; *Tsvety dalyokikh beregov* [Flowers from the Faraway Shores] (poems by Kemala, Aziz Deraman and Baha Zain), *Aziya i Afrika Segodnya*, Moscow, 2008, # 11, pp. 75-76.

14. Kemala, *Stikbi. Iz sbornikov raznykh let* [Poems. From Collections of Different Years], Moscow. "Gumanitary" Publishers, 2001, 60 pp. (jointly with A. Pogadaeva); Aziz Deraman, *Stranstviya poeta. Stikbi* [Poet's Wanderings. Poems], Moscow. "Gumanitary" Publishers; Bakha Zain, *Maski* [Masks], Moscow. "Gumanitary" Publishers, 2003, 96 pp.; Hashim Yaacob, *Poyushchiy bambuk* [Singing Bamboo], Moscow. "Gumanitary" Publishers, 2005, 136 pp.; Rahimiddin Zahari, *Zamok iz peska* [Sand Castle] Selected poems, Moscow, "Klyuch-s" Publishers, 2007, 96 pp.; Siti Zainon Ismahil, *Lyubov' materi* [Mother's Love]. KL: ITNM, 2010.

15. *Pokoryat' vishinu. Stikbi poetov Malayzii i Indonezii v perevodakh V. Pogadaeva*, [Conquering the Peak. Verses by Poets of Malaysia and Indonesia translated by V. Pogadaev], Moscow, "Klyuch-S" Publishers, 2009.

16. Anwar Ridhwan, *Byli i nebyli ostrovov Ogonsoto [Tales of Ogonshoto]*, St. Petersburg, "Pandeya" Publishers, 2006, 160 pp.

17. *Malaiziya. Karmannaya entsiklopedia* [Malaysia. Pocket Encyclopedia], Moscow' "Muravei-gaid" Publishers, 2000, 352 pp.

18. kzmz.arystan.ru/2319.

19. Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Ku Cari Damai Abadi. I Seek Eternal Peace, In 80 languages, Advisor Dato' Dr. Haji Ahmad Kamal Abdullah. Editor Assoc. Professor Dr. Victor Pogadaev, KL: FBLUM, 2008, 88 h.