“I Wanna Hold Your Hand... But Not Too Tightly!”: Soviet Translations of Western Music Lyrics and Mid-Century [Soft] Power

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Abstract
Attempts to satiate Soviet youth’s appetite for Western rock music in the 1950s and ‘60s on the one hand and the need to stem persistent attempts to obtain these products of the “decadent West” on the other prompted the creation of state-sanctioned Russian-language covers. These translations often reflected the “rewriting and manipulation” process (Lefevere 2017) that rendered suggestive innuendo and socio-political content of the original English-language texts impotent – or, at the very least, linguistically banal. The results were reimagined versions of the English-language original songs that accommodated the Soviet sociopolitical and cultural vernaculars of the Cold War.

"I Wanna Hold Your Hand ... But Not Too Tightly!": Soviet Translations of Western Music Lyrics and Mid-Century [Soft] Power

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Introduction: Western Music Crosses the Iron Curtain

The meeting of Allied troops on the Elbe River on 25 April 1945, iconically depicted below (Fig. 1), signaled not only the beginning of the end of WWII, but also, as American and Soviet soldiers shook hands, marked a symbolic cultural exchange of the ephemeral allies. After the war, U.S. troops brought back Russian hats, military badges, and belt buckles to homes and families; Soviet troops returned to their homeland with bars of Hershey's chocolate, nylon stockings, and recordings of American big band and jazz music in their backpacks. The heady end-of-war infusion of tokens of positive impressions of the two disparate cultures. Years later, after the fall of the Berlin Wall and in anticipation of the collapse of the Soviet Union, political scientist Joseph Nye would call this kind of positive coercion "soft power."[1] But the ensuing Cold War and the Soviet government's prohibition of Western ideas and cultural products in the wake of the Marshall Plan and the last years of Stalin's reign put an abrupt end to the symbolic cultural exchanges. However, despite attempts by the USSR to prevent cultural products from the West from entering the Soviet Union, English-language music found its way through the Iron Curtain and into the Soviet Union via illegal tape recordings (магнитиздат) and so-called «музыка на костях», or "music on bones."

"Music on bones," or "Ribs" / «Рёбра» (Fig. 2), were a testament both to Soviet technical ingenuity and the determination of some Russians to get access to recordings of Western music. Russian rock critic and music culture historian Artemy Troitsky described the process of taking old x-ray films, cutting them into discs, and then «с помощью специальных машин – говорят, законспирированные умельцы переделывали их из старых патефонах – нарезали дорожки, копируя

[1] Joseph S. Nye coined the term "soft power," or co-optive power to describe "when one country gets other countries to *want* what it wants" in contrast to "hard or command power of *ordering* others to do what it wants." See Joesph S. Nye, "Soft Power," *Foreign Policy* Autumn, no. 80 (1990): 166, https://www.jstor.org/stable/1148580.



Fig. 1. Russian and U.S. Soldiers Meet at the Elbe River 1945[3]

пластинку-оригинал или магнитофонную запись».[2] […grooves were cut with the help of special machines (made, they say, from old phonographs by skilled conspiratorial hands), to copy the original record or tape recording]. Western music, from big band orchestras to nascent rock, was thus propagated throughout the Soviet Union during the early years of the Cold War. Though the quality of these recordings was often quite poor, young Russians eagerly bought them on the black market to gain access to Western music.

By the early 1960s, the Soviet government, in partnership with the monolithic State-owned record company, Melodiya, began to allow the recording and sale of Russian-language covers of Western popular music performed by Russian artists to offer Soviet citizens linguistically and culturally intelligible alternatives to the so-called decadent cultural products of the West. These lyrical and cultural translations, while based on the original English-language versions, created reimagined products of Soviet realities that, while far from being accurate and artistic representations of the original works, were acceptable to the authorities and might still quell the Russian youth's desire to listen to Western music.

Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev's postwar «оттепель», or "Thaw" (1953-

[2] Артемий Троицкий, Back in the USSR (Санкт-Петербург: Амфора, 2009), 23.

[3]Creative Commons use: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:East_Meets_West_April_25_1945_when_Russian_and_American_soldiers_finally_joined_linkup_dividing_WWII_German_into_two_regions.jpg#

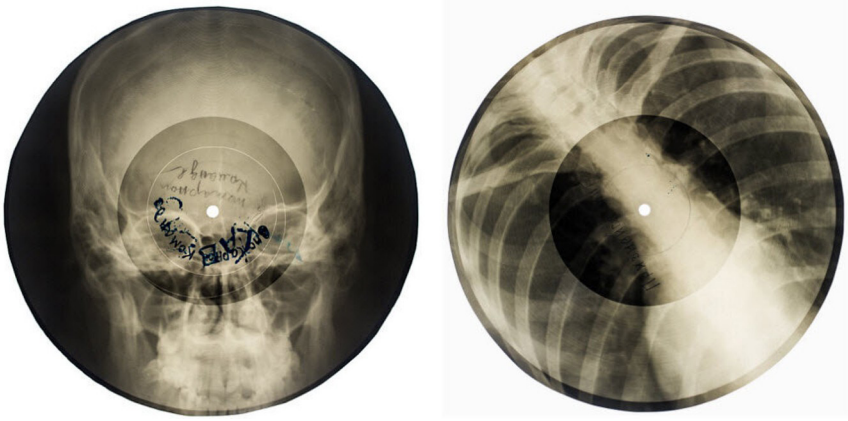


Fig. 2. “Music on Bones”: Unofficial Recordings of Western Music on X-Ray Films[4]

64), which relaxed restrictions on music production, also ushered in new televised programming. Among the new production were several shows that mimicked American youth-oriented TV productions that featured live musical performances and dancing, such as “The Buddy Deane Show” (1957-64), “Hootenanny” (1963-64), and “American Bandstand” (1952-2002). In the Soviet Union, shows such as «Голубой огонёк» (1962-present) «Музыкальный киоск» (1962-93), and «Кинопанорама» (1962-1995) created sets, formats, and programming that closely resembled that of their American counterparts. Musical performances on these programs included Russian-language covers of popular Western songs performed by newly emerging Russian bands and musical ensembles. These Soviet-era attempts to appropriate Western pop and rock music idioms through these translations, or, covers, effectively disrupted the musical genre’s “inappropriate” content and language and propagated instead narratives that aligned with contemporary Soviet/Russian ideology and power.

Cultural Hegemony and Capital

Two theoretical frames are relevant in discussing translation as tool of political soft power in the post-war mid-twentieth century: Antonio Gramsci’s concept of *cultural hegemony* and the creation of cultural products as an instrument of domination[5], and Pierre Bourdieu’s notion of *capital*, specifically symbolic capital, as a source of power – real or perceived[6]. Gramsci considers culture as an instrument of domination that creates consent among those dominated. In the case of translation, the use of cultural symbols, motifs, references, and/or background knowledge transfers the power of those cultural objects into the new version of

[4] Public domain image.

[5] Gramsci, Antonio, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, trans Quintin Hoare, & Geoffrey Nowell Smith. (New York: International Publishers, 1971).

[6] Bourdieu, Pierre, *Distinction. A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984).

the original text. The result is a new product that becomes a part of a state's cultural hegemony and a tool of domination over those who consume the product.

Bourdieu suggests that the term "capital," including economic, social, and cultural capital, but especially *symbolic capital*, underscores the fact that any form of capital needs to be recognized and perceived as valuable by other members of a society to function effectively as a source of power. This definition designates the translations of Western music into Russian covers in a lingua-culturally intelligible and politically acceptable idiom as symbolic capital, valued by Soviet listeners as source of access to Western culture and by the state, which can claim that it not only permits, but facilitates access to these products. In the Soviet context, both frameworks support an understanding of translation as a modified form of Nye's 1990 soft power model, one that, as Roig et al. suggest, has now long "departed from its initial monosemy to acquire additional layers of nuance and complexity.[7]" In this expanded model of soft power, translations provide examples of ideological interventions that played a crucial part in intercultural conversations between the U.S. and USSR during the Cold War.

Translation as Soft Power

Translations, or *rewritings*, as Lefevere[8] characterizes them, are reimaginings that reflect the translators' attempt to adapt and reshape the text to function in each culture at a particular point in time in a particular way. Translations may be considered successful to varying degrees because they attempt to express different values, practices, and lexicon interculturally. "The translator's *power* lies not only in their attempt to express the content – linguistic and indexical -- of the source text, but also to convey the [allowed] expression of public morals, national priorities, and cultural politics of the target audience[9]." If, as Lefevere contends, literary translation is not a reductive reproduction of the language of the original text, but rather a rewriting, a reimagining of the original in the vernacular of the new language and culture, then an interrogation of the translation should reveal not only the linguistic and cultural markers and realities of the place of the translation, but also markers of soft power. For example, as Inaba contends, products of translation may reflect different values and practices aimed at both satiating the reader's or listener's desire to understand the original and promoting a morally indexed version of the original that supports the state's agenda(s). The examples below offer translations of American songs into Russian made during the Cold War and reflect how local cultural, political, and social values affect the translated versions in both form and content.

[7] Roig-Sanz, Diana, Lucia Campanella, & Elisabet Carbó-Catalan, "Translation as a Soft Power Resource: Exploring the Possibilities, Scope, and Challenges of an Interdisciplinary Approach." *Perspectives* 33, no. 1 (2025): 2.

[8] André Lefevere, *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame.* (New York: Routledge, 1992a).

[9] Tomoko Inaba, "Is Translation a Rewriting of an Original Text?" *Translation Theory* 13, no. 2 (2009): https://translationjournal.net/journal/48rewrite.htm.

Soviet-Era Covers of American Music

The first official Russian-language cover of a Western popular song appeared in 1963 with the recording of «Только ты», a reimagining of The Platters' 1955 highly successful doo-wop song "Only You." The decision to cover an American song that was originally performed by an all-Black, predominantly male recording group in a rhythm and blues style that emerged from the urban setting of post-war African American communities on the East Coast was a bold one. Performed by Polish Russian chanteuse, Edita Piekha, the recording appropriated the cultural import of the doo-wop sound of the original performance and, other than the misspelled last name of lyricist Samuel "Buck" Ram (spelling it "Ramand") on the record label (Fig. 3), the Melodiya release made no other mention of the song's U.S. provenance. The song's lyrics and performance in the U.S. and most of the rest of the world were inextricably tied to the African American experience and their fundamental participation in the early days of rock-and-roll music but was simply erased from the Soviet translation of the song.



The Russian lyrics, while attempting to maintain the versification of the English original – do not quite convey the emotion of the R&B original. Absent from the Russian version are evocative phrases, such as "thrill me," "hold my hand," and "magic that you do," which are instead replaced with much more subtle lexical items, such as «нежный» / "gentle" and «родной» / "dear." The Russian version also includes the ideologically charged phrase «навстречу солнцу рядом мы пойдём вместе» / "we will walk together toward the sun," invoking the image and substance of the «светлое будущее» / "bright future" of Soviet propaganda from the Russian Revolution through the end of the Cold War. The parallel texts below and in the remainder of this piece represent the lyrics of the U.S. original

[10] Image from YouTube site My VINYL: https://www.youtube.com/@myvinylcollection3256

recording of the song in the first column, with the Russian translation/cover in the middle, and a literal translation of the Russian version in the third column.

"Only You"	**«Только ты»**	**"Only You"**
The Platters	**Эдита Пьеха**	**Edita Piekha**
Only you	Только ты!	Only you!
Can make this world seem right	В мой дом весну принёс!	You brought Spring into my home
Only you	Только ты!	Only you!
Can make the darkness bright	Открыл мне счастье грёз!	You showed me the joy of dreams!
Only you and you alone	Лишь тобой, любимый мой,	Only with you, my dear,
Can thrill me like you do	Полны мои мечты	Are my dreams filled
And fill my heart	И в каждом нежном взгляде	And in every gentle glance
with love for only you	Только ты!	Only you!
Only you can make,	Только ты	Only you
oh, this change in me	Теперь в душе моей	Are now in my soul
For it's true, you are my destiny	Только ты и нет тебя родней	Only you – and no one is dearer
When you hold my hand,	И с тобой навстречу солнцу	And together with you, side by side,
I understand the magic that you do	Рядом мы пойдём вдвоём	We will walk toward the sun
You're my dream come true,	Только вместе	Only together
my one and only you	Наше счастье мы найдём	Will we find our happiness
Buck Ram & Ande Rand	И. Самойлова	T. Garza

The Emergence of the Soviet Musical Group

As the 1960s progressed and the Soviet appetite for Western music increased, a new development appeared in the Soviet musical entertainment scene: the «вокально-инструментальный ансамбль» / "vocal-instrumental ensemble," or «ВИА» / "VIA." These musical collectives were the most concerted attempt by the Soviet authorities to create an imaginary of Western musical culture – Russian versions of The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, and The Who – complete with electric guitars, organs, and drums, but in state-approved translations in line with the ideological and cultural conventions of the time. Troitsky's description of the VIA phenomenon is palpably grim:

> В ВИА обычно насчитывалось порядка десяти человек (ритм-секция, пара гитар, орган, пара медных и несколько солистов, иногда с тамбуринами), и репертуар состоял из бодрых инструментальных пьес, вялых русскоязычных версий английских хитов и массы

> обычных рутинных поп-песенок в умеренно электронной «обработке». Ужасно скучно, но это был этап в культурной революции […][11].
>
> A VIA band usually had around ten musicians in its lineup (rhythm section, two guitars, organ, a couple of horns and several singers, sometimes with tambourines) and a repertoire that included cheerful instrumental songs, flaccid Russian-language covers of English and American hits and a bunch of the usual Russian pop tunes with a soft electric sound. Terribly boring, but it was a stage in our cultural revolution […].

Andrei Makarevich, founder, guitarist, and lead singer of one of the first *bona fide* Soviet rock bands, Машина времени / Time Machine, called VIAs the "most monstrous Soviet-era phenomenon on stage," and goes on to characterization of this Russian response to Western rock groups, capturing their qualities both in appearance as well as in ideology:

> Музыканты, лабавшие на репетициях Джимми Хендрикса и Лед Зеппелин, надевали по команде одинаковые пиджаки с вышитой на лацкане лирой, вставали на сцене по стойке «смирно» и слегка кастрированными голосами (такой специальный вокально-инструментальный голос – полумужской - полуженский) выводили песенки про то, как веселей, ребята, выпало нам строить путь железный. […], про то, как не надо печалиться – вся жизнь впереди, и иногда про несчастную любовь.[12]
>
> Musicians, who would jam to Jimmy Hendrix and Led Zeppelin during rehearsals, would, on command, put on identical jackets embroidered with a lyre on the lapel; they would stand at rigid attention on stage and, in slightly emasculated voices—that peculiar, specialized vocal-instrumental timbre, neither quite male nor quite female—trill out little songs about how cheerful it was for them, the guys, to be building a railroad [...], about how there was no need to be sad, because all of life lay ahead, and, occasionally, about unrequited love.

The onset of the British Invasion in the U.S. with The Beatles' appearance on "The Ed Sullivan Show" in February 1964 and initiated the dominance of the Fab Four's music on the global stage, extending to the USSR. Though numerous Russian bands and VIAs performed their own interpretation of The Beatles' music in the late 1960s[13], the first official translated rendition of a Beatles' song in the Soviet Union appeared at the end of the decade, but not in the performance of a band or ensemble. In 1969, Russian Jewish stage singer Emil Gorovets (See Fig. 4) became the first Soviet performer to record official translations of songs by The Beatles in the USSR. One of the most successful of these recordings was Gorovets' rendition of Mark Podberëzsky's translation of "A Hard Day's Night," one of The

[11] Троицкий, Артемий. *Back in the USSR*. Санкт-Петербург: Амфора, 2009.

[12] Андрей Макаревич, *Было, есть, будет…* Эксмо, 2015), 306.

[13] Leslie Woodhead, *How the Beatles Rocked the Kremlin: The Untold Story of a Noisy Revolution* (Bloomsbury, 2013).



Fig. 4. Emil Gorovets (1923-2001)[14]

Beatles' first popular songs from their second studio album, *Meet The Beatles* (1964). With lyrics filled with Liverpudlian working class masculine bravado about returning home after a long day at work to a loving partner, the song became the eponymous title track of the group's first feature-length film. To quell the Russian demand for British and American rock-and-roll music, especially of The Beatles, Soviet television allowed the performance of "A Hard Day's Night" in its more ideologically acceptable translation for Russian listeners and viewers in 1969.

"A Hard Day's Night"	**«Тяжёлый день»**	**"A Tough Day"**
The Beatles	**Эмиль Горовец**	**Emil Gorov**
It′s been a hard day's night	Сегодня трудный день	Today's a hard day
And I′ve been working like a dog	Пришлось работать допоздна	I had to work late
It's been a hard day's night	Какой тяжёлый день!	What a tough day!
I should be sleeping like a log	Сказать по правде я устал.	To tell the truth, I'm tire
But when I get home to you	Но я вернулся домой	But I've returned home
I find the things that you do	Я снова вместе с тобой	I'm together with you ag
Will make me feel all right	И жизнь становится другой!	And life becomes differe
You know I work all day	Конечно тяжело	Of course it's difficult
To get you money to buy you things	Когда нет денег на свете жить	When there's not money live on
And it′s worth it just to hear you say	Но только всё равно	But it makes no differen anyway
You′re gonna give me everything	За деньги счастья нельзя купить.	You can't buy happiness with money
So why on earth should I moan?	А мне всё время везёт	But I'm always lucky
'Cause when I get you alone	Пока меня круглый год	For now, all year long,
You know I′ll feel okay	После работы счастье идёт	Happiness comes my wa after work

[14] Public domain image: https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Горовец,_Эмиль_Яковлевич#/media/Файл:Emil_Gorovets.jpg

When I'm home	Я с тобой	I'm with you
Everything seems to be right	Но прекрасен белый свет	But the wide world is beautiful
When I'm home	Я с тобой	I'm with you
Feeling you holding me tight	И ни забот ни тревог	And neither cares nor worries
Tight, yeah	Даже в помине нет	Are anywhere to be found
McCartney & Lennon.	М. Подберёзский	T. J. Garza

The Soviet translation/reimaging of The Beatles' song eschews the suggested physicality and playful sexual innuendo of the Lennon and McCartney original in favor of a portrait of the "beautiful wide world" / «прекрасен белый свет» and the stability of married life. Suggestive phrases, such as "the things that you do," "give me everything," "make me feel all right," that tap into the imagination of the English-speaking listener, are eliminated. Instead, the Russian lyrics focus on the moral values of being a hard-working Russian and the reward of coming home to a refuge of happiness «без забот и тревог» / "without care or worries." This rewriting of the original text and meaning conform with the strict code of moral conduct of the Komsomol, the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League in the 1950s and '60s, which "consistently disparaged all that was erotic in human beings.[15]" It is difficult to imagine the early songs of the Beatles without *double entendre* and suggestive lyrics; who really think that "Baby You Can Drive My Car" is actually about an automobile, that "I Wanna Hold Your Hand" is the sole intention of the singer of these words, or that "Norwegian Wood" refers to Scandinavian Lumber? But for Soviet youth eager to consume the musical products of the West, these lyrical and cultural translations were at least some consolation.

The second example, Neil Sedaka's 1959 B-side hit, "One Way Ticket," offered listeners a danceable tune of love lost and of the feeling of seemingly unrecoverable heartbreak, complete with a musical arrangement that suggests a train whistle and the acceleration of the cars on the track. The song's lyrics are replete with lexicon and phrases that are taken directly from the blues and well known in early rock music performances in the U.S. Covered in 1969 by the popular Soviet VIA, Поющие гитары / The Singing Guitars (See Fig. 5), the song, in contrast to the English original, takes on the melancholy mood, tempo, and timber -- in both text and performance -- of Romantic lyric poetry:

"One Way Ticket"	**«Синяя песня (Синий иней»**	**"A Blue Song (Blue Frost)"**

[15] Igor Kon, "Sexuality and Culture" in *Sex and Russian Society*, eds. Igor Kon and James Riodan (Indian University Press), 24.

Neil Sedaka	**Поющие гитары**	**The Singing Guitars**
Choo, choo train chuggin' down the track	Синий-синий иней лёг на провода	Blue, blue frost lay on the wires
Gotta travel on, never comin' back	В небе тёмно-синем синяя звезда,	In the dark blue sky is a blue star
Oh, oh got a one-way ticket to the blues	Только в небе, в небе тёмно-синем	Only in the sky, the dark blue sky
Bye, bye love my baby's leavin' me	Синий поезд мчится ночью голубой	A blue train rushes in the blue night
Now lonely teardrops are all that I can see	Не за синей птицей, еду за тобой,	I'm going for you, not the blue bird
Oh, oh got a one-way ticket to the blues	За тобою, как за синей птицей	For you, like for the blue bird.
I'm gonna take a trip to lonesome town	Ищу я лишь её, мечту мою,	I seek only her, my dream,
Gonna stay at heartbreak hotel	Лишь она одна мне нужна	She's the only one I need
A fool such as I that never was	Ты, ветер, знаешь всё, ты скажешь	Wind, you know all, you'll say
I cry a tear so well	Где она, она, где она.	Where she is, where she is.
Choo, choo train chuggin' down the track	И снега несутся синие назад.	And the blue snows rush backwards
Gotta travel on, never comin' back	Только б окунуться в синие глаза,	If only I could dive into your blue eyes
Oh, oh got a one-way ticket to the blues	Лишь в твои глаза мне окунуться	Just dive into your eyes
Oh, oh got a one way ticket to the blues	Лишь в твои глаза мне окунуться	Just dive into your eyes
I'm gonna take a trip to lonesome town	Ищу я лишь её, мечту мою,	I seek only her, my dream,
Gonna stay at heartbreak hotel	Лишь она одна мне нужна	She's the only one I need
A fool such as I that never was	Ты, ветер, знаешь всё, ты скажешь	Wind, you know all, you'll say
I cry a tear so well	Где она, она, где она.	Where she is, where she is.
Keller and Hunter	Альберт Азизов	T. J. Garza

Fig. 5. VIA The Singing Guitars / ВИА Поющие гитары[16]

Keller and Hunter's original English-language lyrics use the metaphor of a one-way train ticket to express the emotional spectrum evoked in the early

[16] Public domain image: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3jirl4yLJU



twentieth century's Tin Pan Alley song pluggers' hackneyed, but emotive, lyric images. Phrases such as "the blues," "heartbreak hotel," and "lonesome town" capture this nostalgic mood in the American mid-century. In the Russian version, Albert Azizov's rewriting and reimagining of the lyrics adheres to well-known tropes and images of nature from Russian Romantic poetry, beginning with the title of the song itself: «синий иней» / "blue frost," followed by «синяя птица» / "blue bird," «облака» / "cloud," «небо» / "sky," and «ветер» / "wind." «Тоска», the untranslatable Russian term describing a yearning that incorporates melancholy and nostalgia, replaces "heartbreak" as the dominant theme of the lyrics, and the translation leaves out original thematic and lexical references to the blues.

Translating Social [In]Justice

A final example of Soviet lyric and cultural translation engages the more complex and controversial material of an American social protest song, "Cherokee Nation." John Loudermilk's original 1954 text, entitled "Indian Reservation (The Lament of the Cherokee Reservation Indian)," was first recorded in 1959 by Marvin Rainwater, a quarter Cherokee singer who performed the song publicly in traditional Native American clothing. Rainwater's rendition, called "The Pale Faced Indian," was not successful in sales or recognition. A 1967 British version by Don Fardon had considerable success both in the U.K. and in the U.S. But it was the 1971 version by the American rock band, Paul Revere and the Raiders, that brought the song fully into the U.S. social consciousness and inspired a translation by Soviet Jewish writer, Jakov Goldstein. In performance at concerts in the Soviet Union, the song was introduced in Russian as «песня протеста» /

a "protest song," though its Russian lyrics in translation offer little in the way of replicating the social justice commentary on the treatment of Native Americans in the U.S. in the original version:

"Indian Reservation"	**«Индейская резервация»**	**"Indian Reservation"**
Paul Revere and the Raiders	**Поющие гитары**	**The Singing Guitars**
They took the whole Cherokee nation	Зачем нам опять прерии снятся?	Why do we dream of prairies again?
Put us on this reservation	Разве нам мало резерваций?	Don't we have enough reservations?
Took away our ways of life	Где на всех одна беда	Where one misfortune befalls us all
The tomahawk and the bow and knife	И бьёт хлыстом по спине нужда...	And need whips our back…
Took away our native tongue	А живём, где жить нельзя...	And yet we live where one cannot…
And taught their English to our young	Спасибо вам за всё, друзья!	Thank you for everything, friends!
And all the beads we made by hand	Вы не смогли у нас отнять	You couldn't take it away from us
Are nowadays made in Japan	Святое право - умирать...	The sacred right: to die…
Cherokee people	Чероки, брат мой,	Cherokee, my brother,
Cherokee tribe	Чероки - знак!	Cherokee, a sign!
So proud to live	Есть где-то рай	There's heaven somewhere,
So proud to die	О нём мечтай!	Dream about it!
They took the whole Indian nation	Зачем нам права, гордые люди?	Why do we, proud people, have laws?
Locked us on this reservation	Их на том свете вдоволь будет	There'll be plenty of them in the next life
And though I wear a shirt and tie	Голод смерть живым сулит,	Hunger spells death for the living,
I'm still part Redman deep inside	А мёртвый вечно будет сыт	But the dead will forever be sated.
And some day when they've learned	Из резервации, брат мой, знай	My brother, from the reservation
Cherokee Nation will return	Одна дорога -прямо в рай	There is one road: straight to heaven
Will return will return…	прямо в рай…	Straight to heaven…
John Loudermilk	Яков Гольдштейн (Голяков)	T. J. Garza

Loudermilk's original lyrics are written from the Cherokee Indians' positionality, using the pronouns "them" and "us" to create a narrative of occupation, colonization, and oppression. The Russian version emphasizes the US government's physical assault on individual Native American citizens, focusing instead on the ethos and injustice of the attempts to erase the cultural markers of the Cherokee Nation. As such, this translation creates an imaginary

of the U.S. that is consistent with the narrative of oppression and racism that was pervasive in the Soviet Union. The translation and performance of the song, again by The Singing Guitars, was one of numerous distractions from the multitude of human rights violations in the USSR, whether of women, Jews, or intellectuals, by focusing instead on the difficult positionalities of Blacks, other people of color, and other minoritized groups of people in the West, particularly in the United States.

Rewriting the Times

The above meditations on lyric and cultural translation of Western music into Russian in the mid-twentieth century returns us to Lefevere: "Whether they produce translations, literary histories or their more compact spinoffs, reference works, anthologies, criticism, or editions, rewriters adapt, manipulate the originals they work with to some extent, usually to make them fit in with the dominant, or one of the dominant ideological and poetological currents of their time.[17] If Lefevere is correct and translation is, indeed, rewriting to fit the time, place, and ideology, in addition to the lexical and discourse elements of the source text, then Soviet re-imaginings of Western popular music at the height of the Cold War were, even in their deliberate cultural lacunae and textual manipulations, are legitimate and appropriate objects of their translators. The art and craft of literary translation do not, and should not, require "faithful" iterations of the original texts into another idiom; rather, they are in their idiosyncrasies, appropriations, and purposefully crafted representations of their time, place, and circumstances. As such, they require close reading, interpretation, and a degree of perspicacity to examine these works in their specific settings and environments.

The art and craft of translation permit both the practitioner and the consumer of translated works to bring their respective positionalities to the texts, as well as to engage their respective linguistic, cultural, social, and political circumstances as they read, listen to, or perform these texts. In that way, even the seemingly inappropriate, incongruous appearance and performance of a Soviet-era band singing an oddly construed and differently worded translation of a well-known rock song can be the source of intercultural communication, the most effective form of soft power.

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[17] André Lefevere, *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (New York: Routledge, 1992a), 6.

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Links to Music in the Text

The Platters "Only You"
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rAUJSc6unAg&t=8s
Edita Piekha / Эдит Пьеха "Only You" / «Только ты»
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rgRoapi0KDA

The Beatles “A Hard Day’s Night”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yjyj8qnqkYI
Emil Gorovets / Эмиль Горовец “A Tough Day” / «Тяжёлый день»
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZRk691uKJ08

Neil Sedaka “One-Way Ticket”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HwBo0jnAKSw
The Singing Guitars / Поющие гитары “A Blue Song” / «Синяя песня»
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DIZAYk1tGBY

Paul Revere and the Raiders
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kVwEwdIIZD0
The Singing Guitars / Поющие гитары “Indian Reservation” / «Индейская резервация»
https://yandex.kz/video/preview/5560760915906279562