Cyrillic Alphabets

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Abstract

A collection of Cyrillic-based language alphabets is presented. The contribution contains the data about more than 50 languages using Cyrillic script. A "Unicode-like" coded font is used for the rendering of the Cyrillic texts. The aim is to take part in creating a universal Cyrillic font for TEX and the Ω project and to further help languages using Cyrillic join the TEX community.

Introduction

Cyrillic-based alphabets are (or have been) used by nations in the Russian Federation, and a number of nations in Europe and Asia, including many nations of the former USSR now beyond the Russian border. The article aims to present a list of currently existing written languages using the Cyrillic script and having a codified literary form.

Most of the character encoding systems for Cyrillic used in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and also the UCS/Unicode [5] standard are based on the Russian alphabet. They contain a continuous ordered code sequence only for Russian letters. Other characters are non-standard, they are missing or they are coded "accidentally". I will call these characters "additional" (relative to the usual computer encoding standards!). Many Cyrillic alphabets were borrowed from the Russian alphabet. We can consider their "non-Russian" letters being "additional" or "new", often they were created (appended) as "new" characters. Of course, the previous assertion is not true for languages which have traditionally used Cyrillic script - Belarusian, Ukrainian, Serbian, Macedonian and Bulgarian.

One of my most important sources has been P.C. Гиляревский and B.C. Гривнин (1960). Unfortunately this unique book may be obsolete today. I would be very grateful for corrections and remarks and also references to another sources; especially if the reader is an expert in any language. Please contact me by email. More information about languages can be found on my WWW Home Page (e.g., complete alphabetical orders). And please overlook my lack of knowledge of English.

Language Names and Codes

The ISO standard 639-2 (1993) and the Ethnologue base eth (1990) contain the English names of languages and also their three-letter codes. Another source of language names I have used is Webster's Dictionary (1989). Unfortunately the English and international terminology is not stabilized. When I began translation from Russian I could not find unambiguous names for languages in English. On the other hand, the Russian names are fixed in most cases.

One example, "адыгейский (язык)", is evident in Russian—but I have not selected the best examples from the following variants: Adyghe, Adyge, Adygey, Adygei, Adighe, Circassian, Lower Circassian, West Circassian, Kinkh, Kjkax, Cherkes. Therefore, I have decided to present one (rarely two) language name(s) in Russian and one (maximally two) name(s) in English (often selected "arbitrarily"). The ISO and eth language codes are also shown in the table of languages which use Cyrillic. If the first code (ISO) is not defined or the codes are different then the second code (eth) is presented.

Real Font

The B5 font family (borrowing from the Computer Modern) is a bank of Cyrillic glyphs corresponding to the Ω project (Haralambous and Plaice, 1995). The proposed encoding of a real 8-bit font is based on Unicode (ISO-IEC 10646-1, 1993) — more exactly, "04xx mod "100. Thus the character codes are well defined and standardized. This can simplify communication between authors supporting and improving the fonts.

The table of the b5r12 font (Computer Modern Cyrillic Roman 12 point) is on the last page of the

article. I repeat: the real font is only a bank of glyphs and cannot be used autonomously in a simple and effective way.

Virtual Font

A virtual font was created for the present article to enable access to Cyrillic letters using ASCII characters. For creating .tfm files for virtual fonts, the program VFComb (Berdnikov and Turtia, 1995) was used. It allows the definition (or redefinition), mapping, ligature and kerning data once for all font sizes, and then merging them with metric information of the real fonts (reading proper list files). It is necessary to mention that every font in TFX (real or virtual) can contain no more than 256 characters and it is complicated, or impossible, using fonts with many characters. This is a good reason for introducing Ω -the 16-bit extension of TeX. The virtual font used in this article combines a real font with Unicode-like encoding (mod "100), a font with alternative glyphs (located separately) and several characters from the original CM (e.g., parentheses). The way of referencing the "I's" is shown in the following example.

A segment from the .tbf file (input file for VF-Comb)

```
(LIGTABLE
   (LABEL C I)
   (LIG C 1 0 006)
   (LIG C 2 0 007)
   (LIG C 3 O 300)
   (LIG C 4 0 342)
   (LIG C 5 0 344)
   (STOP)
   (LABEL C i)
   (LIG C 1 0 022)
   (LIG C 2 0 211)
   (LIG C 4 0 343)
   (LIG C 5 0 345)
   (STOP)
   )
    results
'Ii' => Ии % "Standard" 'I'
'Ilil' => Ii % Ukrainian/Belarusian 'I'
'I2i2' => Ïi % Ukrainian 'YI'
'I3' => I % Caucasian aspiration sign "палочка"
'I4i4' => \bar{\Pi}\bar{n} % Tadzhik 'I' with stress
'І5і5' => Йй
```

Cyrillic Character Set and Unicode

The ISO/IEC 10646-1/Unicode (1993 E) covers most of the *letters* used in current *living* written

languages uses a Cyrillic-alphabet (in my opinion). I would like to add the following comments:

- I have no data about other characters; for example, punctuation marks, special signs and other symbols.
- I don't present information about additional characters not in current use.
- Old Cyrillic is omitted and is not a subject of inquiry in this paper.
- Regarding the variant forms: more alternative glyphs may be stored in a font bank and then selected to depict a particular character. This problem is solvable in T_FX.
- Regarding letters with diacritics: there are important differences in the three distinct applications of diacritical marks (with possible disagreement in different languages).
 - 1. The accented symbol denotes the distinct letter as opposed to the same symbol without an accent and it may even be positioned independently in the alphabet.
 - 2. An accent can be used to modify the symbols representing vowels and consonants: for example; vowels can be marked for length or nasalization, consonants can be marked for palatalization. The presence of the accent when writing is significant but unlike the above item, the combination does not constitute a new or special letter, and therefore would be alphabetized in the same position as the letter without such a diacritic.
 - 3. An accent is used to mark stress. These "stressed" letters are not part of the writing system but are, nevertheless, necessary for entries in dictionaries and textbooks. A few examples illustrate the use of stress marks (above, right or below):

акце́нт, АКЦЕ/НТ

ac/cent mark/, r Akzent

Alphabetical Orders and Sort

The greater number of languages using Cyrillic in Russia and the former USSR have adopted words from Russian or, with modifications, in the original form (especially proper names) and their alphabets include *all* Russian letters. Not often exceptions are Ukrainian, Belarusian, Moldavian^{cyr}or Abkhazian.

Alphabetical orders of distinct languages may be different. "Additional" letters have been appended to the end or may occur in the middle of alphabets. Two letters may be located in the opposite order. And then the order of similar or even identical words in dictionaries or indexes may be different.

Ехатрles $(1960, 1990)^{1/2}$ Russian Ukrainian Бь < Юю < Яя Юю < Яя < Бь вальс < валяться валятися < вальс польский < полюс польський сальный < салют < сальний

Correspondence Cyrillic vs. Latin

Many languages now written in Cyrillic used Latinlike alphabets in the 1930s (e.g., Tatar or Kazakh). Several languages have used both Latin and Cyrillic alphabets—at the last count these included Serbo-Croatian, Kurdish, Moldavian, and Azerbaijani. Several nations are preparing projects to migrate from Cyrillic to Latin. The alphabetical orders for Cyrillic and Latin are different but I am sure it will be possible to define algorithms for automatic transliteration, use of common hyphenation patterns and compile and print texts from the one source, in either writing system, to produce for a reader the script with which she/he is familiar.

Cyrillic Letters and Symbols

The table contains the Cyrillic characters defined in the Unicode standard. Russian letters (used in most alphabets) and old Cyrillic letters and symbols are omitted in the list. Corresponding symbolic names of characters can be found in [5, 6]. It would too long to present them here.

Example: CYRILLIC CAPITAL LETTER IO is the Unicode name for "0401 \Rightarrow \ddot{E} .

Explanatory notes and comments

cyr The Cyrillic-alphabet languages presented here also uses other alphabets (usually Latin-like). Languages using the following letters are unknown (to me):

- Ӂӂ
- 2. for $\H y \H y$ I have two candidates 2 letters undefined in Unicode:

 $\tilde{\mathbb{Y}}\tilde{\mathbb{Y}}(=\tilde{\mathbb{Y}}\tilde{\mathbb{y}})$? in Chuvash and $\tilde{\mathbb{Y}}\tilde{\mathbb{Y}}(=\tilde{\mathbb{Y}}\tilde{\mathbb{y}})$? in Karachay-Balkar.

The confusion perhaps may be in my sources or in Unicode.

Unicode codes

"0401 "0451 L' Ë Many languages use the letter Ëë. The list of the languages Ëë is **not** used in is shorter:

Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Serbo-Croatian^{cyr}, Macedonian, Kurdish^{cyr}, Moldavian^{cyr}, Azerbaijani, Abkhazian, Abazin(?)

"0402	"0452	Ţ, ħ	Serbo-Croatian cyr				
"0403	"0453	Г ѓ	Macedonian				
"0404	"0454	ε	Ukrainian				
"0405	"0455	S s	Macedonian				
"0406	"0456	Ιi	Ukrainian, Belarusian,				
Kazakh, Khakass, Komi (Zyrian),							
Komi-Permyak							
"0407	"0457	Ϊï	Ukrainian				
"0408	"0458	Jј	Serbo-Croatian cyr ,				
Macedonian, Azerbaijani, Altaic (Oirot)							
"0409	"0459	Љљ	Serbo-Croatian cyr ,				
"040A	"045A	Њњ	Macedonian Serbo-Croatian cyr ,				
"040B	"045B		Macedonian Serbo-Croatian ^{cyr}				
"040C	"045C	Кк	Macedonian				
"040D	"045D	(This po	osition shall not be used)				

"0410.."042F uppercase Russian "0430.."044F lowercase Russian

"0460.. "0486 Old Cyrillic

"040E "045E

"040F "045F

"0490 "0491 Γ Γ Ukrainian (now used again!)

Belarusian, Uzbek,

Dungan

 \coprod \coprod Serbo-Croatian^{cyr},

Macedonian, Abkhazian

"0492 "0493 Γ Γ Tadzhik, Uzbek, Uighur, Kazakh, Azerbaijani, Khakass,(Bashkir), (Karakalpak)

variant Γ Γ Bashkir, Karakalpak"0494 "0495 Γ Γ Yakut (Sakha),
Abkhazian, Eskimo (Yuit) Cyr"0496 "0497 \mathcal{H} \mathcal{H} Uighur, Turkmen,
Tatar, Kalmyk, Dungan

¹ Referee's note: The Ukrainian Academy of Sciences changed the official order of the Ukrainian alphabet in 1991 (or thereabouts), and the soft sign is no longer the last letter of the alphabet.

 $^{^2}$ Author's note: Reworking and reprinting of all the dictionaries of any language will not be easy. I will keep this example to demonstrate "real life" changes.

"0498 "0499 3 Bashkir variant Bashkir Kazakh, Karakalpak, Abkhazian variant Ķ "049C "049D $\mbox{\ensuremath{\mathbb{K}}}$ $\mbox{\ensuremath{\mathbb{K}}}$ Azerbaijani "049E "049F $^{
m K}$ Abkhazian "04A0 "04A1 K K Bashkir "04A2 "04A3 H H Uighur, Kazakh, Turkmen, Kirghiz, Tatar, Bashkir, Khakass, Tuva (Soyot), Kalmyk, Dungan "04A4 "04A5 H H Altaic (Oirot), Yakut (Sakha), Mari-low "04A6 "04A7 \prod \prod Abkhazian "04A8 "04A9 (Q @ Abkhazian "04AA "04AB Chuvash, Bashkir variant Bashkir "04AC "04AD T Abkhazian "04AE "04AF Y V Uighur, Kazakh, Turkmen, Kirghiz, Azerbaijani, Tatar, Bashkir, Tuva (Soyot), Yakut (Sakha), Mongolian^{cyr}, Buryat, Kalmyk, Dungan "04B0 "04B1 Y Y Kazakh "04B2 "04B3 X X Tadzhik, Uzbek, Karakalpak, Abkhazian, Eskimo (Yuit) cyr variant "04B4 "04B5 'L TI Abkhazian Ч ч Tadzhik, Abkhazian "04B6 "04B7 "0488 "0489 Ψ Ψ Azerbaijani "04BA "04BB h h Kurdish^{cyr}, Uighur, Kazakh, Azerbaijani, Tatar, Bashkir, Yakut (Sakha), Buryat, Kalmyk "04BC "04BD Θ Abkhazian "04BE "04BF 🖰 Abkhazian "04C0 Abazin, Adyge, Kabardian-Circassian, Avar(ic), Lezgin, Lak(i), Dargwa, Tabasaran, Chechen, Ingush "04C1 "04C2 ЖЖ ??? "04С3 "04С4 Ӄ Ӄ Khanty-Vakhi, Chukcha, Eskimo (Yuit)^{cyr}, Koryak (Nymylan)

"04C5 "04C6 (This position shall not be used) Chukcha, Eskimo $(Yuit)^{cyr}$, Koryak (Nymylan) "04C9 "04CA (This position shall not be used) Ч_Ч _{Khakass} "04CB "04CC "04D0 "04D1 A \ddot{a} Chuvash "04D2 "04D3 A \ddot{a} Mari-high, Khanty (Ostyak), (Kalmyk) "04D4 "04D5 Æ æ Ossetic "04D6 "04D7 $\stackrel{\cdot}{\mathrm{E}}$ $\stackrel{\cdot}{\mathrm{e}}$ Chuvash "04D8 "04D9 \overrightarrow{O} \overrightarrow{O} Kurdish^{cyr}, Uighur, Kazakh, Turkmen, Azerbaijani, Tatar, Bashkir, Kalmyk, Khanty (Ostyak), Abkhazian, Dungan "04DA "04DB 🖯 苟 Khanty (Ostyak) "04DC "04DD K K Udmurt (Votyak) З Udmurt (Votyak) "04DE "04DF "04E0 "04E1 Abkhazian "04E2 "04E3 $\bar{\Pi}$ Tadzhik "04E4 "04E5 Й Udmurt (Votvak) $\ddot{\mathrm{O}}$ Kurdish^{cyr}, "04E6 "04E7 Altaic (Oirot), Khakass, Marilow, Mari-high, Udmurt (Votyak), Komi (Zyrian), Komi-Permyak, Khanty-Vakhi, (Kalmyk) "04E8 "04E9 🖯 Θ Uighur, Kazakh, Turkmen, Kirghiz, Azerbaijani, Tatar, Bashkir, Tuva (Soyot), Yakut (Sakha), Mongolian^{cyr}, Buryat, Kalmyk, Khanty (Ostyak) "04EA "04EB 🖯 Ö Khanty (Ostyak) "04EC "04ED (This position shall not be used) "04EE "04EF Tadzhik "04F0 "04F1 \dot{y} \dot{y} Khakass, Mari-low, Mari-high, Khanty-Vakhi, Altaic (Oirot), (Kalmyk) "04F2 "04F3 Y ??? "04F4 "04F5 $\dot{\mathbf{H}}$ $\dot{\mathbf{H}}$ Udmurt (Votyak) "04F6 "04F7 (This position shall not be used) "04F8 "04F9 H H Mari-high

Languages Using Cyrillic Script

The following table contains a short overview of Cyrillic-alphabet languages and their "additional" letters (according to 'usual' standard encoding systems). ISO (ISO Committee Draft 639-2, 1993)/eth (Ethnologue, 1990)are two different three-letter language codes. The order is "quasi-linguistic-geographical-historical" ("cognate" or "neighbouring" nations being together).

Indo-European Slavic Languages / Russian Ukrainian Belarusian Bulgarian Serbo-Croatian ^{cyr} Macedonian	_	Codes ISO/eth rus ukr bel/ruw bul/blg src mac/mkj	Additional characters (Ëë) Гг Єє Іі Її (') Іі Ўӱ Ђђ Јј Љљ Њњ Ћћ Џџ Ѓѓ Ss Јј Ќќ Љљ Њњ Џџ
Iranian Languages • Ossetic ∘ Kurdish ^{cyr} • Tadzhik Romance Language ∘ Moldavian ^{cyr}	/ Иранские языки осетинский курдский таджикский es / Романские языки молдавский	oss/ose kur tgk/pet	Ææ ∂ə Öö hh h'h' Qq Ww Fғ Ӣӣ Ққ Ӯу Ҳҳ Ҷҷ
Altaic Group Turkic Languages / • Uzbek • Uighur • Kazakh • Turkmen • Kirghiz • Azerbaijani • Tatar • Bashkir • Karachay-Balkar • Kumyk	узбекский уйгурский казахский туркменский киргизский азербайджанский татарский башкирский карачаево-балкарски	ksk	\ddot{y} ў Ққ Ғғ Ҳҳ Ққ Ңң Ғғ Үү Өө Җҗ Әә hh Әә Ғғ Ққ Ңң Өө Ұұ Үү hh Ii Җҗ Ңң Өө Үү Ғғ Әә Јј Кк Өө Үү hh Чч ' Әә Өө Үү Җҗ Ңң hh Ғғ (=Ғғ) 33 (= 33) Ҡҡ Ңң Өө Çç (=Çç) Үү hh Әә (Ýý =) \ddot{y} ÿ
 Nogay Karakalpak Altaic (Oirot) Khakass Tuva (Soyot) Chuvash Yakut (Sakha) Mongolian Languag Mongolian^{cyr} Buryat Kalmyk 	ногайский каракалпакский алтайский хакасский тувинский чувашский якутский ges / Монгольские язь монгольский бурятский калмыцкий	nog kaa/kac alt kjh tyv/tun chv/cju sah/ukt MKU mon/khk bua/mnb kgz	Ққ Гғ (=Ғғ) Хҳ Јј Ҥҥ Öö Ӱӱ Ғғ İ i (=Ii) (Нъ нъ=) Ңӊ Öö Ӱӱ (Ҷҷ=) Ӌч Ңӊ Ѳѳ Үү Ӑӑ Ӗӗ Ҫҫ Ӳӳ(=Ӱӱ) Ҕҕ Ҥҥ Ѳѳ Һһ Үү Ѳѳ Үү Ѳѳ Үү Ѳѳ Үү Һһ Ӛә Һһ Җҗ Ңӊ Ѳѳ Үү

_	guages / Тунгусо-маньчж	курс		зыки			
Evenki (Tungus) эвенкийский			evn				
Even (Lamut)Nanai (Gold)				$egin{array}{c} eve \ gld \end{array}$			
Uralic Group							
	s / Финно-угорьские язын	εи					
• Mari-low	марийский луговой		mal	Hн Öö Ӱӱ			
• Mari-high	марийский горный т			Ää Öö Ӱӱ Ӹӹ			
Mordvin-Erzya	мордовский эрзянский туб			v			
Mordvin-Moksha	мордовский мокшанский						
• Udmurt (Votyak)	удмуртский		mdf udm	Жж Зз Йи Öö Ӵӵ			
• Komi (Zyrian)	коми		kpv	Ii Öö			
Komi-Permyak	коми-пермяцкий		koi	Ii Öö			
• Mansi (Vogul)	мансийский		mns				
Khanty-Vakhi	хантыйский-ваховский		kca	Ää Ӄӄ Ӈӈ Öö Ѳѳ Ӫӫ Ӱӱ Әә Ӛӓ			
• -Kazim	-казымский			Ää Әә Ӛӛ Ӈӈ Ѳѳ Ӫӫ			
• -Shurishkar	-шуришкарский						
Samoyedic Languages	/ Самодийские языки						
• Nenets (Yurak)	, ненецкий		yrk				
• Selkup	селькупский	\mathtt{sel}/sak					
Caucasian Languag	ges / Кавказские языки						
• Abkhazian	абхазский abk			Ҕҕ Џџ Ҽҽ Ҿҿ Ӡӡ Ққ Кҟ Ҩҩ Ҧҧ Ҭҭ Ҳҳ Ҵҵ Ҷҷ Әә			
• Abazin	абазинский		abq	I			
• Adyge	адыгейский		ady	Ī			
• Kabardian-Circassian			kab	Ī			
• Avar(ic)	аварский	ava/	'avr	I			
• Lezgin	лезгинский lez			I			
• Lak(i)	лакский		lbe	I			
• Dargwa	даргинский		dar	I			
• Tabasaran	табасаранский		tab	I			
• Chechen	чеченский	che	'cjc	I			
• Ingush	ингушский		inh	I			
Sino-Tibetan Grou	р / Китайско-тибетские я	зык	И				
• Dungan	дунганский			Әә Җҗ Ңң Ўӱ Үү			
9	uages / Палеоазиатские	язы	ки				
• Chukcha	чукотский		ckt	_Մ Н н '			
• Eskimo $(Yuit)^{cyr}$	эскимосский		ess	(Г'г'=) Ҕҕ (К'к'=) Ӄҕ (Н'н'=) Ӈӈ (Х'х'=) Ҳҳ '			
• Koryak (Nymylan)	корякский		kpy	(В' в') (Г' г') Ӄӄ Ӈӈ (К' к') (Н' н')			
• Nivkh (Gilyak)	нивхский			,			
Explanatory notes		т	•.				
the language is migrating (again!) to Latin writing							
(Ëë) a character not used today (particularly or entirely) (=F _F) variant not preferred							
i — + cl variant no	I DECITORECOCI						

b5r12 Font Table

(Computer Modern Roman 12 point) Modern Cyrillic Part of ISO 10646-1/Unicode

	<i>'0</i>	′1	2	<i>'3</i>	4	′ 5	6	7		
'00x		Ë	Ъ	Ϋ́	6	S	I	Ϊ	″0x	
'01x	J	Љ	Њ	Ti	Ŕ		ÿ	Ц	O.A.	
'02x	A	Б	В	Γ	Д	Ε	Ж	3	".4	
'03x	И	Й	К	Л	M	Н	Ο	П	″1x	
'04x	Р	С	Т	У	Φ	Χ	Ц	Ч	″0	
'05x	Ш	Щ	Ъ	Ы	Ь	Э	Ю	Я	″2x	
'06x	a	б	В	Γ	Д	е	ж	3	″3x	
′07x	И	й	К	Л	M	Н	0	П	Эх	
′10x	р	c	Т	у	ф	X	Ц	Ч	″4x	
′11x	Ш	Щ	Ъ	Ы	Ь	Э	Ю	Я	47	
′12x		ë	ħ	ŕ	ϵ	S	i	ï	″5x	
′13x	j	Љ	Њ	ħ	Ŕ		ÿ	Ų	JA	
′14x	Ω	ω	Ъ	Ъ	Ю	ю	A	A	″6x	
′15x	Ы	ŀА	Ж	Ж	Ѭ	Ѭ			OA	
′16x	Ψ	ψ	Θ	0	V	V	Ÿ	Ÿ	″7x	
′17x									1 A	
'20x									″8x	
′21x									OA	
'22x	Γ	Ľ	F	F	Ŋ	Б	Ж	ж	″9x	
'23x	3	3	К	К,	К	К	К	k	JA	
´24x	Ж	ж	Ң	Ц	Н	Н	П	Пე	"Ax	
′25x	0	Q	Ç	ç	Т	Т	Y	Y	AX	
′26x	¥	¥	Х	Х	Ц	Ц	Ч	Ч	"Bx	
'27x	Ч	Ч	h	h	е	·e	ę	æ	ВX	
′30x	I	Ж	Ж	Ӄ	Ӄ			Н	"Cx	
'31x	H			Ч	Ч				011	
'32x	Ă	ă	Ä	ä	Æ	æ	Ĕ	ĕ	"Dx	
'33x	Э	Э	Ë	ë	Ж	Ж	З	Ӟ	DX	
<i>'34x</i>	3	3	Й	Й	Й	Й	Ö	Ö	"Ex	
′35x	0	Θ	Ö	ë			Ӯ	ÿ	עם	
′36x	Ӱ	ÿ	Ӳ	ű,	Ÿ	Ÿ			"Fx	
'37x	Ӹ	Ӹ							1.7	
	″8	″9	"A	"B	"C	″D	"E	"F		

Comments

Alternative glyphs referenced in the article (Fr Kr Xx 33 Çç Ýý) are located in the additional separate font.

The old Cyrillic part ("60.."86) is not used in the article and has not been completed.

Conclusion

I think the Cyrillic portion of the Unicode Mapping Table covers quite a good character set for most of the languages using the Cyrillic alphabet today. On the other hand UCS/Unicode does not offer a sophisticated solution for alphabetical ordering. And I am afraid that the situation with special symbols, particularities, and multiple accents for dictionaries and textbooks, etc., will be more complicated.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Prof. Donald E. Knuth for providing TeX, METAFONT and the Computer Modern Fonts, Michel Goossens for important documents about languages and Unicode standard, Yannis Haralambous, Olga Lapko and other authors for METAFONT sources of Cyrillic fonts, Aleksandr Berdnikov for the program VFComb (See his article on VFComb in this issue), and Mimi Burbank for help with the English text.

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