

Cyrillic script review – 2020/1

client Kostas Bartsokas

typeface Commissioner

date 20.03.20

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12pt / 15 pt

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With Peru's famous Inca Trail becoming increasingly overrun—forcing travellers to battle stiff competition for peak season permits—the lesser-known Salkantay Trek is quickly gaining a reputation as both a less-crowded and more strenuous alternative. A good level of fitness is required due to the high altitude. But the extra effort pays off. The trail offers mind-blowing visuals and takes in a variety of ecosystems—from cloud forests and alpine peaks to glacial lakes and tropical jungles. Following in the footsteps of the highly trained

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You did a great job, the texture of the text looks very good!

✓

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** tip too light, you have large hands, but still maybe is a fit
mind, consider sample is a fit
you in a shadow looks & it's too dark compared to
stems.
very weak*

12pt / 15 pt

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Характеристика шрифта, обозначающая соотношение толщины основных и соединительных штрихов. Шрифт мо-

In typography, contrast refers to weight contrast, which is to say that contrast denotes the difference between thick and thin

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Съешь же ещё этих мягких французских булок, да выпей чаю. Лингвисты фиг выговоришь этюд: «подъём челябинский, запах щец». Всё ускоряющаяся эволюция компьютерных технологий предъявила жёсткие требования производителям вычислительной техники, так и периферийных устройств. Шалящий фавн прикинул объём горячих звезд этих вьюжных царств. Эжирафы честно в цель шагают, да щук обять за память ёлкой... экс-граф? изъят. бьём чуждый цен хвош! эй, жлоб! где туз? прячь юных

СЪЕШЬ ЖЕ ЕЩЁ ЭТИХ МЯГКИХ ФРАНЦУЗСКИХ БУЛОК, ДА ВЫПЕЙ ЧАЮ. ЛИНГВИСТЫ В УЖАСЕ: ФИГ ВЫГОВОРИШЬ ЭТЮД: «ПОДЪЁМ ЧЕЛЯБИНСКИЙ, ЗАПАХ ЩЕЦ». ВСЁ УСКОРЯЮЩАЯСЯ ЭВОЛЮЦИЯ КОМПЬЮТЕРНЫХ ТЕХНОЛОГИЙ ПРЕДЪЯВИЛА ТРЕБОВАНИЯ К ПРОИЗВОДИТЕЛЯМ ВСЕХ ВЪЮЖНЫХ ЦАРСТВ. ШАЛЯЩИЙ ФАВН ПРИКИНУЛ ОБЪЁМ ГОРЯЧИХ ЗВЕЗД ВЪЮЖНЫХ ЦАРСТВ. ЭХ, ЖИРАФЫ ЧЕСТНО В ЦЕЛЬ ШАГАЮТ, ДА ЩУКУ...

2

Съешь же ещё этих мягких французских булок, да выпей чаю. Лингвисты: фиг выговоришь этюд: «подъём челябинский, запах щец». Всё ускоряющаяся эволюция компьютерных технологий предъявила жёсткие требования к производителям вычислительной техники, так и периферийных устройств. Шалящий фавн прикинулся объём горячих звезд этих вьюжных царств. Экспрессии честно в цель шагают, да щук обять за память ёлкой... экс-графы изъят. бьём чуждый цен хвощ! эй, жлоб! где туз? прячь юных

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the oval may get a little larger (to my cyrillic eye).
же мы сомневаемся, что
она будет смотреть на нас с любовью.

ноинпцч

ноинпцч

V

н о и н

a bit thick
compared to other
thin strokes. compare
to: 

It seems like the width is decreasing
a little bit too quickly. Н looks narrower
than H. Л looks narrower than H, Н.
maybe the step should be -7 and not -10
units?




same here. In Black the difference is usually
smaller, just ~5 units, not more than that

N O V H П Т Ц Щ

НОВНПЦЩ

V

N vs И

a bit thick compared to
other thin strokes

Stylized versions of Cyrillic letters N and И. The letter N is a simple V-shape. The letter И is composed of a vertical stroke and a diagonal stroke meeting at the top. A red arrow points from the text 'a bit thick compared to other thin strokes' to the vertical stroke of И.

looks a bit narrow,
narrower than N

Stylized versions of Cyrillic letters И and Н. The letter И is shown with a wider vertical stroke and a narrower diagonal stroke. The letter Н is a simple vertical stroke. Pink arrows point from the text 'may get +2/3 units to match И better' to the vertical strokes of И and Н.

may get +2/3
units to match И
better

Large, bold black versions of Cyrillic letters Н, И, Н. A blue double-headed arrow below the first Н indicates its width. The letters are positioned side-by-side.

Large, bold black versions of Cyrillic letters И, Н, Ч, Ч. Pink arrows point from the text 'may get +2/3 units to match И better' to the vertical strokes of И and Ч. A pink arrow also points from the text 'a bit thick compared to other thin strokes' to the vertical stroke of И.

The image displays two rows of Cyrillic characters for comparison. The top row shows lowercase letters 'n', 'v', 'w', and 'm' in a thin weight font, where the strokes are relatively narrow and the letters have a delicate, wavy appearance. The bottom row shows the same characters in a thick weight font, where the strokes are much thicker and the letters appear bold and more solid. The characters are arranged horizontally, with 'n' on the far left and 'm' on the far right of each row.

V

normally I am not a fan of M with diagonal legs in Cyrillic lowercase, because it very often stands out in text.

I suggest treating Cyrillic lowercase characters not as small caps, but rather judge them among lowercase. And so UC and LC constructions do not have to be the same. But in your case I do like this M, and I have a few advices on how to make it even better.



Keep an eye on counter shapes. I always look at the relations between counter shapes in W and M. The ones in M should not be too small, the more similar - the better.



- ① These parts in M should not get too dark in lowercase — that is the most important thing to watch. Otherwise M will look particularly dark within lowercase. Moving counter shapes more inwards always helps.

Width of the m (lowercase)

- ② diagonals may get more vertical in the lowercase to reduce the outer white spaces.

+ do not afraid to make M significantly wider

МАШИНА WOMAN

МАШИНА WOMAN

V

МАШИНА WOMAN

↑ both a bit narrow (~10-15 units)
↓ esp. light end, looks narrower
than M

МАШИНА WOMAN

н н л н д п н

н н л н д п н

J

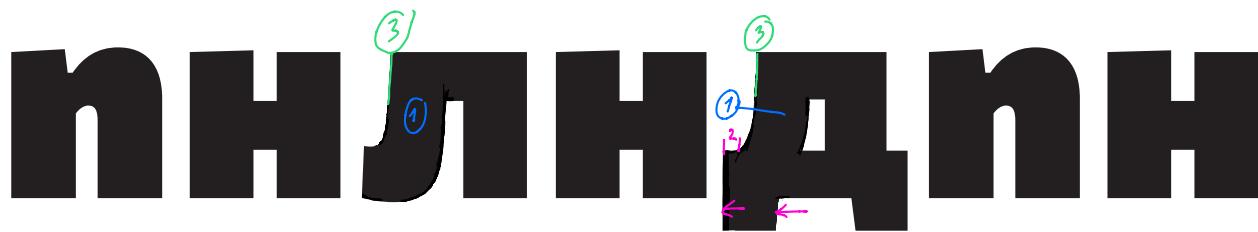
proportions of Л, Д look good!

① There are thin strokes, which comes from → (typefaces with contrast), but stays true even when drawing low contrast sans serifs. left stroke may get 1-2 units thinner in light weight + quite a lot thinner in Black

② this part is important and it should be prominent. left stroke should not merge into the spike in smaller sizes. But of course this part is slightly smaller than the right one.



③ legs can get a little more diagonal in your very dynamic design. Is feel free to start with an less vertical stroke at the top



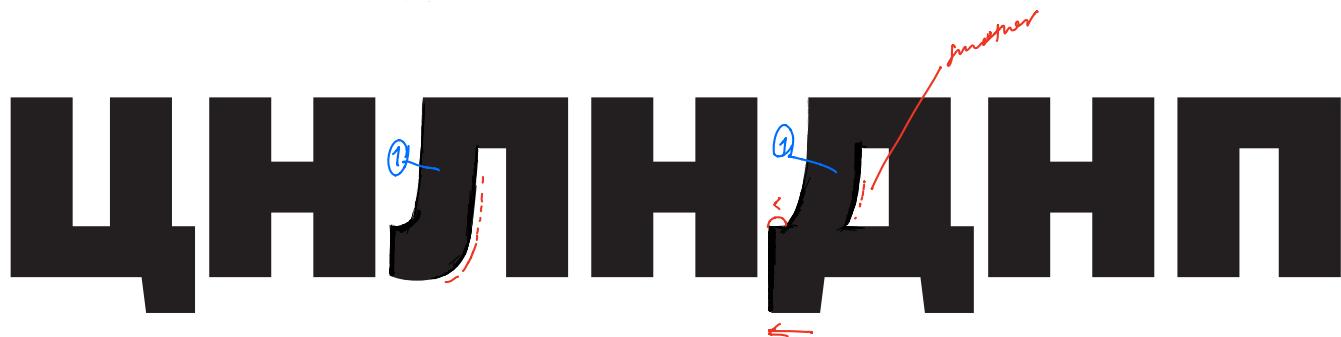
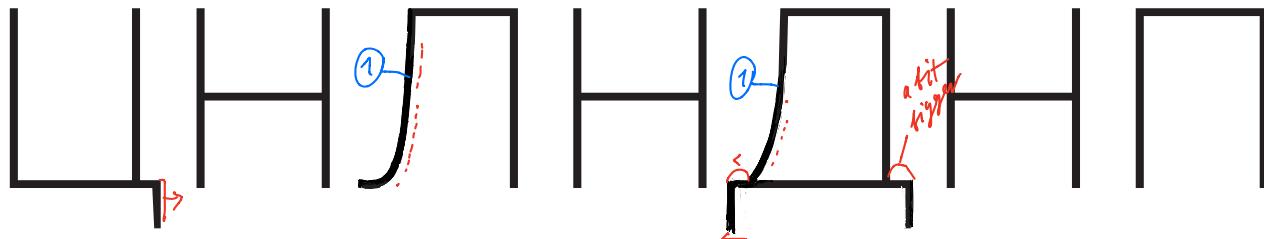


Ц Н Ј Џ Џ Џ Џ

Proportions of the Л and Д (uppercase)

Same comments as for the lowercase (p. 12). But here problems are more visible.

① a bit too vertical, curve needs to get smoother



алүшта

алүшта

У

алушта

*these terminals are
so small, there is no need to
curve it up as much, you can calm it
down a little bit*

*(compare to
the gentle
terminal
in а)*

алушта

а в з с ч ъ н я

а в з с ч ъ н я

J

a B 3 S Ч ъ н я

¹
a little wider

Counter shape
in light style
looks a bit too
small
¹
(compare to
a, 3, B, etc.)

tiny bit too
dark + tiny bit
too curved?
(similarly to
the UC, p.29)
look a bit high,
compare to bl (~p. 22)

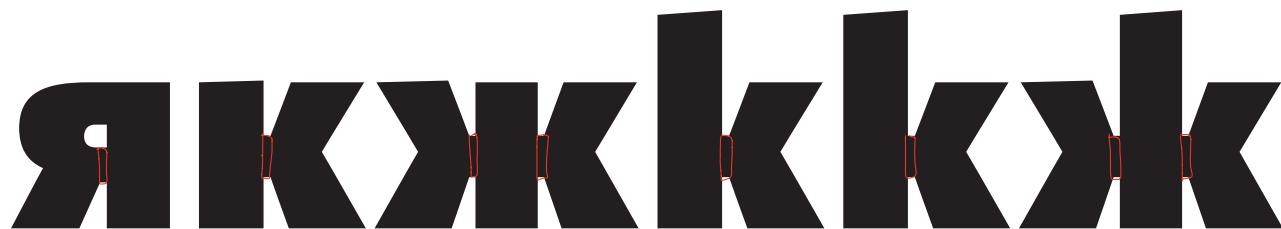
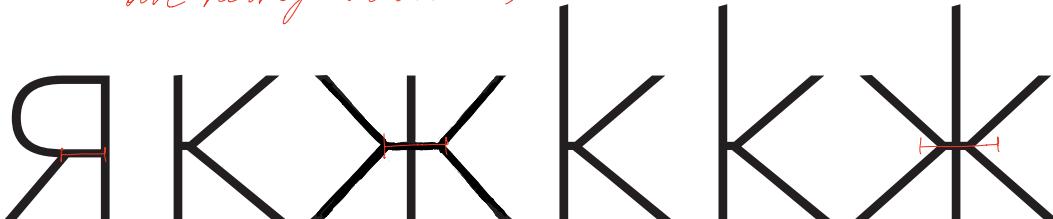
а в з с ч ъ н я

a little too curved,
similar comments
as for the uppercase, p. 29.

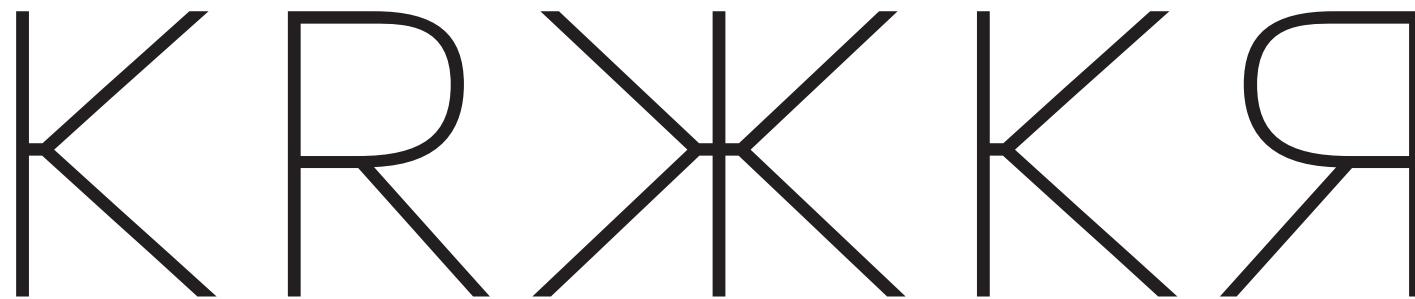


я К Ж Ѡ Ѡ Ѡ

About ІІ. Your current construction (middle part of it) is a little disturbing in the text in light weight. It is not critical, but I'd still consider making the middle part wider. While in black everything is very even and Я, К, ІІ, К, etc. are nearly identical, in the light it gets more tricky. →



→ What if you try making the middle wider, at least a little bit? ІІ may become a part of a larger system of shapes (compare the middle part of it to Я).



Four small line drawings of Cyrillic letters, each showing a different structural variation or alternate form:

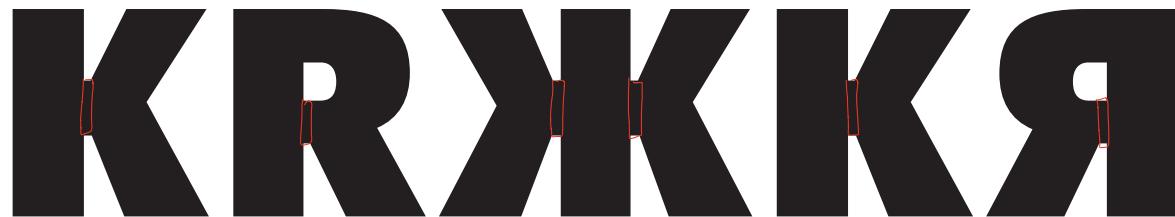
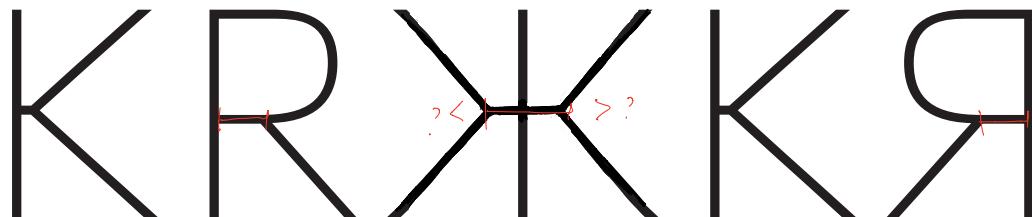
- The first letter is a stylized 'K' with a vertical stroke on the left and diagonal strokes forming the main body.
- The second letter is a stylized 'R' with a vertical stroke on the left and diagonal strokes forming the main body.
- The third letter is a stylized 'Ж' (Zh) with a central vertical stroke and diagonal strokes extending from the top and bottom.
- The fourth letter is a stylized 'Я' with a vertical stroke on the left and diagonal strokes forming the main body.



KRЖКЯ

Cyrillic K Ж and their alternates (uppercase and lowercase)

J



ранфнhdq

ранфнhdq

V

I like this φ. Even though in humanist designs a single-oval form is more preferred, I think this fits nicely. But you will need the alternative φ for Bulgarian alternate. Bulgarians prefer single story in most cases.
My only advice so far will be to keep an eye on the ovals.

р а Н ф Н h d q

Esp. in black weight, where the contours are narrower than the ones in p, d, etc.

р а Н ф Н h d q

outer and inner contours
look a little more pointy than
similar ones in p, d, a.
I suggest adjusting them
just tiny bit.

M V H Y H Y H Н Ј Н Ј

М В Н Ў Н Ј Н Ј

I suggest comparing Y with proportions of the uppercase V rather than Y. In Black Y works fine. In digit it feels like the counter shape can get bigger / wider.

V



М В Н Ў Н Ў Н Ј љ

a d 6 h g f n s ð

a d 6 h g f n s ð

A few notes on the 6. Overall it is already good. But we can make it even better!

- ① Counter shape in Black. There is a room to make it larger. The goal is to make the proportions of it more similar to the counter shapes in d, b, o. So a bit narrower + taller (not too round)
- ② Do not make the x-height too small. It only needs to get smaller when there is no room



③ When figuring out how small this space in 6 might get I always look for comparably tight white spaces (~g, 2, etc.)

④ In black weights with a lack of space you are allowed to make this part (4) quite a bit thinner than in other arcs (5)



⑥ The arc itself may get more 'angular', similarly to the one in h, z (especially in light weight)

⑦ 6 may have a slightly more distinctive 'squarishness' here, where the contrast is twisting. + If you manage to make the stroke slightly thinner towards the top, it is also good (you already do that in black, but you may have something similar in light too)

⑧ and at last the angle of the cut. It feels very unnatural when it goes in other direction (~z for example)

Въезд новый

Въезд новый

У

Въезд новый

are these different from
in bl? look higher

Въезд новый

ПРОСТЬИНУТЬ

ПРОСТЬИНУТЬ

J

ПРОСТЬИНУТЬ

ПРОСТЬИНУТЬ



slightly closer to each other

The white space between b and i needs to be visually smaller than the space (1) so that the whole letter is easily recognized as single letter.

Ё Э Џ Й ў а ё й ѕ

ё́ Э́ Џ́ Й́ ў́ а́ ё́ й́ ѕ́

Kratka (or cyrillic breve). As a Russian -speaker I always pay special attention to the relation between dieresis & kratka. They are the two main accents used in Russian language, so making them work together well is very important.

03/20/20



.. / V
Е Е Є Є Є Й й є є Й Й

compared to default breve
kratka is more cases more square than rounded

.. / V
Ё Ё Є Є Ё Й Й є є Й Й

① Proportions. Generally bigger accents are better for Russian as we do not use many of them (which is also true to most common Cyrillic-based languages too). Yours are quite big - which is great! My advice will be not to make kratka too tall, then it looks too tall next to dieresis. Do not be afraid of making it wider though, especially in uppercase.

② 
I can see that you often have a touch of reversed contrast. Not sure if that was made intentionally in kratka or not. Traditionally horizontal part is thinner than the sides.

ceəsз2bae

ceəsз2bae

V

ce³s³bae

1 →



↑ looks a little darker
from other similar elements?

J

1 ←

↑ looks a bit narrow

ce³s³bae

1 →



↓ a bit too flat?

1 ←

SCE[—] S³E

sce³s³e

✓

a little shorter

SCE~~3~~ S~~3~~E



SCE~~3~~ S~~3~~E





ПОМОЩИЙ

У

П О Н О Щ И Й

п о н щ и й

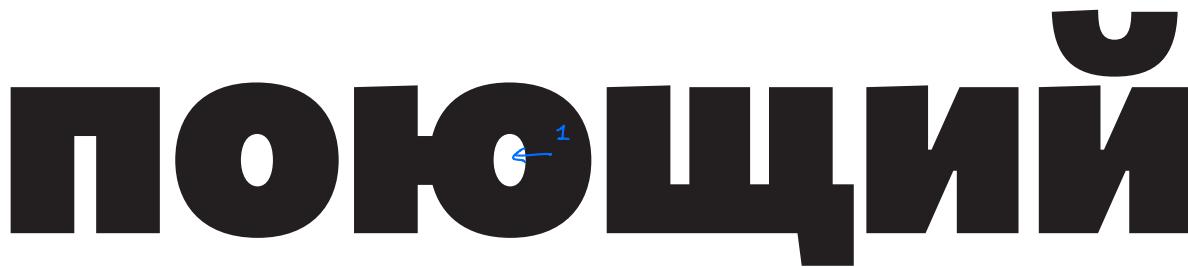
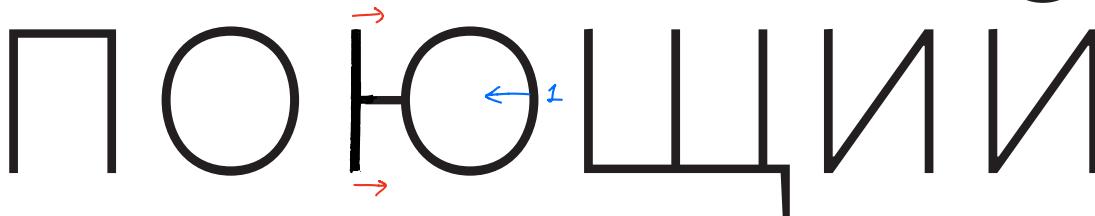
oral may get a little
closer to the stem (~5 units)
I usually compare the distance
to the spacing (1)
It is not always the rule, but
it is good to keep an eye on that.

понощий

покощий

J

① If you haven't done it yet, you may
correct the size of the oval in TO
-5 units in light (not more)
-10 units in Black (not more)
same can be done in UC too

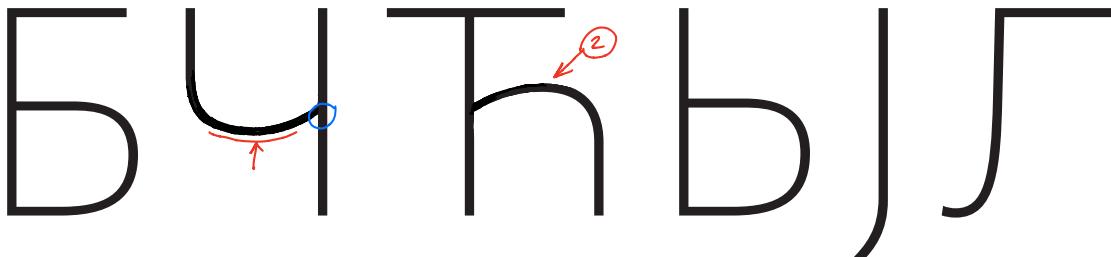


БЧТБДЈЛ

БЧТБДЈЛ

V

Cyrillic Ч. Having such a curved arc in the uppercase (and actually in lowercase too) is very problematic. On one hand in UC it looks like it was brought from the lowercase ч. Too curved, does not relate to other uppercase characters either. In fact Ч is more of all related to Г, in proportions in particular, but also the middle part — it follows Г and also stands on an optical middle.



*there is no real room for an ink trap here, esp. if you will make the arc more flat.



(2) very similar story happens in Serbian Г, Ђ, where there is even less room for such a curved element. Simplifying it and making flat helps a lot in making counter shapes more simple and this way more compatible with the rest of the uppercase Ч vs. Г Г Џ

тћ тđ тћ бу

тћ тđ тћ бу

✓

A row of lowercase letters showing the comparison between Latin and Cyrillic characters. It includes two 't's, two 'h's, two 'd's, one 'b', and one 'u'. The first two 't's are Latin, followed by two Cyrillic 'th' ligatures, then two Latin 'd's, one Cyrillic 'h' with a red bracket underneath it, one Latin 'b', and one Cyrillic 'u'.

A row of lowercase letters in a bold font, showing the same comparison as the first row. It includes two 't's, two 'h's, two 'd's, one 'b', and one 'u'. The second 'h' is highlighted with a red bracket underneath it.

in your design I don't see a reason to change Cyrillic т so much compared to the latin. Very often latin т has a very small and thin bar. But not in your case.

you may extend the bar a little more to the right in Cyrillic, but making the x-height so much lower is too visible at the moment. I suggest keeping the т-parts the same in Latin & Cyrillic.

CAPАΦAH

CAPАΦАН

J

ϕ in ligts looks a bit small to my 'cyrillic eye'. Greek and Cyrillic Φ , have slightly different preferences (at least from what I discovered in my Greek attempts), Greek Φ is preferred to be slightly smaller + a little more rounded than what is common in Cyrillic.

a little more square on the outer oval? proportions look good!

When drawing a Cyrillic one I not only compare it to O , but also to P . If P is quite square, then I consider If a slight squariness will also fit the Φ

CAPАΦAH

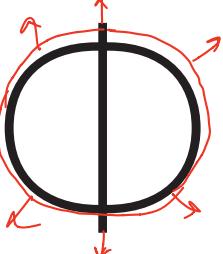
CAPАΦАН



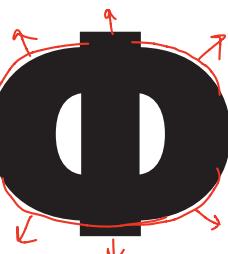
And Bulgarian Cyrillic preferences are also different. Somewhere between Default Cyrillic and Greek. oval is as similar + as big to O as possible + also very big. The oval goes almost all the way to the baseline & capheight

03/20/20

CAPAOAH



CAPAΦAH



possibly even
larger oval!

The image displays two rows of Cyrillic characters. The top row consists of five stylized characters: 'д' (d), 'ц' (ts), 'щ' (shch), 'ч' (ch), and 'ш' (sh). These characters are composed of thick black lines forming geometric shapes like rectangles and triangles. The bottom row shows the same characters in a bold, black, sans-serif font.



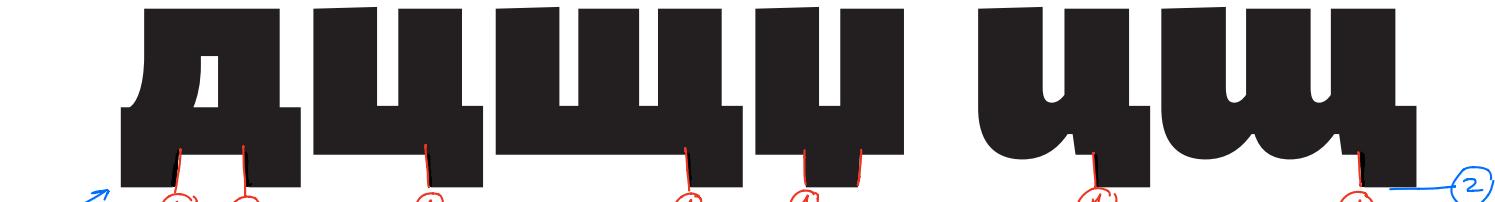
① I am personally not a fan of these kind of 'hot vertical' strokes/spikes. Spikes can be considered as descenders, so I usually prefer a straight form. Diagonal ones always appear very decorative to my eye. If you insist on keeping them as they are, I would like to propose reducing the angle a bit (exp. in black) in both UC and LC.



all a bit longy

I really like this subtle detail! Almost invisible, but brings a nice touch

②

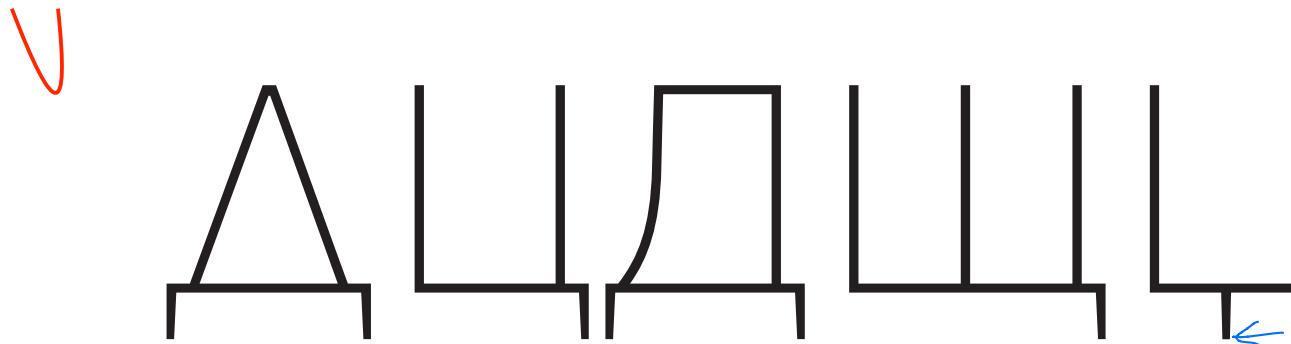


all a bit short

② I wonder about the length of the spikes. I noticed that the ones in light are different from the ones in Black (in light - longer). This difference is a bit too exaggerated. Spikes in Black may get a few units longer, in light - shorter.



Uppercase with spikes



t f T T Ъ м ъ

t f T T ъ м ъ

all good

✓

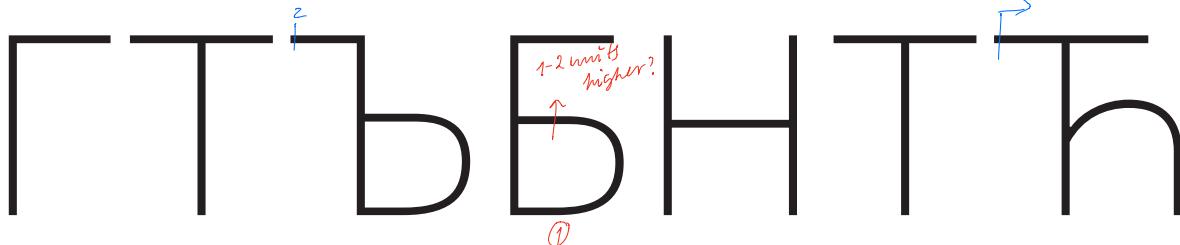
tfТъмъ

tfТъмъ

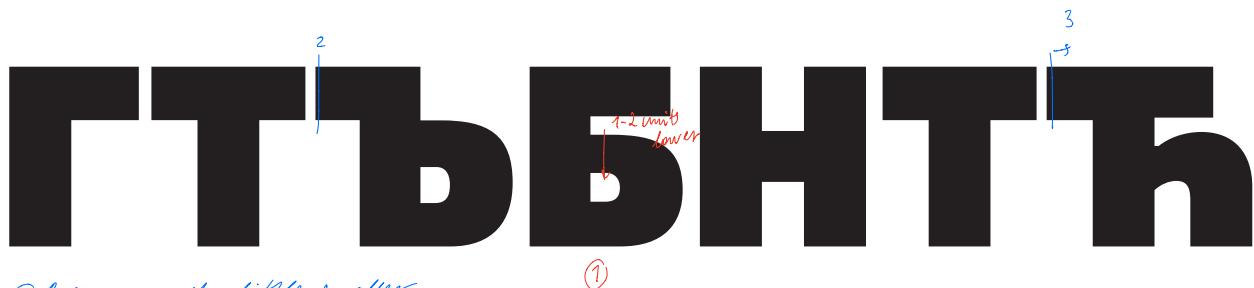
Г Т Ъ Б Н Т Ы

Г Т Ъ Б Н Т Ы

① in 5 in light bottom part looks like it is on a smaller side (compared to the white space on the top in black - other way around)



② same as 'Б' or smaller



② both may get a little smaller

~10 units in light

~5 units in Black (not more than 5)

Judging the length of the left horizontal

I always compare it the right b-part and try to make it appear proportional to it.

In light b is on a narrower side, so it feels like horizontal stroke is too long

Horizontal strokes in uppercase

gpyzu base

gpyzu base

J

*does the top look a little heavier
than the bottom?*

gpyzu base

gpyzu base

роль Върнама

роль Върнама

ролъв Върнама

may get a little lighter?
compare to the ѣ

- ② you can make it tiny bit larger
(just 1-2 units?)
- ④ ③ compare thickness of these points
can the one in б be tiny bit thinner?

ролъв Върнама

④
③
②
①

bit more
isquarish?
compare to
(smaller
ovals)

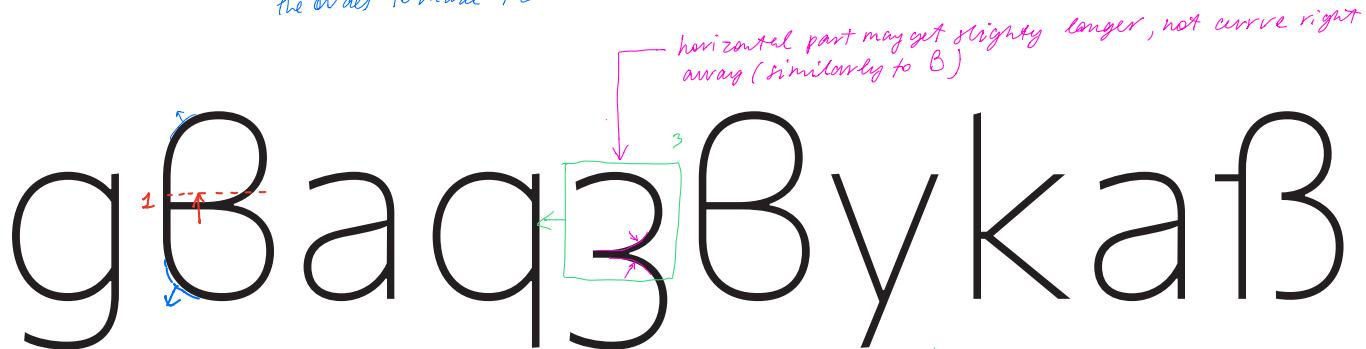
гBaqзBykaß

гBaqзBykaß

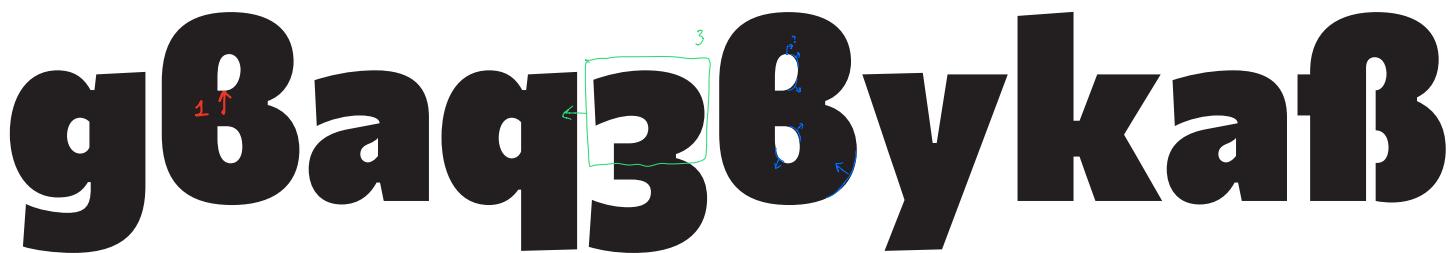
J

⑥ too low, esp. in light. Compare with β

② try to make inner and outer contours a bit more symmetrical. Compare left and right side of the ovals to make them more alike



(3) does the top part go a bit (1-2 units)
too much to the right?



нобег ногеg

нобег ногеg

① Serbian δ as well as the default one will normally have a vertical cut or an angle in other direction.

J

нoбeг нoбeг

нoбeг нoбeг

1 REVIEW (03.20.2020): 06 hours 00 minutes
Total time: 06 hours 00 minutes

That is it for now!

If you will have any questions please let me know.

Thank you!