

# Refractions of China in Russia, and of Russia in China: Ideas and Things

*Mark Gamsa*  
Tel Aviv University  
*gamsa@post.tau.ac.il*

## Abstract

This article analyses perceptions of China in Russia and of Russia in China by focusing on exchange through material culture, including the tea trade and the borrowing of architectural styles. It demonstrates that some things Chinese became domesticated in Russia, having first arrived there in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, whereas others continued to represent an exotic “China.” Fewer things Russian were familiar in imperial China. In twentieth-century China, Russia became closely associated with Communism, while the idea of “Russia” was also fashioned via cultural and material exchange. Other areas of historical contact between Russia and European countries and China and Asian countries have been mapped out by extensive research. This article argues that the field of contact between Russia and China has been neglected because historians have grown too used to conceptualizing relations between Europeans and Asians in terms of a confrontation of West and East.

## Keywords

Russian-Chinese relations – cross-cultural contact – material culture – tea trade – chinoiserie

---

\* Drafts of this article were first presented in February 2014 as a guest lecture at the Centre for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies, Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto, and as a paper in the workshop “Russia in East Asia: Imagination, Exchange, Travel, Translation,” Columbia University. A revised version was presented as a guest lecture for the research group “Russian Space,” The Arctic University of Norway, Tromsø, in January 2016. These occasions and readings of the text by colleagues and reviewers have all provided valuable feedback.

## Introduction

To delineate some elements in the perception of China in Russia and vice versa—to come closer to an understanding of what “China” has stood for in Russia, and “Russia” in China—the present article offers a comparative study in the history of ideas and material culture, animated by the conviction that the two are best seen as intertwined components of global history.<sup>1</sup>

As long ago as 1972, Mark Mancall, the historian of Russian-Chinese relations, advocated for analyzing “the Russian impact on China ... within the context of particular configurations in the total paradigmatic perceptual scheme through which the Chinese viewed themselves and reality.”<sup>2</sup> Yet there have been few attempts to meet this challenge with regard either to the Russian impact on China or the Chinese impact on Russia. The term “refraction,” not used by Mancall, may be used metaphorically of the process by which a culture is imagined and its attributes are nativized selectively by another.<sup>3</sup> Most of this article is devoted to hitherto neglected refractions of “China in Russia.” The second part considers more concisely refractions of “Russia in China,” the essential other side to the encounter, on which some work has recently been done.

With marked delay after its original enunciation in the 1970s, historians and literary scholars of Russia in the West discovered Edward Said’s *Orientalism* as a theoretical prism through which to view Russia’s relations with the East, both inside and beyond its borders. In the titles of papers, monographs, and conferences, they have since exploited the popularity of the term “Orientalism,” even when (as often proved the case) they neither found this perspective justified by their research material nor sympathized with its political agenda.<sup>4</sup>

---

1 See G. Riello and A. Gerritsen, eds., *Writing Material Culture History* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014). On material culture forming the idea of “Japan” in the United States, see C. Bush, “The Ethnicity of Things in America’s Lacquered Age,” *Representations* 99, no. 1 (2007). See also S. Berger, “Comparative History,” in Berger et al., eds., *Writing History: Theory and Practice*, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2010).

2 M. Mancall, “Russia and China: The Structure of Contact,” in W.S. Vucinich, ed., *Russia and Asia: Essays on the Influence of Russia on Asian Peoples* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1972): 332.

3 I do not borrow this term from existing theory. Cf. H. Levin, *Refractions: Essays in Comparative Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966): x: “our world view is a response to an unremitting traffic in images, which are reshaped by the very circumstances of their transmission.”

4 Debate on the applicability of Orientalism to the Russian context was initiated with a section in an issue of *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 1, no. 4 (2000), subsequently

Research on Asian-European and Asian-American contacts has recently shed the Orientalist terminology, speaking instead of encounters and mutual appropriations. Few would now dispute the basic insight that the Orient has been subject to Western construct. But, whereas Said, whose interests lay mostly in European perceptions of the Muslim world, insisted on the Western construct of the Orient, by now we have also learned about Oriental constructs of the West.<sup>5</sup> Tackling the Russian-Chinese encounter via fresh examples and specific evidence, this article argues that condescension to a non-European “other” was only one of the lenses through which China was refracted in Russian eyes.<sup>6</sup> Even though some historical actors in Russia allowed the composite notion of the Orient to dominate their worldview, there is no reason to follow their logic and, by throwing Russian Central Asia into one pot with Japan and China, support the fiction of a Russian “Orient.” The basic premise informing this inquiry is that meaning in society is mediated through a system of signs: to understand a sign, you need to know its place in the system.

Russia, a European country, is also Asian, and it borders China; the tension between these contradicting definitions will soon become apparent. What follows does not pretend to provide a full catalog of trade items<sup>7</sup> or a chronology

---

much cited. Useful critiques of the Said thesis include V. Tolz, “Orientalism, Nationalism, and Ethnic Diversity in Late Imperial Russia,” *The Historical Journal* 48, no. 1 (March 2005), on the professional Orientalists; J.A. Sharp, “Beyond Orientalism: Russian and Soviet Modernism on the Periphery of Empire,” in *Russian Art and the West: A Century of Dialogue in Painting, Architecture, and the Decorative Arts*, ed. R.P. Blakesley and S.E. Reid (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2007), on uses of the Orient by avant-garde artists.

- 5 Cf. A. Jackson and A. Jaffer, eds., *Encounters: The Meeting of Asia and Europe, 1500-1800* (London: V&A, 2004); P. ten-Doesschate Chu and Ning Ding, eds., *Qing Encounters: Artistic Exchanges between China and the West* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2015); F. Pouillon and J.-C. Vatin, eds., *After Orientalism: Critical Perspectives on Western Agency and Eastern Re-Appropriations* (Leiden: Brill, 2015).
- 6 Cf. A. Ferrari, “The East and Russian Culture,” in a volume accompanying an exhibition in the Palazzo Strozzi, Florence (September 2013-January 2014): J.E. Bowlt et al., eds., *The Russian Avant-Garde: Siberia and the East* (Milan: Skira, 2013). In A. Bolton, ed., *China through the Looking Glass* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2015), A. Geczy, “A Chamber of Whispers,” makes a convincing argument that cultures in the “East” as well as the “West” constantly look at, eavesdrop on, borrow, and steal from each other.
- 7 For instance, Britain associated rhubarb with China, importing it via St. Petersburg and the Baltic Sea, primarily between 1760 and the 1830s, but, because the plant was also familiar in Siberia and never became important in Russian medicine, it played no conspicuous part in the Russian image of China. Cf. M.P. Romaniello, “True Rhubarb? Trading Eurasian Botanical and Medical Knowledge in the Eighteenth Century,” *Journal of Global History* 11, no. 1 (March 2016).

of main events in the relations between Russia and China,<sup>8</sup> but the third, concluding, part reflects on the conceptual middle ground of these two states and cultural systems.

## 1 China in Russia

In what everyday contexts was China present in the Russian vocabulary and imagination? Russian literature offers some answers. The writer Ivan Shmelev (1873-1950) has been praised for his ability to depict traditional Russian life. In the first chapter of his lyrical short novel *Rosstani* (1913), about an old man bidding farewell to life, the main protagonist's son is said to have fallen "near Hsin-Hu village," "in the Japanese war," information that contrasts deliberately with the pristine Russianness of the rest of the narrative. Later, however, in chapter 6, old Danila Stepanych considers planting "Chinese crab-apple trees" (*kitaiskie iabloni*),<sup>9</sup> and neither the narrator nor the protagonist associates these trees with China. Indeed, "Chinese apples" (*kitaiskie iabloki*) reappear to symbolize old Russian life in the opening paragraph of Shmelev's *Niania iz Moskvy* (A Nanny from Moscow, 1936), a novel written in emigration. In chapter 4 of that novel, a Chinese vase figures in a non-believer's household, whose masters keep no icons.<sup>10</sup> In a short novel by Shmelev set in the Caucasus, *Na morskome beregu* (On the Seashore, originally published in 1913), "Chinese" peaches, and grapes that are first described as "Japanese" and later prove to have been an inedible local plant, stand for hollow exoticism, contrasted with the healthy simplicity of vines cultivated by an old Greek fisherman.<sup>11</sup> In another short novel, *Neupivaemaia chasha* (Inexhaustible Cup, 1918), the rich landlord (*barin*) is clad in a "red Chinese dressing gown ... with large-headed

8 A chronology and narrative streamlined to meet the priorities of the current political partnership between the two countries is A.V. Lukin, ed., *Rossia i Kitai: Chetyre veka vzaimodeistviia. Istoriia, sovremennoe sostoiianie i perspektivy razvitiia rossiisko-kitaiskikh otnoshenii* (Russia and China: Four Centuries of Interaction. The History, Current State and Development Perspectives of Russian-Chinese Relations) (Moscow: "Ves' Mir," 2013).

9 Ivan S. Shmelev, *Sobranie sochinenii* (Collected Works), 5 vols., with additions (Moscow: Russkaia Kniga, 2001): 1: 159, 179.

10 Shmelev, *Sobranie sochinenii*: 3: 12, 27-8. "Chinese apples" calls to mind the first European name, *pomme de Chine*, for the fruit now domesticated as the orange. The French name became *appelsien* in Dutch (cf. the German *Apfelsine*), and the latter reached Russian as *apel'sin*, an example of an eastern botanical import that was linguistically imported through the West.

11 Shmelev, *Na morskome beregu* (Belgrade: n.p., 1930): 13-4, 41, 45 (cf. 22-3).

golden snakes” and his silk, a luxury Chinese import since the seventeenth century, is the very symbol of decadence.

In the same work, however, a description of goods sold at a quintessentially Russian fair includes *kitaika*, a cheap cotton cloth.<sup>12</sup> *Kitaika* can refer to two things: One is a kind of fabric, which was also known in Russian as *nanka* and in English as nankeen after the city (Nanking, now romanized as Nanjing) from which it came.<sup>13</sup> This fabric was imported extensively from China in the eighteenth century, but, by the nineteenth, it was being manufactured in Russia, mainly in Moscow and Kazan.<sup>14</sup> The other meaning of *kitaika* is the fruit of the Chinese crab-apple tree, or the tree itself.<sup>15</sup>

These examples show that things coming from China could represent a strange land in the Far East—an incomprehensible place name in Manchuria where Russian blood was shed, an exotic vase, or an extravagant piece of clothing—but Chinese objects could also be so much part of “home” that, their alien origins forgotten, they might convey the very essence of Russianness.

Peasants, too, had an image of China.<sup>16</sup> Before the Boxer uprising of 1900 and the war against Japan in Manchuria between 1904 and 1905 had transported peasant conscripts to China, villagers and ordinary townspeople became acquainted with Chinese goods and foodstuffs through trade. Among commodities of Chinese origin, tea was foremost, although, by about 1900, its identification with “China” had weakened greatly.

### 1.1 *Tea from China*

Few phenomena are as closely identified with the traditional Russian way of life as tea drinking, but the story of the acculturation of tea in tsarist Russia is inseparable from the China trade.<sup>17</sup> Tea was consistently the main item

12 Shmelev, *Neupivaemaia chasha*, in *Sobranie sochinenii*: 1: 387, 419.

13 *Entsiklopedicheskii slovar' Brokgauz i Efron* (The Brockhaus and Efron Encyclopedic Dictionary), 82 vols. (St. Petersburg: Brokgauz i Efron, 1890-1907): 40: 519, s.v. *nanka*.

14 V.S. Elistratov, *Iazyk staroi Moskvy: Lingvoentsiklopedicheskii slovar'* (The Language of Old Moscow: A Linguistic and Encyclopedic Dictionary), 2nd ed. (Moscow: Astrel', 2004): 253.

15 For such use in literature, see the novel *Pered zerkalom* (Facing the Mirror, 1965-70) by Veniamin Kaverin (1902-89), collected in his *Purpurnyi palimpsest* (The Crimson Palimpsest) (Moscow: Agraf, 1997): 243, where the reference is to the scenery of prerevolutionary Kazan.

16 Cf. L. Heretz, *Russia on the Eve of Modernity: Popular Religion and Traditional Culture under the Last Tsars* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008): 147-50, on the popular image of China and its evolution during the Russo-Japanese war.

17 Research on the subject has mostly been the preserve of economic history in Russia and China. Particular attention has been paid to Kiakhta, the town on the Russia-Mongolia

imported from China from the nineteenth century until private trade was abolished by the Bolsheviks. Its rich cultural history in Russia has received some scholarly attention during the last few years, sponsored, in part, by contemporary businessmen interested in recovering the heritage and symbolic capital of tsarist merchants. This research has established that, in the early eighteenth century, the nobility and well-to-do city residents of European Russia had already been introduced to tea, which they at first treated as a medicine. Until the end of that century, tea was consumed mainly by the elite. Chinese tea was both transported to Russia from China—by camel caravans passing through Mongolia, Siberia, and the Urals—and via European ports, mostly from London. Tea drinking had spread to all strata of Russian society by the 1840s. In the second half of the nineteenth century, in parallel to the overland route via Kiakhta, Chinese tea of lesser quality began to be delivered by sea from Canton, while cheap tea from India and Ceylon also became available. Brick tea was imported by Russian merchants, who, in the 1860s, established factories in the port of Hankou on the Yangtze River (now part of Wuhan, in Hubei province). In the 1890s, although small plantations had been established in the Russian Caucasus, most of the tea consumed in Russia still came from China, and Russia was by far the world's largest importer of Chinese tea. The opening of the Trans-Siberian railway helped reduce tea prices further, and its consumption reached a new peak. Tea drinking around the samovar, a custom practiced since the early nineteenth century, became a national pastime.<sup>18</sup>

Literary evidence on the early association with China of tea drinking in the Russian empire includes the contributions of two national poets, a Polish and a Russian. In his first published poem, “Zima miejska” (City Winter, 1818), Adam Mickiewicz (1798-1855), who attended Wilno (later Vilnius) University from 1815 to 1819, described the golden days of his fellow students, the city's “fashionable youth,” drinking “Chinese tea” while wearing a “nankeen” robe for breakfast and sipping out of “porcelain” cups at lunch.<sup>19</sup> And, in chapter 3

---

border that flourished as the centre of the barter trade in tea roughly between 1760 and 1860. A.V. Startsev, “Kiakhtinskii torg” (The Kiakhta Trade), in *Istoricheskaia entsiklopediia Sibiri* (Historical Encyclopedia of Siberia), ed. V.A. Lamin, 3 vols. (Novosibirsk: Istoricheskoe Nasledie Sibiri, 2009): 2: 256-7. On the place of the tea trade in Russian-Chinese relations, see M. Avery, *The Tea Road: China and Russia Meet Across the Steppe* (Beijing: China Intercontinental Press, 2003).

- 18 This account is based chiefly on I.A. Sokolov, *Chai i chainaia torgovlia v Rossii: 1790-1919 gg.* (Tea and the Tea Trade in Russia, 1790-1919), 2nd ed. (Moscow: Sputnik+, 2012). From the same author and publisher, see *Kitaiskii chai v Rossii* (Chinese Tea in Russia), 3 vols. (2015).
- 19 Tomas Venclova discusses this poem in his *Vilnius: Gorod v Evrope* (Vilnius: A City in Europe), trans. M. Čepaitytė (St. Petersburg: Iz-vo Ivana Limbakha, 2012): 147. See the

of Alexander Pushkin's (1799-1837) novel in verse *Eugene Onegin*, "a Chinese teapot" appeared atop a Russian samovar as Tatiana Larin sat down to drink tea with her sister: *Shipel vechernii samovar / kitaiskii chainik nagrevaia*.<sup>20</sup> Just like the articles listed by Mickiewicz, the Chinese teapot was an exotic item in the 1820s, when Pushkin's novel was serialized. As Pushkin scholars have pointed out, readers would not have taken the object as literally "Chinese": Tatiana's family was not described as well-off, and a genuine porcelain teapot from China would have been unaffordable luxury. The teapot on Tatiana's samovar may thus have looked "Chinese" but was still assumed to be of Russian manufacture.<sup>21</sup> The first porcelain factory, Portselinovaia Manufaktura, opened in St. Petersburg in 1744, more than thirty years after the first European porcelain was produced in Meissen, Saxony; it was relaunched under the name Imperatorskii Farforovyi Zavod in 1765. While the Russian "taste for China" was adopted through Germany, the nativized word *farfor* for porcelain/china came from Turkish. Several private Russian firms made porcelain in the nineteenth century.<sup>22</sup>

---

chapter by T.R. Weeks on Mickiewicz as Polish national poet, Russian subject, and Lithuanian patriot in *Russia's People of Empire: Life Stories from Eurasia, 1500 to the Present*, ed. S.M. Norris and W. Sunderland (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012).

- 20 *Evgenii Onegin*, chap. 3, sect. 37. In the literal translation by Vladimir Nabokov, *Eugene Onegin: A Novel in Verse* (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1964), this reads, "the evening samovar / hissed as it warmed the Chinese teapot." The classic study by M.P. Alekseev, "Pushkin i Kitai" (Pushkin and China), in the last revised version collected in *Pushkin i mir Vostoka* (Pushkin and the World of the East), ed. E.P. Chelyshev (Moscow: Nauka, 1999), does not mention this scene. D. Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, *Russian Orientalism: Asia in the Russian Mind from Peter the Great to the Emigration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), has much on Pushkin in the Caucasus in chap. 4, "The Oriental Muse," but ignores his interest in China. S.S. Lim, *China and Japan in the Russian Imagination, 1685-1922: To the Ends of the Orient* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013): 32, cites another instance of tea-drinking by the samovar in *Evgenii Onegin*, chap. 2, sect. 12.
- 21 K.A. Aminova, "Kitaiskii chainik" (Chinese Teapot), in *Onegin'skaia entsiklopediia* (The Onegin Encyclopedia), ed. N.I. Mikhailova, 2 vols. (Moscow: Russkii Put', 1999-2004).
- 22 V.V. Znamenov, ed., *Imperatorskii Farforovyi Zavod 1744-1904* (The Imperial Porcelain Factory) (St. Petersburg: Sankt-Peterburg Orkestr and Global View, 2008), and [www.ipm.ru](http://www.ipm.ru). "Chinese teapots" produced by Russian porcelain factories in the 1830s are shown in *Voobrazhaemyi Vostok: Kitai "po russki," XVIII—nachalo XX veka* (The Imagined Orient: China "in Russian," Eighteenth to Early Twentieth Centuries), ed. O.A. Sosnina (Moscow: Kukhovo Pole, 2016): 157-8.

Whether “a purely Russian invention”<sup>23</sup> or another cultural import, the samovar became a Russian speciality by the end of the eighteenth century, its production associated with a particular locality, the town of Tula, south of Moscow. It retained iconic status as a symbol of Russian culture while owing its spread to the rising demand for Chinese tea. Teapots were used before the adoption of the samovar in Russia and may have been adapted for preparing tea from a vessel previously used for boiling *sbiten'*, a traditional honey-based drink.<sup>24</sup> The first English teapots, made of silver, emerged at roughly the same time in the late seventeenth century, in imitation of Chinese porcelain teapots and winepots.<sup>25</sup> Of well-attested Chinese origin, teapots were developed in the twelfth century by craftsmen in Yixing 宜興, a town in today's Jiangsu province.<sup>26</sup>

Westerners always noticed the unusually small cups used by the Chinese for tea and other beverages. The Portuguese Dominican friar Gaspar da Cruz (1520-70), who visited Canton, left a description of small Chinese porcelain cups in his pioneering book *Tratado das cousas da China* (Treatise on Things Chinese), published in 1569.<sup>27</sup> In Russia, notwithstanding the poem by Mickiewicz cited above, porcelain cups were not taken up together with tea. Russian teacups were larger and differed from the Chinese or Japanese by having handles; in this, the Russian variety was probably indebted to the china teacups identified with tea-drinking culture in Britain. Neither did the Chinese use a samovar. Still, readers of Pushkin's friend, Father Iakin'f (Nikita) Bichurin

- 
- 23 J. Scarce, “Russia, Iran and Turkey,” in *Tea East & West*, ed. R. Faulkner (London: V&A, 2003): 78; cf. Sokolov, *Chai i chainaia torgovlia*: 34. As V.H. Mair and E. Hoh put it more carefully in their *The True History of Tea* (New York and London: Thames & Hudson, 2009): 144, the origins of the samovar “are somewhat obscure.”
- 24 Exhibition on teapot history, Collection of Folk Artisan Crafts of the Russian Federation (Fond Narodnykh Khudozhestvennykh Promyslov RF), Moscow, April-June 2013.
- 25 J. Styles, “Product Innovation in Early Modern London,” *Past and Present* 168 (2000): 140-8. See the teapot (c. 1685) from the Victoria & Albert Museum, illustrated in *Chinese Whispers: Chinoiserie in Britain 1650-1930*, ed. D. Beevers (Brighton: Royal Pavilion & Museums, 2008): 86.
- 26 R. Finlay, *The Pilgrim Art: The Culture of Porcelain in World History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010): 127. On the massive imports of Yixing ware and their imitation in Europe, see W.R. Sargent, *Treasures of Chinese Export Ceramics: From the Peabody Essex Museum* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012): 223.
- 27 “They drink so little,” da Cruz explained, “because at each mouthful of food they must take a sip of drink, and therefore the cup is so small.” A translation of his book is in C.R. Boxer, *South China in the Sixteenth Century (1550-1575)*, 2nd ed. (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), here 142.

(1777-1853), who not only informed the poet about China but laid the foundations of Russian Sinology after serving in the Russian Orthodox Mission in Peking between 1807 and 1822, could be forgiven for having concluded that the samovar was a household item in China, too, since Bichurin reported that the Chinese dinner table in winter featured “a *samovar*, in which are assembled different meats and broth condiments.”<sup>28</sup> This description of the Chinese hot pot through imaginative recourse to a Russian object is a telling moment in cultural translation. A century after Bichurin, when the eminent writer Lu Xun (1881-1936) explained the word “samovar” to readers of his 1935 translation (via German and Japanese) of Nikolai Gogol’s (1809-52) novel *Dead Souls* (1842), he too compared the samovar to the Chinese hot pot.<sup>29</sup>

For a purpose similar to that served by the Chinese porcelain cups, Russian tea drinkers employed saucers. These were also known in China but only after being introduced by European demand for tea services in the seventeenth century.<sup>30</sup> In the popular Russian custom—not the way the Larins of *Eugene Onegin* would have taken their tea and certainly not a way familiar in China—tea was poured out into a saucer, where it cooled more quickly than in a deeper vessel. The painter Boris Kustodiev (1878-1927) illustrated this usage in several celebrated portraits of merchant women at the tea table. An ingenious Russian solution to handling hot tea, practiced since the first half of the nineteenth century,<sup>31</sup> has been to pour the drink into a glass in a metal glass holder, the *podstakannik*, still offered to travelers on Russian trains today. The main difference between tea consumption in China and Russia has, however, been the Russian preference (conspicuous from the nineteenth century on) for black tea over green and the addition of sugar, milk, and cream—the *slivki* (literally, cream) that, in Pushkin’s description in *Eugene Onegin*, were served with the tea.

For Russians, tea has been so closely identified with their home culture since the nineteenth century that its foreign origins gradually became obscured. An earlier comparable import was the potato, which Catherine the Great had

28 Taking the opposite direction from da Cruz, Bichurin explained that Chinese wine cups were as small as a Russian thimble because the Chinese “drink very little.” N.Ia. Bichurin, *Kitai v grazhdanskom i npravstvennom sostoianii* (China in [Its] Civil and Moral Condition; 1848), ed. K.M. Tertitskii (Moscow: Vostochnyi Dom, 2002): 376. The same text had appeared in Bichurin’s *Kitai, ego zhiteli, nruvy, obychai, prosveshchenie* (China, Its Inhabitants, Mores, Customs, Education; 1840).

29 B.L. Riftin, “*Mertyve dushi* Gogolia v kitaiskikh perevodakh” (Gogol’s *Dead Souls* in Chinese Translations), *Vostok-Zapad 2009-2010*: 232.

30 M. Wilson, “China,” in Faulkner, ed., *Tea East & West*: 41-3.

31 Cf. Scarce, “Russia, Iran and Turkey”: 77-80.

forced on an unwilling population; despite the “potato uprisings,” this naturalized vegetable became an essential component of the Russian diet by the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>32</sup> With the help of powerful native associations such as the samovar, tea—the domesticated “sign” of China—metamorphosed into the essence of Russianness.<sup>33</sup> The poets Mickiewicz and Pushkin wrote before this appropriation process was completed; in 1848 a Russian writer describing tea as both a beverage popular throughout the Russian empire and a quintessential element of Moscow life still emphasized its Chinese origins, going so far as to imagine how the Chinese would have praised tea-drinking habits in Moscow and to call refined enjoyment of the drink (by Russians) *kitaizm*, Chineseness.<sup>34</sup> By the end of the same century, a new understanding of tea as “Russian” replaced perception of it as “Chinese” even though tea imports from China continued and Russian tea companies made persistent use of Chinese imagery in their advertising.

We know now that tea, whether imported mostly from China or, as with the British market, from Southeast Asia, was naturalized everywhere it reached. Already in the early eighteenth century, “Chinese tea became a national British beverage.”<sup>35</sup> Across the British Empire, as in the Muslim world, the rituals surrounding tea consumption became markers of national distinctiveness: tea has likewise been called a national drink in Persia (where samovars are also part of tea culture) and Turkey.<sup>36</sup> For more than a millennium, tea has been

32 Another imported product, coffee, remained the preferred beverage in St. Petersburg and the western provinces of Russia. On Russian *kofo*, see K.A. Bogdanov, *O krokodilakh v Rossii: Ocherki iz istorii zaimstvovaniia i ekzotizmov* (On Crocodiles in Russia: Essays from the History of Borrowings and Exotica) (Moscow: NLO, 2006): 56-67. For the world-history context, see F. Fernández-Armesto and B. Sacks, “The Global Exchange of Food and Drugs,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption*, ed. F. Trentmann (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

33 “The ‘Chinese herb’ became the Russian national drink already in the nineteenth century, forming a significant layer in our country’s culture.” Sokolov, *Chai i chainaia torgovlia*: 77.

34 See Ivan T. Kokorev (1825-53), “Chai v Moskve” (Tea in Moscow), collected in his *Moskva sorokovykh godov: Ocherki i povesti o Moskve XIX veka* (Moscow in the Forties: Sketches and Short Novels about Nineteenth-Century Moscow), ed. B.V. Smirenskii (Moscow: Moskovskii Rabochii, 1959): 102-7 (*kitaizm*, p. 106).

35 J. Hanser, “Teatime in the North Country: Consumption of Chinese Exports in North-East England,” *Northern History* 49, no. 1 (March 2012): 55, and cf. 65. See also L. Hunt, *Writing History in the Global Era* (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 2014): 134-8, on the “astounding” changes introduced through tea drinking into the Anglophone world.

36 Scarce, “Russia, Iran and Turkey”: 80, 83. E.K. Lichtenstein, “Identities through Things: A Comment,” in *Early Modern Things: Objects and their Histories, 1500-1800*, ed. P. Findlen (London and New York: Routledge, 2013): 377-8, notes that “material objects could ...

perceived as a traditional beverage in China.<sup>37</sup> Tea and potatoes had already had a long history in Russia when, in 1890, the next symbol of Russianness, the matryoshka nesting doll, was invented with inspiration drawn from a Japanese lacquerware toy and the British arts-and-crafts movement, to be presented in the Russian pavilion of the Exposition Universelle in Paris in 1900.<sup>38</sup>

### 1.2 *The Built Environment*

Having started out with apples, we have now seen the material presence of China in Russia through silk and cotton, porcelain and tea. In the realm of high culture, China was better known through the applied arts than it was through literature. Translations from Chinese into Russian, long mediated through French and German, were marginal in the cultural consciousness of the European-oriented Russian intelligentsia. Chinese music, too, was little known in Russia, although several European composers posited a musical affinity between Russia and China.<sup>39</sup> Chinoiserie, the fashion for things Chinese first introduced from Western Europe in the eighteenth century, blossomed anew in the art and literature of the Russian Silver Age, approximately from the 1890s to the First World War, and will be dealt with below. A revival of the Enlightenment's "taste for China,"<sup>40</sup> this second wave arose from the rediscovery of China in art nouveau and European modernism.

---

function as cultural liaisons, bridging the divide between disparate societies, [yet] things could divide as easily as they could unite"; he refers to the association of tea with female domesticity in Europe and military valour in Japan. For more, see Faulkner, ed., *Tea East & West*; Mair and Hoh, *The True History of Tea*; M. Pitelka, ed., *Japanese Tea Culture: Art, History and Practice* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003); L.C. Martin, *Tea: The Drink that Changed the World* (Tokyo: Tuttle Publishing, 2007), and the impressive work by M. Ellis et al., *Empire of Tea: The Asian Leaf that Conquered the World* (London: Reaktion Books, 2015).

37 A favored drink of the imperial court in the Tang dynasty (618-907), tea "became common refreshment throughout China" during the Song dynasty (960-1279), becoming "a defining aspect of Chinese culture" thereafter. Finlay, *The Pilgrim Art*: 125-6. See also "Tea," theme issue of the online journal *China Heritage Quarterly* 29 (March 2012) and J.A. Benn, *Tea in China: A Religious and Cultural History* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2015).

38 W.R. Salmond, *Arts and Crafts in Late Imperial Russia: Reviving the Kustar Art Industries, 1870-1917* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996): 85-7.

39 Chap. 7, "Popolo di Pekino: Musorgsky's Muscovy in Early Twentieth-Century Europe," in *Five Operas and a Symphony: Words and Music in Russian Culture*, ed. B. Gasparov (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), discusses such perceptions by Puccini and Mahler.

40 For a comparative perspective, see D. Porter, *The Chinese Taste in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) and E. Zuroski Jenkins, *A Taste for*

The artistically most impressive expressions of chinoiserie in Russia were inaccessible to the general public in three palace complexes in the vicinity of St. Petersburg—the “Chinese study” in Peter the Great’s palace Monplaisir (behind the gates of Peterhof on the coast of the Gulf of Finland), Catherine the Great’s “Chinese Palace” at Oranienbaum, and, above all, the “Chinese village” and the now-lost “Chinese town” and “Chinese theater,” built on Catherine’s orders at Tsarskoe Selo.<sup>41</sup> In the late tsarist period, while images of “China” could be seen in the advertisements of tea-trading firms, more accessible architecture reminiscent of China met the public’s eye in daily life. The still unwritten cultural history of the relations between Russia and China would need to revisit such sites.<sup>42</sup>

One extraordinary site of an imagined “China in Russia” in the fin de siècle was the Perlov Teahouse in Moscow, the main store of the Perlov tea magnates. The family business, established in 1787, owned more than one hundred thirty shops in Russia and abroad. In anticipation of the arrival of the Chinese imperial envoy Li Hongzhang 李鴻章 (1823-1901) for the coronation of Nicholas II in Moscow in 1896, the Russian architect Karl Gippius (1864-1941) turned a building on Miasnitskaia Street, recently acquired by Sergei Perlov (1836-1910), into a masterpiece of late chinoiserie. Complete with a roof pagoda, the Perlov Teahouse was exquisitely furnished with artifacts, some imported from China; the owner, who also resided in the building, was a collector of Chinese art and porcelain. Customers entering the shop were served tea by Russian staff in the Chinese fashion, although, if so inclined, they could choose coffee instead. The Teahouse was nationalized in the 1920s, divided into communal apartments

---

*China: English Subjectivity and the Prehistory of Orientalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

- 41 See J. Milam, “Toying with China: Cosmopolitanism and Chinoiserie in Russian Garden Design and Building Projects under Catherine the Great,” *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 25, no. 1 (2012) and the recent articles in O.A. Sosnina, ed., *Vobrazhaemyi Vostok*, a volume published to accompany an exhibition at Moscow’s Tsaritsyno Museum (November 2015–April 2016). The website peterhofmuseum.ru has much visual material and a historical introduction.
- 42 See M. Gamsa, “The Cultural and the Social in Chinese-Russian Relations,” *Cultural and Social History* 9, no. 3 (2012). N.A. Samoilov, *Rossiiia i Kitai v XVII—nachale XX veka. Tendentsii, formy i stadii sotsiokul'turnogo vzaimodeistviia* (Russia and China in the Seventeenth—Early Twentieth Centuries: Trends, Forms and Stages of Sociocultural Interaction) (St. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo SPGU, 2014): 137, describes the Perlov shop from very different historiographical positions.

during the Soviet period, and restored in 2011 to its initial form and function by a descendant of the Perlov family.<sup>43</sup>

### 1.3 “Chinese Shadows” in Russia: Looking West or East?

Instead of searching for the collective Russian image of China, as one might do by summarizing literary works “about China,” let us examine several books having China in their title but not necessarily as their subject. The following investigation will demonstrate both the absorption of China into Russian life and the concrete sources of Chinese imagery in material culture. Between 1894 and 1928, no fewer than five books came out under the title *Kitaiskie teni* (Chinese Shadows). None alluded to or seemed to be aware of the others.

The first such work is a long novel by Petr P. Gnedich (1855-1925), serialized in the journal *Russkii Vestnik* in 1894 and published as a book in St. Petersburg in 1895. This author is remembered today only for a popular history of world art; the “Chinese shadows” of the title appear in the very end of his *Kitaiskie teni*, an utterly forgotten novel.<sup>44</sup> These “shadows” are pictures, projected by a magic lantern. Another *Kitaiskie teni* is a collection of stories by Aleksei N. Tolstoy (1883-1945), published in 1922 in Berlin, where the writer lived before returning to Soviet Russia the same year. The Berlin edition was not subsequently reissued, although reworked versions of the stories were published in the Soviet Union.<sup>45</sup> They bear no relation to China. Similarly, *Kitaiskie teni* by poet Georgii V. Ivanov (1894-1958) was the title of fictionalized memoirs about the Russian literary world, published in the émigré press from 1924 to 1930. These memoirs, too, have nothing to do with China, beyond their oblique title, which had earlier appeared to Gnedich and A.N. Tolstoy.<sup>46</sup> What, then, did “Chinese shadows” mean?

Clues to Ivanov’s reading of China can be found in his poetry. In “Kitaiskie drakony nad Nevoi” (Chinese Dragons over the Neva; 1914),<sup>47</sup> a menacing China gazes on the Russian capital through the eyes of two stone guardian lions, which had been brought to St. Petersburg from Jilin town in Manchuria and

43 See M.V. Nashchokina, “Chainyi dom Sergeia Vasil’evicha Perlova” (The Sergei V. Perlov Teahouse), *Nashe nasledie* 111 (2014), with numerous illustrations on the journal’s website.

44 P.P. Gnedich, *Kitaiskie* [orig. spelling *Kitaiskiiia*] *teni* (St. Petersburg: Tip. Tovarishchestva “Obshchestvennaia Pol’za,” 1895): 441-3.

45 Gr. A.N. Tolstoy, *Kitaiskie* [orig. spelling *Kitaiskiiia*] *teni* (Berlin: Ogon’ki, 1922).

46 *Kitaiskie teni* is available in G. Ivanov, *Sobranie sochinenii* (Collected Works), ed. E.V. Vitkovskii, 3 vols. (Moscow: Soglasie, 1994): vol. 3.

47 *Ibid.*: 1: 120; and see editor’s commentary. On the incomprehensibly ominous stone lions, cf. also the preceding poem, “Stuchat dalekie kopyta ...” (Distant Hooves are Clattering): *ibid.*: 119.

placed on the Embankment of Emperor Peter the Great in 1907. The creatures exact a bloody revenge for the defeat of the Boxer uprising by taking the life of a passer-by, who has witnessed their midnight awakening—a gothic tale with a nod to Pushkin's *Bronze Horseman*. In Ivanov's prose, things Chinese become part of the decor of a decadent Russia; his fascination with chinoiserie, evident in the unfinished novel *Tretii Rim* (The Third Rome; 1929), calls to mind the Orient figuring in the work of painters of the Mir Iskusstva (World of Art) circle in the 1900s.<sup>48</sup> The stone lions on the Neva riverbank return, not as symbols of China but as a cherished memory of Petersburg, in Ivanov's last poems of 1958, the year of his death in France.<sup>49</sup> The two statues are still there on the Petrovskaia Embankment, the feminine-sounding *shi-tsza*, in the Russian transcription on the pedestals, standing for the Chinese *shizi* 獅子, lion.

Our next *Kitaiskie teni* is a title the writer Andrei Sobol' (1888-1926) gave to the last of the four volumes of his *Collected Works*, which he prepared for publication before committing suicide.<sup>50</sup> The volume is titled after its opening story, not a story about China but a modernist montage of the doomed love of a petty thief and his girl in the fear-infested Moscow of early Bolshevik rule. The intention of the title is, however, conveyed through the shadow-theater figures that decorate the book's cover page. This visual hint solves the riddle and shows that Russian authors derived their *kitaiskie teni* through *ombres chinoises*. This was how the art of shadow puppetry, loosely based on the Chinese genre, had become known in Europe after being introduced during the fad for China in the eighteenth century.<sup>51</sup> The "Chinese shadows" belonged to the vocabulary of Russian chinoiserie, along with the china, tea, and parasols, but disappeared before the others. By now, the expression appears to survive only in references to cosmetics manufactured in China, while past uses of the term are reminiscent of the old English parlor game "Chinese whispers": connoting an exotic and incomprehensible China,<sup>52</sup> "Chinese shadows" may or may not apply to a Chinese subject. The French derivation of *kitaiskie teni* (comparable to the

48 Cf. R. Bartlett, "Japonisme and Japanophobia: The Russo-Japanese War in Russian Cultural Consciousness," *Russian Review* 67, no. 1 (2008).

49 See "I.O.," from a cycle of poems later collected under the heading *Posmertnyi dnevnik* (A Posthumous Diary), in Ivanov, *Sobranie sochinenii*: 1: 438.

50 A. Sobol', *Sobranie sochinenii* (Collected Works), 4 vols. (Moscow: Zemlia i Fabrika, 1926-7).

51 F.P.L. Chen, *Chinese Shadow Theatre: History, Popular Religion, & Women Warriors* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007): 49, concludes that "there was nothing Chinese about the *ombres chinoises*, aside from the name."

52 See R. Ballaster, *Fabulous Orient: Fictions of the East in England 1662-1785* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005): 202-8.

German origins of Russian porcelain) reminds us that aesthetic Orientalism, the revival of both *chinoiserie* and *japonisme*, which marked the Russian Silver age and extended into the Soviet 1920s, originated in Western Europe.

Probably the best-known example of this Franco-Russian trajectory is the China of poet Nikolai Gumilev (1886-1921), the mentor of Georgii Ivanov and other young poets of his generation. His collection *Farforovyi pavil'on* (The Porcelain Pavilion), first published in 1918 and subtitled *Chinese Poems*,<sup>53</sup> consisted largely of adaptations from *Le livre de jade*, a highly influential collection of Chinese poetry translated by Judith Gautier (1845-1917), which itself was the result of a complex process of adaptation and creation, revision, and expansion between the first edition in 1867 and the second in 1902. "Le pavillon de porcelaine" was the single most widely admired poem in *Le livre de jade*, although Gautier, possibly inspired by the sight of a porcelain pavilion at the Paris Exposition in 1867, actually added "porcelain" to a Tang Dynasty poem, where it was not present.<sup>54</sup> Gumilev returned to revolutionary Russia from France after discovering, half a century later, the *chinoiserie* cultivated by poets of the Parnasse in Paris of the 1860s and 1870s. The most notable figure among those poets was Judith Gautier's father, Théophile Gautier (1811-72). Gumilev's adapting Chinese poetry into Russian through French offers a parallel to the reappropriation of an imagined "China" in Catherine's Russia, based on Meissen porcelain, French prints of Chinese fountains, and English China gardens.<sup>55</sup> It is also analogous to the mediated retranslation of Russian literature that was practiced in China, largely through English, in the first half of the twentieth century.

In an unpublished poem of 1915, Osip Mandelstam (1891-1938), who met Gumilev in Paris at the start of a close friendship, portrayed his "cardboard profile ... \as if for a Chinese shadow cut" (*I tvoï kartonnyi profil', Gumilev, / Kak vyrezannyi dlia kitaiskoi teni*), while chiding him for "admitting Théophile to the pantheon."<sup>56</sup> But the standard narrative of the derivation of Russian images of the East from Western Europe, which the example of *kitaiskie teni* appears

53 N. Gumilev, *Farforovyi pavil'on: Kitaiskie stikhi* (St. Petersburg: Giperborei, 1918). A second edition was published posthumously in 1922 (Petrograd: Mysl').

54 See P. Yu, "Your Alabaster in This Porcelain': Judith Gautier's *Le livre de jade*," *PMLA* 122, no. 2 (2007): 475-7.

55 T. Mozzhukhina, "Shinuazri v evropeiskom i russkom farfore XVII veka" (Chinoiserie in European and Russian Porcelain in the Eighteenth Century) and D. Shvidkovsky, "Shinuazri v evropeiskoi i russkoi arkhitekture" (Chinoiserie in European and Russian Architecture), in *Voobrazhaemyi Vostok*, ed. Sosnina.

56 Unpublished address to Gumilev, beginning with the line *Avtomatichen, vezhliv i surov*, in O. Mandelstam, *Kamen'* (Stone), ed. L.Ia. Ginzburg et al. (Leningrad: Nauka, 1990): 350.

to support, requires qualification. Gumilev had written about China before going to France; another source of influence on him while in Paris was meeting Russian artists with strong interests in the East.<sup>57</sup> The geography of Russia as a country encompassing “the East” within itself and an empire bordering on the Chinese ensured that direct import and cultural translation were also at work.<sup>58</sup> While this does not mean that images received “directly” from China could not then be processed through Western taste and European authorities, not all the Chinese shadows in Russia were a projection of the French.

A case in point is the adventure-novel *Kitaiskie teni*, published in Riga in 1928 by Iurii Galich, the pen name used by émigré writer Georgii I. Goncharenko (1877-1940). A White Army general, who expressed strongly anti-Soviet positions, Goncharenko had lived in Riga from 1923 and committed suicide there after the Soviet Union invaded Latvia. As a writer of popular fiction, Galich made a living out of his experiences in the Far East with little of the French flair of the Silver Age. Unlike the “Chinese shadows” discussed so far, his *Kitaiskie teni* is firmly set in China. The hectic, luridly Oriental metropolis of Shanghai serves not only as the scene but almost as a co-participant in the misadventures of a Russian prince, formerly a lieutenant in the White Army whom emigration had reduced to poverty and humiliating moral compromises.<sup>59</sup>

“China” as an exotic mirage, the dream of a faraway land—a *dalekii Kitai* (distant China) of pavilions and mandarins—had been a destination for Russian imaginary escapes since Pushkin’s day.<sup>60</sup> It was called upon to fulfill this function all the more urgently when state borders had been closed and the option of a flight to China from the hardships of the Revolution and civil

57 O.I. Fedotov, “‘Kitaiskie stikhi’ Nikolaia Gumileva: Versifikatsionnaia poetika tsikla” (Nikolai Gumilev’s *Chinese Poems: The Versification Poetics of the Cycle*), *Literatura* 37 (2003).

58 This was illustrated at the exhibition, *The Russian Avant-Garde: Siberia and the East* (see n. 6, above).

59 *Kitaiskie teni*, in I. Galich, *Sobranie sochinenii* (Collected Works), ed. I. Vladimirov, 4 vols. (Moscow: Knizhnyi Klub Knigovek, 2012): vol. 2.

60 Gumilev’s “A Voyage to China” (1910) attached the adjective *dalekii* to China just as Pushkin did, imagining an escape “beneath the walls of distant China / or seething Paris” in a poem beginning with the line “*Poedem, ia gotov*” (Let’s Go then, I Am Ready). Two weeks after writing this poem, in January 1830, Pushkin requested permission to travel to France or Italy or join an embassy to China in Bichurin’s company, but the tsar granted him neither. Alekseev, “Pushkin i Kitai”: 71. Gumilev notably rhymed *Kitai* with *rai* (paradise); Valerii Pereleshin (1913-92), a disciple who became the most important poet of the Russian emigration in China, reused this rhyme twice in his own poem “Kitai,” written in Harbin in 1942. See O. Bakich, *Valerii Pereleshin: Life of a Silkworm* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015): 3; on Gumilev, esp. 134.

war—a “way out” used by Russians for emigrating to Manchuria and Shanghai in the 1920s—was cut off. In 1927, at a time when consolation and distraction were sorely needed, Elizaveta I. Vasil'eva (1887-1928), best known as Cherubina de Gabriac, a pen name she had used for romantic poetry published in the St. Petersburg journal *Apollon* in 1909, signed poems, which proved to be her last, with another pseudonym, Ли Сян-цзы (Li Xiangzi). Her cycle of twenty-one poems in “Chinese” style was entitled *The Little House under the Pear Tree*. They were the fruit of the poet's last romantic attachment, to the sinologist Iulian K. Shchutskii (1897-1938), and it was he who transformed the former Cherubina, an exile in Soviet Turkestan, into a philosopher of ancient China. Was this Chinese mask an attempt to achieve distance by alienation from the suffering self, or was it intended to circumvent censorship and let the poetry reach readers in the guise of translation? Ten years after Vasil'eva's death in Tashkent, Shchutskii was executed with other Russian Orientalists in the Stalinist purges, while *The Little House under the Pear Tree* remained in manuscript until 1988.<sup>61</sup> Vasil'eva probably wrote her Chinese poems in awareness of Gumilev's *Porcelain Pavilion* and possibly in homage to the poet, who had been a central figure in her life and was shot by the Bolsheviks in 1921.

The Perlov Teahouse no longer existed in Soviet Moscow, but a grand building on Bol'shaia Sadovaia Street, conceived in “Stalin's empire style” in 1939 and completed by architect Dmitrii Chechulin (1901-81) only in 1954, was named Hotel Pekin to celebrate Soviet-Chinese friendship. The hotel was soon provided with a restaurant, also named “Pekin,” which served Chinese food prepared by a Russian kitchen staff. In the Perestroika days of 1989, Pekin v Moskve (Peking in Moscow) opened on the premises as the first Chinese-staffed Chinese restaurant in the city. Both restaurants closed in 1997, while the Hotel Pekin remained in operation at the same central location, a hundred meters from the landmark monument to poet Vladimir Mayakovsky.<sup>62</sup> Alongside Chinese vases and art, the hotel's interior decor includes a painted plafond, on

61 See E. Vasil'eva, “Dve veshchi v mire dlia menia vsegda byli samymi sviatymi: Stikhi i liubov” (“Two Things in the World Were always most Sacred to Me: Poetry and Love”), *Novyi Mir* 12 (1988); V. Glotser, “Domik pod grushevym derevom. Poslednii psevdonim Cherubiny” (*The Little House under the Pear Tree: The Last Pen Name of Cherubina*), *Peterburgskoe Vostokovedenie* 9 (1997) and A.I. Kobzev, “Sinie cherti protiv tamplierov” (*The Blue Devils Against the Knights Templar*), *Obshchestvo i Gosudarstvo v Kitae* 43 (2013).

62 On “Stalin's empire style,” with much on Chechulin and several mentions of the Hotel Pekin, see *Arkhitektura stalinskoi epokhi* (*The Architecture of the Stalin Age*), ed. Iu.L. Kosenkova (Moscow: KomKniga, 2010) and the “history” section on [hotelpeking.ru](http://hotelpeking.ru).

which a Chinese girl, followed by a Russian with a parasol, appears as the only traditionally clad figure among a bevy of Soviet citizens in suits and dresses.

Various Chinese and Chinese-styled decorative objects originally acquired when they were in fashion during the decades preceding the Revolution passed on to the heirs of their first owners, weathering the ravages of twentieth-century Russian history.<sup>63</sup> In the continuing formation of an imagined “China in Russia,” objects brought back directly from China played a special part. In the mid-1930s and again after the historical turning points of the war’s end in 1945 and Stalin’s death in 1953, things Chinese arrived in Soviet Russia in the luggage of “repatriates” from Harbin and Shanghai.<sup>64</sup> In the 1950s, Soviet people who had spent several years on assignment in the People’s Republic of China (PRC) brought home items that would also function as tokens of China. The porcelain pieces, fans, and gowns embodied the memory of life in China and represented “the Orient” for following generations. In the new places to which they had been transported, these objects developed new functions.<sup>65</sup> Former residents of tsarist Russia, who moved on from China to the United States, South America, Australia, or Israel, also took their Chinese memorabilia with them, but the symbolic weight of such articles increased in Russia itself, because foreign travel had become an experience unlikely to be repeated.

The children of both “White” émigrés and Soviet employees in China recalled acquiring their first images of the country in which their parents had lived through material objects, sometimes bearing the unfamiliar signs of Chinese writing.<sup>66</sup> Besides personal channels of this kind, regular Soviet trade

63 See L.I. Kuz'menko, “Kitaiskie veshchi v obikhode: Moda na ‘vostochnoe’ v russkoi gorodskoi srede kontsa XIX—nachala XX veka” (Chinese Things in the Household: Fashion for the “Oriental” in the Russian City Environment of the Late Nineteenth–Early Twentieth Century), in *Tsvety neobychnnye: Narodnaia khudozhestvennaia kul'tura Rossii rubezha vekov. Kul'turovedcheskaia perspektiva* (Flowers Extraordinary: Popular Art Culture in Turn-of-the-Century Russia: A Culturological Perspective), ed. V.N. Maksimov (Moscow: Progress–Traditsiia, 2002).

64 An example is the kimono-clad porcelain doll from Manchuria with which N. Starosel'skaia opens her *Povsednevnaia zhizn' “russkogo” Kitaia* (The Everyday Life of “Russian” China) (Moscow: Molodaia Gvardiia, 2006), a book based on memoirs by former Russian émigrés in China.

65 Cf. B. Olsen, *In Defense of Things: Archaeology and the Ontology of Objects* (Plymouth: AltaMira Press, 2010) for a cogent argument against a purely representational view of material objects.

66 For the descendants' perspective in another part of the world, see the beginning of Perry Anderson's memoir of his father, an employee of the Chinese Maritime Customs: “we were left with a world of objects, familiar and incomprehensible, recalling a past to which

with the PRC in the 1950s and again in the 1980s introduced such new Chinese goods into Russian daily life as towels and thermos bottles. These were esteemed as “imports” rather than suffering from the disrespect that later developed for things “made in China.”<sup>67</sup>

## 2 Russia in China

The Chinese notion of “Russia” has been heavily influenced by communism, following the model of the Bolshevik Revolution, but it has also been fashioned by circulating goods and artifacts, travel reports, literature, music, and visual arts. Not unlike the situation with things Chinese in Russia, some imports from Russia came to occupy an in-between space in the modern Chinese imaginary: although “Russian,” hence foreign, they were nonetheless an instinctively familiar part of daily life.

There was no Chinese equivalent to the spread of tea in Russia, nor was Russian tea drinking usually perceived by the Chinese as the important cultural export of China that it was.<sup>68</sup> Gastronomic imports from Russia were rare before the Russian population in Harbin, the administrative center of the Chinese Eastern Railway in Manchuria, had spread the customs of eating bread and sausages, cracking sunflower seeds, and drinking beer. Much earlier, however, an imagined Russian item of high symbolic value, though irrelevant to the history of Russian-Chinese relations, had attracted Chinese attention: a splendid snow cape embellished with peacock feathers, which appeared in the beloved classic of Chinese literature, *Dream of the Red Chamber* by Cao Xueqin 曹雪芹 (1715?-63), first published in 1791. This unique garment, worn by the novel’s main hero, is described in chapter 52 and reported to have been “made

---

we otherwise had no relation: large buff tea chests, stamped with ideograms ... dusty books and papers, with Chinese characters on the back.” “An Anglo-Irishman in China: J.C. O’G. Anderson,” in P. Anderson’s *Spectrum: From Right to Left in the World of Ideas* (London: Verso, 2005): 345.

67 E. Kuz'mina, “Sdelano v Kitae: Nostal'giia po kitaiskim tovaram” (Made in China: Nostalgia for Chinese Products), *Magazeta*, 3 July 2013.

68 The Qing official Tulišen, who visited Russia in 1712-15, reported that Russians “did not know tea”; by the second half of the century another Manchu author, the pseudonymous Qishi, noticed the Russian liking for tea but remarked that they “only sipped it sugared.” A. Di Toro, *La percezione della Russia in Cina tra XVII e XVIII sec.* (The Perception of Russia in China between the 17th and 18th Centuries) (Rome: La Sapienza Orientale, 2012): 104, 151. Early Chinese exotica (*esotismi*) from Russian, collected by Di Toro, include no foodstuffs other than *malina*, raspberry (ibid.: 183-91).

by the Russians.” Indeed, in the Russian translation of the novel the cape, or cloak, was silently turned into the (almost) native *caftan*.<sup>69</sup> If the thing had ever existed—Cao Xueqin recreated in remarkable and often reliable detail the “material culture” of his privileged childhood and youth—one wonders whether the ornament of “peacock feathers” was inspired by the *zhar-ptitsa*, the magical firebird of Slavonic lore. It was on images of the firebird that Russian artisans of Tsar Peter’s Monplaisir palace, working under a Dutch master from 1720 to 1722, based their lacquered representations of “Chinese” peacocks. Readers of Cao’s masterpiece in China would have remembered the surprising Russian connection of *Dream of the Red Chamber* through the “peacock gold” cape.<sup>70</sup>

In Cao’s day, an important site representing Russia in China already functioned in Peking: the Russian Orthodox Mission, mentioned above in connection with the sinologist monk Iakinf Bichurin, was officially established in 1715 and lasted until 1956.<sup>71</sup> While Russian imports were always much less prominent in China than the other way around, some commodities did, at various times, represent “Russia” for the Chinese. The main Russian exports to China from the 1760s to the 1830s were furs. In the 1830s and 1840s, Russian cloth became popular and circulated widely,<sup>72</sup> but this market declined by the end of the century. Until payment in gold and silver was permitted in 1854, Chinese tea was bartered in Kiakhta for Russian textiles and furs.<sup>73</sup> By 1860, Russia’s forcible acquisition from the weakened Qing empire of large territories north

69 Cao Xueqin, *The Story of the Stone, also Known as The Dream of the Red Chamber*, trans. D. Hawkes, 5 vols. (vols. 4 and 5 ed. Gao E and trans. J. Minford) (Harmondsworth UK: Penguin, 1973-86), vol. 2, *The Crab-Flower Club*: 544. Cf. the translation by V.A. Panasiuk, *Son v krasnom tereme* (Dream in the Red Chamber), 2 vols. (Moscow: Gos. Iz-vo Khudozhestvennoi Literatry, 1958): 1: 733. The caftan was originally a Turkish import. The Chinese text said only that the cloak came from *Eluosi guo* 俄罗斯国 (Russia): Cao Xueqin and Gao E 高鹗, *Hong lou meng* 紅樓夢, 3 vols. (Beijing: Zuo jia chubanshe, 1957): 2: 560-61.

70 According to Ni Yibin, “Material Culture Matters in *The Story of the Stone*,” in *Approaches to Teaching The Story of the Stone (Dream of the Red Chamber)*, ed. A. Schonebaum and T. Lu (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2012): 251, “no material [in the novel] is more exotic.” This compares with the image of China in “A Bouquet of Peacock Feathers,” the opening poem of *The Little House Under the Pear Tree*. Peacocks also represented China in the decor of the Perlov Teahouse.

71 As a “place of cultural contact” between Russia in China, the Mission is analyzed in part one of Di Toro’s *La percezione della Russia in Cina tra XVII e XVIII sec.* See also G. Afinogenov, *The Eye of the Tsar: Intelligence-Gathering and Geopolitics in Eighteenth-Century Eurasia*, PhD diss. (Harvard University, 2015): esp. chaps. 3 and 6.

72 M.I. Sladkovskii, *History of the Economic Relations between Russia and China*, trans. M. Roublev (Jerusalem: Israel Program for Scientific Translations, 1966): 69.

73 See, e.g., Avery, *The Tea Road*: 132-3.

of the Amur and east of the Ussuri rivers earned it the lasting animosity of Chinese patriots. Yet much of the contemporaneous information on Russia, as conveyed in the Chinese geographical literature of the period, was mediated through Western sources. The antagonism of an increasingly nationalistic public was triggered again by Russian intervention in the Boxer uprising and the Russo-Japanese war in Manchuria.

In the twentieth century, the influence of politics on the perceptions of Russia in China was intensified, as the revolutionary movement in Russia inspired ideologues of the struggle against the Qing dynasty that ended in the revolution of 1911. The Soviet Union became a model for left-leaning followers of the May Fourth movement in China in the 1920s and for the new Communist China in the 1950s. Conversely, under Nationalist rule in the 1930s and 1940s, Soviet Russia was often accused of imperialism and “revisionism.” Then, after 1960, the USSR was denounced by the Chinese communist regime as Sino-Soviet relations deteriorated at the end of a decade-long “friendship” and was demonized during the Cultural Revolution (1966-76). The impact of politics on the constructed meaning of “Russia” in China cannot be denied, but state-driven propaganda should not be mistaken for public opinion.<sup>74</sup> Cultural and social aspects of the relationship also played a role.

In China’s republican period (1911-49), a commodity closely associated with Russia was kerosene, the fuel originating in Russian-controlled Azerbaijan, on the Persian border.<sup>75</sup> A short story titled “Russian Kerosene” (1931),<sup>76</sup> the first publication of Sha Ting 沙汀 (1904-92), who would later become a well-known writer, is admittedly a puerile piece. Our interest in it lies in the way a “Russian” commodity was identified with its country of origin: news that kerosene from

74 The identification of scholarship with state interest, along with the attribution of uniform views to “the Chinese people” at any given time, are problems marring Chinese research on the subject: e.g., Li Sui’an 李隨安, *Zhongguo de Eluosi xingxiang 1949-2009* 中國的俄羅斯形象 1949-2009 (China’s Image of Russia, 1949-2009) (Harbin: Heilongjiang jiaoyu chubanshe, 2012).

75 Cf. F. Dikötter, *The Age of Openness: China before Mao* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008): 91 on “new objects, none being more popular than the kerosene lamp, providing cheaper and better lighting”; and references to kerosene in the index of Dikötter, *Things Modern: Material Culture and Everyday Life in China* (London: Hurst, 2007).

76 “Eguo meiyou” 俄國煤油, in *Sha Ting wenji* 沙汀文集 (Collected Works), 8 vols. (Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe, 1986-92): vol. 1. The “success of Russian kerosene” in competition with American oil since the 1890s was highlighted already in Digamma (Makar N. Vasil’ev), *Torgovlia s Kitaem* (Trade with China) (Tomsk: F.P. Romanov, 1899): 14-16. By 1931, when the Chinese story was published, oil products were the leading Soviet exports and were used in propaganda to showcase the achievements of the first five-year plan.

Russia would soon become available instills hope in the dreary existence of the story's hero, a self-pitying youth in Shanghai. Convinced that his life will take a turn for the better once he buys some "Russian kerosene," the protagonist eventually wanders in a dreamlike state into a shop selling the desired commodity, only to perish there in a sudden fire.

As Sha Ting's story signals, things may stand for dreams: material culture and the world of ideas are not separate realms. A film that has been called the most impressive achievement of contemporary Chinese documentary cinema, the nine-hour epos "West of the Tracks" (Tiexi 鐵西, 2003) by director Wang Bing 王兵, describes the closing down of steel plants in Shenyang, in north-eastern China. Built in the 1930s by the Japanese occupation regime, in the 1950s, with Soviet help, they were developed into a symbol of industrialization and the triumph of the working class. Wang Bing has said in an interview that he felt "an attractive force [in these factories] like that of a person's past ideals." Rather than making a film celebrating national heavy industry, like films produced in the Stalin period, Wang Bing captured the end of an era in China. Without nostalgia, he looked back at "the ruins of an ideal"—a past holding the promise of a future that, for people in both countries, never came true—and at the romanticism of industrial modernity, the by-now disqualified values that Communist China had shared with the Soviet Union.<sup>77</sup>

The proliferation of industrial factories during the decade of "Soviet-Chinese friendship" can be placed in a larger context. The built environment in Communist China reflected the special connection with Soviet Russia more directly than did the examples we have discussed of an imagined "Chinese" influence on Russian urban space. The expansion of Beijing's Tiananmen Square in the early 1950s was modeled on Moscow's Red Square and carried out with the assistance of Soviet advisers.<sup>78</sup> The building boom launched by the Chinese Communist Party during the 1950s has been described as the

---

77 Lu Xinyu, "Ruins of the Future: Class and History in Wang Bing's *Tiexi District*," trans. J.X. Zhang, *New Left Review* 31 (2005): 131. Cf. J.P. Arnason, *The Future that Failed: Origins and Destinies of the Soviet Model* (London: Routledge, 1993). Another cinematic reflection on the "failed future" through materialized symbols of the imported communist ideal is a short comedy by director Geng Jun 耿軍, "The Hammer and Sickle Are Sleeping" (Chuizi liandao dou xiuxi 錘子鐮刀都休息, 2013), on post-industrial unemployment in Heilongjiang.

78 J. Becker, *City of Heavenly Tranquillity: Beijing in the History of China* (London: Allen Lane, 2008): 168-9, 278-80, and Wu Hung, *Remaking Beijing: Tiananmen Square and the Creation of a Political Space* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

Stalinization of China,<sup>79</sup> and its consequences remain part of the urban landscape. The Soviet Exhibition Hall, today's Beijing Exhibition Center, opened in 1954 with a cinema, a theater, and, notably, a Moscow Restaurant (a parallel to Moscow's "Pekin"), which offered a taste of Russian cuisine to a select clientele in the Mao era; it still operates today. Not limited to Beijing, the Soviet building style marked cities across the country, just as British architecture had spread through China's treaty ports.<sup>80</sup> An ensemble of Russian religious and modernist architecture was left in Harbin.<sup>81</sup>

Similarly momentous in its influence in China during the first Maoist decade was Soviet cinema. Extensive cultural and institutional imports from the Soviet Union also marked the Chinese engagement with European classical music (a field in which Russian émigré musicians had been important intermediaries already during the republican period) and the evolution of modern Chinese art and theater. In everyday life, these imports included the adoption by women of the Russian dress known as *bulaji* (the Chinese pronunciation of Russian *plat'e*). Propaganda posters inspired by Soviet examples became a ubiquitous tool of political campaigns. Russian and Soviet literature was influenced by Chinese literature from the 1920s to the 1950s, and interest in it revived in the 1980s. These issues are beyond the scope of an article focused mainly on the Russian side of the relationship. While aspects of the Russian presence in China are being discovered in current research, they have not yet been situated within the framework of the Russian-Chinese encounter.<sup>82</sup>

79 F.W. Mote, "A Millennium of Chinese Urban History: Form, Time, and Space Concepts in Soochow," *Rice University Studies* 59, no. 4 (1973): 59.

80 Yan Li, "Building Friendship: Soviet Influence, Socialist Modernity, and Chinese Cityscape in the 1950s," *Quarterly Journal of Chinese Studies* 2, no. 3 (2014), also mentions the Sino-Soviet Friendship Buildings in Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Wuhan and many more Soviet-modeled constructions in the PRC up to the early 1960s. Cf. M.Iu. Shevchenko, "Vliianie sovetskoi arkhitektury na zastroiku Pekina 1930-1950kh godov" (Influence of Soviet Architecture on the Construction of Beijing, 1930s to 1950s), in *Arkhitektura stalinskoi epokhi*, ed. Kosenkova; on the Sino-Soviet building style and "socialist realism with Chinese characteristics," see the concluding chapter of O. Hatherley, *Landscapes of Communism: A History through Buildings* (New York and London: The New Press, 2016).

81 Cf. M. Gamsa, "The Many Faces of Hotel Moderne in Harbin," *East Asian History* 37 (Dec. 2011).

82 See, e.g., V. Garrett, *Chinese Dress: From the Qing Dynasty to the Present* (Singapore: Tuttle, 2007): 213-15; J. Winzenburg, "Aaron Avshalomov and New Chinese Music in Shanghai, 1931-1947," and Hon-Lun Yang, "The Shanghai Conservatory, Chinese Musical Life, and the Russian Diaspora, 1927-1949," both in *Twentieth-Century China* 37, no. 1 (2012); M. Gamsa, *The Chinese Translation of Russian Literature: Three Studies* (Leiden: Brill, 2008); idem,

### 3 The Contact Zone

It emerges even from this preliminary enquiry that the two cultures shared and still share a zone of contact in which the supposedly foreign has often become surprisingly recognizable. Similar “contact zones” have been documented for relationships such as those between Russia and Poland or France, on the one hand, and between China and India or Japan, on the other.<sup>83</sup> It may be that perceptions of racial difference still make locating a Russian-Chinese field of contact—as a conceptual meeting place distinct from the geographical “middle ground” of the border areas between the two states—seem a less natural task than describing contacts within Europe or Asia. The physical space of the Russian-Chinese frontier has been inhabited by other ethnicities, such as nomadic native peoples, Central Asian Muslims, Mongols, and Kazakhs, who could act as border-crossing intermediaries between Russians and Chinese.<sup>84</sup> On the ground, Russians and Chinese also met as emigrants, labor migrants, and students in the other country. This article presents a contact field, or historical “contact zone,” in a sense unrelated to the notion popularized by Mary Louise Pratt in anthropology and cultural studies.<sup>85</sup> Rather, it affirms the need to shed the exoticizing bias that marks interpretations of Russian-Chinese relations as primarily a confrontation between West and East. Although it has often been so perceived on both sides, this encounter between two cultures (both containing much ethnic and geographical variety) and political entities

---

*The Reading of Russian Literature in China: A Moral Example and Manual of Practice* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

- 83 See, e.g., studies on French influence in tsarist Russia by Yuri M. Lotman (1922-93), and numerous publications on Russia and Poland under the rubric of Slavonic studies. On China and India, see esp. J. Kieschnick, *The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), which connects Chinese tea with Buddhist ideas, and Kieschnick and M. Shahar, eds., *India in the Chinese Imagination: Myth, Religion, and Thought* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014). The literature on China and Japan is too extensive to cite here, but see esp. work by Joshua A. Fogel, Paula S. Harrell, and Christopher T. Keaveney.
- 84 Cf. Noda Jin, “Russo-Chinese Trade through Central Asia: Regulations and Reality,” in *Asiatic Russia: Imperial Power in Regional and International Contexts*, ed. Uyama Tomohiko (London and New York: Routledge, 2012).
- 85 Pratt’s notion of a contact zone has been referred to in several studies of the Russian-Chinese and Russian-Mongolian frontier regions: see S. Urbansky, “‘Vasily’ of China and His Russian Friends: Smugglers and Their Transcultural Identities,” in *Entangled Histories: The Transcultural Past of Northeast China*, ed. D. Ben-Canaan et al. (Heidelberg: Springer, 2014); S. Namsaraeva, “Border Language: Chinese Pidgin Russian with a Mongolian ‘Accent’,” *Inner Asia* 16 (2014).

can be approached fruitfully with the same tools that have been used to study inter-European and inter-Asian contacts, exchanges, and mutual perceptions.

In the contact zone, the origins of objects and commodities are so hopelessly confused that no party would appropriate them fully to itself. Objects, words, and ideas that can no longer be traced to either national origin inhabit a conceptual limbo. Foreign things within the zone have blended into the receiving (home) culture, while their foreignness has not disappeared but has become another layer in the local construction of meaning. We have long known that this was the case with French etiquette in Russia and Buddhist ritual in China, as much historical work has been done on the Russian-French and Chinese-Indian contact zones, but there has been far less awareness of this nexus between Russia and China. Communism offers an obvious example of the Russian-Chinese contact zone, and it is the one that has been studied most. I will conclude with two other examples, both of which have to do with place names.

The first case, mentioned above, is that of Harbin, now capital of China's Heilongjiang province. Russia began building the city in Manchuria in 1898 as part of its project to connect the Trans-Siberian railway with Vladivostok in the Russian Maritime District by cutting through Chinese territory. From the early days, nobody knew the origin of the name Harbin, and conflicting theories proliferated: typically, Russian residents thought Ha'erbin 哈爾濱 must have meant something in Chinese, while Chinese arriving in the new city may have thought that its name was Russian.<sup>86</sup> It was neither: although no consensus exists on this issue, research suggests that the name is of Manchu-language origin. In Russian perception, Harbin has come to be identified with the mental image of "a Russian city in China." On the Chinese side, the Russianness of Harbin is similarly dominant in cultural memory, although there are elements to this perception, such as the tag "ice city," that are not shared in Russia. Conversely, the nostalgic Russian image of an émigré "White Harbin" as a last preserve of the old Russian way of life after 1917 cannot be shared in China.

---

86 A particularly fascinating folk etymology among several in circulation asserted that the place name meant "happy grave" (Russ. *veselaia mogila*). While some Russian speakers traced this etymology to local inhabitants encountered in 1898, usage of this reading in the early twentieth century was distinctly Russian rather than Chinese. In a typical confusion, advertising flyers for tourists that could be picked up in Harbin hotels in April 2014 listed "happy graveyard" (*kuai le de muchang* 快樂的墓場), in both Chinese and English, among putative interpretations of the city name, all under the heading "Harbin, Eastern Paris." My thanks to Jacob Dreyer for sending me a copy of this flyer.

A second example is Kitai-gorod: a commercial district built in the sixteenth century between the Kremlin and Red Square in central Moscow, it is not marked as a district on city maps today but remains familiar chiefly by association with the name of a metro station. Even Moscow residents will often connect the historical name with China: literally, Kitai-gorod is “Chinatown.” However, contrary to a claim by a historian of the Chinese migration that “Moscow had Europe’s first Chinatown, established in the seventeenth century by traders who crossed the border China shares with Russia,”<sup>87</sup> there was no Chinatown in Kitai-gorod and few Chinese in Moscow before the late nineteenth century.<sup>88</sup> City guides may explain the district name by the Old Russian *kita*, referring to things plated or braided.<sup>89</sup> An alternative etymology traces Kitai-gorod to the Italian *città* (city), because the builder of the walled town between 1535 and 1538 was a Florentine master remembered as Petrok Malyi (Little Petrok).<sup>90</sup> In another reading, Elena Glinskaya (1508–38), the mother of Ivan the Terrible (Ivan IV, who was to rule as tsar from 1547 to 1584), and the regent of Russia at the time of its construction, named Kitai-gorod in honor of her birth place, supposedly a town by the name of Kitai, in Podolia.<sup>91</sup>

Whatever the historical truth behind it, the aura of the “curious name” has worked its magic. After being restored between 1925 and 1930, the old wall of Kitai-gorod was demolished in 1934. In 1938, the émigré writer Mikhail Osorgin (1878–1942) opened a memoir of prerevolutionary Moscow, which he published

- 
- 87 G. Benton, “The Chinese in Europe: Origins and Transformations,” *Religions & Christianity in Today’s China* 1, no. 1 (2011): 64.
- 88 See A.I. Petrov, *Istoriia kitaitsev v Rossii 1856–1917 gody* (A History of the Chinese in Russia, 1856–1917) (St. Petersburg: Beresta, 2003): 188–91.
- 89 This is the explanation adopted by C. Merridale, *Red Fortress: The Secret Heart of Russia’s History* (London: Allen Lane, 2013): 63. By contrast, Kitai as “China” has an English cognate in Cathay, the name of northern China in Renaissance Europe. Russian “Kitai,” used since the early seventeenth century, evolved, by way of the Turkic *Khitāy*, from the name of the Qidan (Khitan) people, founders of the Liao dynasty (916–1125), which, at its height, ruled parts of modern-day Russian Far East, Mongolia, and northern China.
- 90 See references to Pietro Annibale (alias Little Petrok) in D. Shvidkovsky, *Russian Architecture and the West*, trans. A. Wood (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), and more in E. Welch, “Between Italy and Moscow: Cultural Crossroads and the Culture of Exchange,” in *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe*, ed. R. Muchembled, 4 vols. (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press and European Science Foundation, 2006–7): vol. 4.
- 91 This was the explanation endorsed in V.A. Giliarovskii, *Moskva i moskvichi* (Moscow and Muscovites; expanded 1935 edition), in his *Izbrannoe* (Selected Works), ed. E.G. Kiseleva, 3 vols. (Moscow: Moskovskii Rabochii, 1960): 3: 77. Giliarovskii’s bleak chapter, “Pod Kitaiskoi stenoi” (Under the Kitai/Chinese Wall), described Kitai-gorod in the 1870s and 1880s as the lair of criminal riffraff and a destination of stolen goods.

in a Russian newspaper in Paris, with a play on the double meaning of *kitaiskaia stena* (lit., Chinese wall): “not only Moscow,” he wrote, but “the whole of Russia now lies behind a Chinese wall.” He then recalled the thriving market along the outer walls of Kitai-gorod as “a wonderful Muscovite Asia” (*prekrasnaiia Moskovskaia Aziia*).<sup>92</sup> “Asian” imagery also comes up in the main work of Russian fiction set in this quarter of Moscow, the novel *Kitai-gorod* by Petr Boborykin (1836-1921), published in 1882: here Kitai-gorod presents an earthy mix of Asia and Europe—the Golden Horde, Byzantium, and Muscovy, all in one.<sup>93</sup> But what made Kitai-gorod “Asian”? While Tatar workers were employed in its large retail enterprises,<sup>94</sup> including the warehouses of tea-trading companies, such “Asians” were hardly to be found among the booksellers specializing in Russian *lubok* books (popular prints), the Kitai-gorod people whom Osorgin knew best and described in his recollections.

A literary trope rather than a pointer to demographic reality, “Muscovite Asia” reflected an image of Moscow as an Asian city,<sup>95</sup> a capital naturally opposed to the other, European capital of Russia, St. Petersburg. The semantic field—or, to employ a different language, the geopoetics—of Kitai-gorod enhanced the “Asian” image of the Russian heart of empire by adding a “Chinese” segment of meaning to it. Kitai-gorod’s propensity to evoke “China” probably increased after the old world of merchant Moscow was swept away in 1917 and erstwhile associations of the name with an agglomeration of shops and storehouses gradually faded. Andrei Sobol’s story “Kitaiskie teni” opened with a collage of

92 See “Lubochniki” (*Lubok* Sellers, 1938) in Mikhail Osorgin, *Sobranie sochinenii* (Collected Works), ed. O.Iu. Avdeeva, 5 vols. (Moscow: Moskovskii Rabochii and Intelvak, 1999-2007), vol. 5, *Zametki starogo knigoeda: Vospominaniia* (An Old Book-Eater’s Notes: Memoirs). The Kitai-gorod gates and old wall were partially reconstructed in the 1990s: A. Možaeв, “Moskovskoe Zariad’e: Zatianuvsheesia protivostoianie goroda i stroitelei” (The Moscow Zariad’e: A Prolonged Conflict between the City and Urban Developers), *Revue des Etudes Slaves* 86, nos. 1-2 (2015): 72-3.

93 P.D. Boborykin, *Kitai-gorod* (Moscow: Moskovskii Rabochii, 1960): 22.

94 P.I. Bogatyrev, *Moskovskaia starina* (Old Moscow Lore; first ed. 1906-7), a memoir of the 1880s and 1890s excerpted in *Ushedshaia Moskva: Vospominaniia sovremennikov o Moskve vtoroi poloviny XIX veka* (Departed Moscow: Memoirs of Contemporaries on Moscow in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century), ed. N.S. Ashukin (Moscow: Moskovskii Rabochii, 1964): 80.

95 A.M. Martin, *Enlightened Metropolis: Constructing Imperial Moscow, 1762-1855* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013): 37, 137, 267, 289. See more in E. Macheret, “O nekotorykh istochnikakh ‘buddiiskoi Moskvy’ Osipa Mandel’shtama” (On Some Sources of Osip Mandelstam’s “Buddhist Moscow”), *Acta Slavica Iaponica* 24 (2007), and A. Di Ruocco, *The Buddhist World in Modern Russian Culture (1873-1919): Literature and Visual Arts*, PhD diss. (University of Southern California, 2011).

Asians gathered in Moscow by the whirlwind of world revolution: “in the break hour, an Indian and a Japanese drink the tea of former Vysotskii.”<sup>96</sup> More than any other writer, Boris Pil’niak (1894-1938) exploited the Chineseness of Kitai-gorod to its full potential in his first, audaciously avant-garde, novel *Golyi god* (The Naked Year, published between 1918 and 1922).<sup>97</sup>

Playing with the idea of a China in Moscow, Pil’niak, who later traveled to China and Japan and wrote about both, knew exactly what he was doing. As for the unintended or inadvertent “refractions” of China in Russia, sampled in this article, such unacknowledged presences of China in the Russian vocabulary and daily life may also be thought of as the “Chinese shadows” (*kitaiskie teni*) in Russian consciousness. China, too, has had its “Russian shadows,”<sup>98</sup> and each side’s imaginings of the other became building stones of the contact zone between the two countries. Rather than just conserving their exotic or alien origins, perceptions of the Chinese or Russian “other” merged with those of self. Having gone through this process, they ceased being “foreign.”<sup>99</sup> While “China” in Russia and “Russia” in China are concepts in continuous reconstruction, their meaning is far from being restricted by the tags of “East” and “West.” The image of China in Russia could at times coalesce with that of Japan, as happened when chinoiserie mixed with *japonisme*, or, pejoratively, in the discourse of the Yellow Peril at the dawn of the twentieth century.<sup>100</sup> Yet few Russians have confused China with Turkey, despite using “Vostok” for both regions.

96 Sobol’, “Kitaiskie teni,” in *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 4, *Kitaiskie teni*: 5. Vysotskii was one of the largest tea magnates in Moscow. As a capitalist, the owner was declared a “former person” and his family firm was nationalized in 1919; operations were moved abroad, however, and Wissotzky Tea is presently an international brand headquartered in Israel.

97 *Golyi god*, in B.A. Pil’niak, *Sobranie sochinenii* (Collected Works), 6 vols. (Moscow: Terra, 2003-4): vol. 1.

98 Cf. the poetry collection of V. Lomakin, *Russkie teni* (Russian Shadows) (Moscow: NLO, 2004), largely on the unburied dead of the communist upheaval in the twentieth century. If an allusion to the more familiar *kitaiskie teni* was intended, it was not developed in the book, which may, however, allude to H.G. Wells, *Russia in the Shadows* (1920). A term used in China for the lasting legacy of the close relationship with the Soviet Union is “the Soviet complex” (*Sulian qingjie* 蘇聯清結).

99 Cf. the argument of D. Cannadine, *The Undivided Past: History beyond Our Differences* (London: Penguin Books, 2013).

100 See V.E. Molodiakov, “Iaponiia v russkom soznanii i russkoi kul’ture kontsa XIX—nachala XX veka” (Japan in Russian Consciousness and Russian Culture at the End of the Nineteenth–Beginning of the Twentieth Century), in *Rossia i mir glazami drug druga: Iz istorii vzaimovospriiatii* (Russia and the World in Each Other’s Eyes: From the History of Mutual Perception), ed. A.V. Golubev (Moscow: Institut Rossiiskoi Istorii RAN, 2002): 2: 335-8.

Bundling together Russian responses to the Caucasus, China, Japan, Mongolia, and Korea may produce only an artificially coherent picture, the false construction of a Russian Orientalism allegedly encompassing the whole of Asia, but the study of ideological constructions has much to gain from closer attention to material forms of cultural contact. By looking at both ideas and things, the present article has been a step in that direction.

### Bibliography

- Afinogenov, Gregory. 2015. *The Eye of the Tsar: Intelligence-Gathering and Geopolitics in Eighteenth-Century Eurasia*. PhD diss. Harvard University.
- Alekseev, M.P. 1999. Pushkin i Kitai (Pushkin and China). In *Pushkin i mir Vostoka* (Pushkin and the World of the East), ed. E.P. Chelyshev. Moscow: Nauka: 50-80.
- Aminova, K.A. 1999-2004. Kitaiskii chainik (Chinese Teapot). In *Oneginskaia entsiklopediia* (The Onegin Encyclopedia), ed. N.I. Mikhailova. 2 vols. Moscow: Russkii Put': 1: 508-9.
- Anderson, Perry. 2005. An Anglo-Irishman in China: J.C. O'G. Anderson. In his *Spectrum: From Right to Left in the World of Ideas*. London: Verso: 343-88.
- Arnason, Johann P. 1993. *The Future that Failed: Origins and Destinies of the Soviet Model*. London: Routledge.
- Ashukin, N.S., ed. 1964. *Ushedshaia Moskva: Vospominaniia sovremennikov o Moskve vtoroi poloviny XIX veka* (Departed Moscow: Memoirs of Contemporaries on Moscow in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century). Moscow: Moskovskii Rabochii.
- Avery, Martha. 2003. *The Tea Road: China and Russia Meet Across the Steppe*. Beijing: China Intercontinental Press.
- Bakich, Olga. 2015. *Valerii Pereleshin: Life of a Silkworm*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Ballaster, Ros. 2005. *Fabulous Orient: Fictions of the East in England 1662-1785*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bartlett, Rosamund. 2008. Japonisme and Japanophobia: The Russo-Japanese War in Russian Cultural Consciousness. *Russian Review* 67, no. 1: 8-33.
- Becker, Jasper. 2008. *City of Heavenly Tranquillity: Beijing in the History of China*. London: Allen Lane.
- Beevers, David, ed. 2008. *Chinese Whispers: Chinoiserie in Britain 1650-1930*. Brighton UK: Royal Pavilion & Museums.
- Benn, James A. 2015. *Tea in China: A Religious and Cultural History*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Benton, Gregor. 2011. The Chinese in Europe: Origins and Transformations. *Religions & Christianity in Today's China* 1, no. 1: 62-70.

- Berger, Stefan. 2010. Comparative History. In *Writing History: Theory and Practice*, ed. Berger et al. 2nd ed. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic: 187-205.
- Bichurin, N.Ia. 2002. *Kitai v grazhdanskom i npravstvennom sostoianii* (China in [Its] Civil and Moral Condition). Ed. K.M. Tertitskii. Moscow: Vostochnyi Dom.
- Boborykin, P.D. 1960. *Kitai-gorod*. Moscow: Moskovskii Rabochii.
- Bogdanov, Konstantin A. 2006. *O krokodilakh v Rossii: Ocherki iz istorii zaimstvovanii i ekzotizmov* (On Crocodiles in Russia: Essays from the History of Borrowings and Exotica). Moscow: NLO.
- Boxer, C.R. 2010. *South China in the Sixteenth Century (1550-1575)*. 2nd ed. Farnham UK: Ashgate.
- Bush, Christopher. 2007. The Ethnicity of Things in America's Lacquered Age. *Representations* 99, no. 1: 74-88.
- Cannadine, David. 2013. *The Undivided Past: History beyond Our Differences*. London: Penguin.
- Cao Xueqin 曹雪芹 and Gao E 高鹗. 1957. *Hong lou meng 紅樓夢* (Dream of the Red Chamber. 3 vols. Beijing: Zuoqia chubanshe.
- Cao Xueqin 曹雪芹 and Gao E 高鹗. 1958. *Son v krasnom tereme* (Dream in the Red Chamber). Trans. V.A. Panasiuk. 2 vols. Moscow: Gos. Iz-vo Khudozhestvennoi Literatury.
- Cao Xueqin 曹雪芹 and Gao E 高鹗. 1973-86. *The Story of the Stone, also Known as The Dream of the Red Chamber*. Trans. David Hawkes. 5 vols. (vols. 4 and 5 trans. John Minford). Harmondsworth UK: Penguin.
- Chen, Fan Pen Li. 2007. *Chinese Shadow Theatre: History, Popular Religion, & Women Warriors*. Montreal and Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Di Ruocco, Adele. 2011. *The Buddhist World in Modern Russian Culture (1873-1919): Literature and Visual Arts*. PhD diss. University of Southern California.
- Di Toro, Anna. 2012. *La percezione della Russia in Cina tra XVII e XVIII sec.* (The Perception of Russia in China between the 17th and 18th Centuries). Rome: La Sapienza Orientale.
- Digamma (Makar N. Vasil'ev). 1899. *Torgovlia s Kitaem* (Trade with China). Tomsk: F.P. Romanov.
- Dikötter, Frank. 2007. *Things Modern: Material Culture and Everyday Life in China*. London: Hurst.
- Dikötter, Frank. 2008. *The Age of Openness: China before Mao*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Elistratov, V.S. 2004. *Iazyk staroi Moskvy: Lingvoentsiklopedicheskii slovar'* (The Language of Old Moscow: A Linguistic and Encyclopedic Dictionary). 2nd ed. Moscow: Astrel'.
- Ellis, Markman, et al. 2015. *Empire of Tea: The Asian Leaf that Conquered the World*. London: Reaktion Books.

- Entsiklopedicheskii slovar' Brokgauz i Efron* (The Brockhaus and Efron Encyclopedic Dictionary). 1890-1907. 82 vols. St. Petersburg: Brokgauz i Efron.
- Fedotov, O.I. 2003. *Kitaiskie stikhi* Nikolaia Gumileva: Versifikatsionnaia poetika tsikla (Nikolai Gumilev's *Chinese Poems: The Versification Poetics of the Cycle*). *Literatura* 37: 2-7.
- Fernández-Armesto, Felipe, and Benjamin Sacks. 2012. The Global Exchange of Food and Drugs. In *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption*, ed. Frank Trentmann. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 127-44.
- Ferrari, Aldo. 2013. The East and Russian Culture. In *The Russian Avant-Garde: Siberia and the East*, ed. John E. Bowlt et al. Milan: Skira: 29-31.
- Finlay, Robert. 2010. *The Pilgrim Art: The Culture of Porcelain in World History*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Galich, Iurii. 2012. *Kitaiskie teni* (Chinese Shadows). In his *Sobranie sochinenii* (Collected Works), ed. Igor' Vladimirov. 4 vols. Moscow: Knizhnyi Klub Knigovek: vol. 2.
- Gamsa, Mark. 2008. *The Chinese Translation of Russian Literature: Three Studies*. Leiden: Brill.
- Gamsa, Mark. 2010. *The Reading of Russian Literature in China: A Moral Example and Manual of Practice*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gamsa, Mark. 2011. The Many Faces of Hotel Moderne in Harbin. *East Asian History* 37 (Dec.): 27-38.
- Gamsa, Mark. 2012. The Cultural and the Social in Chinese-Russian Relations. *Cultural and Social History* 9, no. 3: 391-405.
- Garrett, Valery. 2007. *Chinese Dress: From the Qing Dynasty to the Present*. Singapore: Tuttle.
- Gasparov, Boris. 2005. *Five Operas and a Symphony: Words and Music in Russian Culture*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Geczy, Adam. 2015. A Chamber of Whispers. In *China through the Looking Glass*, ed. Andrew Bolton. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art: 23-9.
- Giliarovskii, V.A. 1960. *Moskva i moskvichi* (Moscow and Muscovites). In his *Izbrannoe* (Selected Works), ed. E.G. Kiseleva. 3 vols. Moscow: Moskovskii Rabochii: vol. 3.
- Glotser, Vladimir. 1997. *Domik pod grushevyim derevom*. Poslednii psevdonim Cherubiny (*The Little House Under the Pear Tree: The Last Pen-name of Cherubina*). *Peterburgskoe Vostokovedenie* 9: 522-32.
- Gnedich, P.P. 1895. *Kitaiskie teni* (Chinese Shadows). St. Petersburg: Tip. Tovarishchestva "Obshchestvennaia Pol'za."
- Gumilev, N. 1918. *Farforovyi Pavil'on: Kitaiskie stikhi* (The Porcelain Pavilion: Chinese Poems). St. Petersburg: Giperborei.
- Hanser, Jessica. 2012. Teatime in the North Country: Consumption of Chinese Exports in North-East England. *Northern History* 49, no. 1: 51-74.

- Hatherley, Owen. 2016. *Landscapes of Communism: A History through Buildings*. New York and London: The New Press.
- Heretz, Leonid. 2008. *Russia on the Eve of Modernity: Popular Religion and Traditional Culture under the Last Tsars*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hunt, Lynn. 2014. *Writing History in the Global Era*. New York and London: W.W. Norton.
- Ivanov, Georgii. 1994. *Sobranie sochinenii* (Collected Works). Ed. E.V. Vitkovskii. 3 vols. Moscow: Soglasie.
- Jackson, Anna, and Amin Jaffer, eds. 2004. *Encounters: The Meeting of Asia and Europe, 1500-1800*. London: V&A.
- Kaverin, V. 1997. *Purpurnyi palimpsest* (The Crimson Palimpsest) Moscow: Agraf.
- Kieschnick, John. 2003. *The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Kieschnick, John and Meir Shahar, eds. 2014. *India in the Chinese Imagination: Myth, Religion, and Thought*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Kobzev, A.I. 2013. Sinie cherti protiv tamplierov (The Blue Devils against the Knights Templar). *Obshchestvo i gosudarstvo v Kitae* 43: 247-62.
- Kokorev, I.T. 1959. *Moskva sorokovykh godov. Ocherki i povesti o Moskve XIX veka* (Moscow in the Forties: Sketches and Short Novels about Nineteenth-Century Moscow). Ed. B. V. Smirenskii. Moscow: Moskovskii Rabochii.
- Kosenkova, Iu.L., ed. 2010. *Arkhitektura stalinskoj epokhi* (The Architecture of the Stalin Age). Moscow: KomKniga.
- Kuz'menko, L.I. 2002. Kitaiskie veshchi v obikhode: Moda na "vostochnoe" v russkoi gorodskoi srede kontsa XIX—nachala XX veka (Chinese Things in the Household: Fashion for the "Oriental" in the Russian City Environment of the Late Nineteenth–Early Twentieth Century). In *Tsvety neobychnyie. Narodnaia khudozhestvennaia kul'tura Rossii rubezha vekov. Kul'turovedcheskaia perspektiva* (Flowers Extraordinary: Popular Art Culture in Turn-of-the-Century Russia. A Culturological Perspective), ed. V.N. Maksimov. Moscow: Progress–Traditsiia: 330-49.
- Kuz'mina, Elena. 2013. Sdelano v Kitae: Nostal'giia po kitaiskim tovaram (Made in China: Nostalgia for Chinese Products). *Magazeta*, 3 July.
- Levin, Harry. 1966. *Refractions: Essays in Comparative Literature*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Li Sui'an 李隨安. 2012. *Zhongguo de Eluosi xingxiang 1949-2009* 中國的俄羅斯形象 1949-2009 (China's Image of Russia, 1949-2009). Harbin: Heilongjiang jiaoyu chubanshe.
- Lichtenstein, Erin K. 2013. Identities through Things: A Comment. In *Early Modern Things: Objects and their Histories, 1500-1800*, ed. Paula Findlen. London and New York: Routledge: 375-80.
- Lim, Susanna Soojung. 2013. *China and Japan in the Russian Imagination, 1685-1922: To the Ends of the Orient*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Lomakin, Vasili. 2004. *Russkie teni* (Russian Shadows). Moscow: NLO.

- Lu Xinyu. 2005. Ruins of the Future: Class and History in Wang Bing's *Tiexi District*. Trans. J.X. Zhang. *New Left Review* 31: 125-36.
- Lukin, A.V., ed. 2013. *Rossiiia i Kitai: Chetyre veka vzaimodeistviia. Istoriiia, sovremennoe sostoianie i perspektivy razvitiia rossiisko-kitaiskikh otnoshenii* (Russia and China: Four Centuries of Interaction. The History, Current State and Development Perspectives of Russian-Chinese Relations). Moscow: "Ves' Mir."
- Macheret, Elizabeth. 2007. O nekotorykh istochnikakh "buddiiskoi Moskvy" Osipa Mandel'shtama (On Some Sources of Osip Mandelstam's "Buddhist Moscow"). *Acta Slavica Iaponica* 24: 166-87.
- Mair, Victor H., and Erling Hoh. 2009. *The True History of Tea*. New York and London: Thames & Hudson.
- Mancall, Mark. 1972. Russia and China: The Structure of Contact. In *Russia and Asia: Essays on the Influence of Russia on Asian Peoples*, ed. Wayne S. Vucinich. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press: 313-37.
- Mandelstam, Osip. 1990. *Kamen'* (Stone). Ed. L.Ia. Ginzburg et al. Leningrad: Nauka.
- Martin, Alexander M. 2013. *Enlightened Metropolis: Constructing Imperial Moscow, 1762-1855*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Martin, Laura C. 2007. *Tea: The Drink that Changed the World*. Tokyo: Tuttle.
- Merridale, Catherine. 2013. *Red Fortress: The Secret Heart of Russia's History*. London: Allen Lane.
- Milam, Jennifer. 2012. Tying with China: Cosmopolitanism and Chinoiserie in Russian Garden Design and Building Projects under Catherine the Great. *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 25, no. 1: 115-38.
- Molodiakov, V.E. 2002. Iaponiia v russkom soznanii i russkoi kul'ture kontsa XIX—nachala XX veka (Japan in Russian Consciousness and Russian Culture at the End of the Nineteenth–Beginning of the Twentieth Century). In *Rossiiia i mir glazami drug druga: Iz istorii vzaimovospriatiia* (Russia and the World in the Eyes of Each Other: From the History of Mutual Perception), ed. A.V. Golubev. Moscow: Institut Rossiiskoi Istorii RAN: 2: 325-40.
- Mote, F.W. 1973. A Millennium of Chinese Urban History: Form, Time, and Space Concepts in Soochow. *Rice University Studies* 59, no. 4: 35-65.
- Možaev [Mozhaev], Aleksandr. 2015. Moskovskoe Zariad'e: Zatianuvsheesia protivostoianie goroda i stroitelei (The Moscow Zariad'e: A Prolonged Conflict between the City and Urban Developers). *Revue des Etudes Slaves* 86, nos. 1-2: 61-74.
- Mozzhukhina, Tat'iana. 2016. Shinuazri v evropeiskom i russkom farfore XVII veka (Chinoiserie in European and Russian Porcelain in the Eighteenth Century). In *Voobrazhaemyi Vostok*, ed. Sosnina: 83-91.
- Namsaraeva, Sayana. 2014. Border Language: Chinese Pidgin Russian with a Mongolian "Accent." *Inner Asia* 16: 116-38.

- Nashchokina, M.V. 2014. Chainyi dom Sergeia Vasil'evicha Perlova (The Sergei V. Perlov Teahouse), *Nashe Nasledie* 111: 24-34.
- Ni Yibin. 2012. Material Culture Matters in *The Story of the Stone*. In *Approaches to Teaching The Story of the Stone (Dream of the Red Chamber)*, ed. Andrew Schonebaum and Tina Lu. New York: Modern Language Association of America: 226-58.
- Noda Jin. 2012. Russo-Chinese Trade Through Central Asia: Regulations and Reality. In *Asiatic Russia: Imperial Power in Regional and International Contexts*, ed. Uyama Tomohiko. London and New York: Routledge: 153-73.
- Olsen, Bjørnar. 2010. *In Defense of Things: Archaeology and the Ontology of Objects*. Plymouth: AltaMira Press.
- Osorgin, Mikhail. 1999-2007. Lubochniki (*Lubok* Sellers). In his *Sobranie sochinenii* (Collected Works), ed. O.Iu. Avdeeva. 5 vols. Moscow: Moskovskii Rabochii and Intelvak, vol. 5, *Zametki starogo knigoeda: Vospominaniia* (An Old Book-Eater's Notes: Memoirs): 336-49.
- Petrov, A.I. 2003. *Istoriia kitaitsev v Rossii 1856-1917 gody* (A History of the Chinese in Russia, 1856-1917). St. Petersburg: Beresta.
- Pil'niak, B.A. 2003-4. *Golyi god* (The Naked Year). In Pil'niak, *Sobranie sochinenii* (Collected Works). 6 vols. Moscow: Terra: vol. 1.
- Pitelka, Morgan, ed. 2003. *Japanese Tea Culture: Art, History and Practice*. London: RoutledgeCurzon.
- Porter, David. 2010. *The Chinese Taste in Eighteenth-Century England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pouillon, François, and Jean-Claude Vatin, eds. 2015. *After Orientalism: Critical Perspectives on Western Agency and Eastern Re-Appropriations*. Leiden: Brill.
- Pushkin, Alexander. 1964. *Eugene Onegin: A Novel in Verse*. Trans. Vladimir Nabokov. New York: Bollingen Foundation.
- Riello, Giorgio, and Anne Gerritsen, eds. 2014. *Writing Material Culture History*. London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Riftin, B.L. 2009-2010. *Mertye dushi Gogolia v kitaiskikh perevodakh* (Gogol's *Dead Souls* in Chinese Translations). *Vostok-Zapad 2009-2010*: 223-48.
- Romaniello, Matthew P. 2016. True Rhubarb? Trading Eurasian Botanical and Medical Knowledge in the Eighteenth Century. *Journal of Global History* 11, no. 1: 3-23.
- Salmond, Wendy R. 1996. *Arts and Crafts in Late Imperial Russia: Reviving the Kustar Art Industries, 1870-1917*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Samoilov, N.A. 2014. *Rossii i Kitai v XVII—nachale XX veka. Tendentsii, formy i stadii sotsiokul'turnogo vzaimodeistviia* (Russia and China in the Seventeenth–Early Twentieth Centuries: Trends, Forms and Stages of Sociocultural Interaction). St. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo SPGU.
- Sargent, William R. 2012. *Treasures of Chinese Export Ceramics: From the Peabody Essex Museum*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

- Scarce, Jennifer. 2003. Russia, Iran and Turkey. In *Tea East & West*, ed. Rupert Faulkner. London: V&A: 74-85.
- Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, David. 2010. *Russian Orientalism: Asia in the Russian Mind from Peter the Great to the Emigration*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Sha Ting 沙汀. 1986-92. Eguo meiyou 俄國煤油 (Russian Kerosene). In *Sha Ting wenji* 沙汀文集 (Collected Works). 8 vols. Shanghai: Shanghai wenyi chubanshe: 1: 1-18.
- Sharp, Jane A. 2007. Beyond Orientalism: Russian and Soviet Modernism on the Periphery of Empire. In *Russian Art and the West: A Century of Dialogue in Painting, Architecture, and the Decorative Arts*, ed. Rosalind P. Blakesley and Susan E. Reid. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press: 112-33.
- Shevchenko, M.Iu. 2010. Vliianie sovetskoi arkhitektury na zastroiku Pekina 1930-1950kh godov (Influence of Soviet Architecture on the Construction of Beijing, 1930s to 1950s). In *Arkhitektura stalinskoi epokhi*, ed. Kosenkova: 463-73.
- Shmelev, Ivan S. 1930. *Na morskome beregu* (On the Seashore). Belgrade: n.p.
- Shmelev, Ivan S. 2001. *Sobranie sochinenii* (Collected Works). 5 vols., with additions. Moscow: Russkaia Kniga.
- Shvidkovsky, Dmitry. 2007. *Russian Architecture and the West*. Trans. Antony Wood. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Shvidkovsky, Dmitry. 2016. Shinuazri v evropeiskoi i russkoi arkhitekture (Chinoiserie in European and Russian Architecture). In *Voobrazhaemyi Vostok*, ed. Sosnina: 94-113.
- Sladkovskii, M.I. 1966. *History of the Economic Relations between Russia and China*. Trans. M. Roublev. Jerusalem: Israel Program for Scientific Translations.
- Sobol', Andrei. 1926-27. *Kitaiskie teni* (Chinese Shadows). In his *Sobranie sochinenii* (Collected Works). 4 vols. Moscow: Zemlia i Fabrika: vol. 4.
- Sokolov, I.A. 2012. *Chai i chainaia torgovlia v Rossii: 1790-1919 gg.* (Tea and the Tea Trade in Russia, 1790-1919). 2nd ed. Moscow: Sputnik+.
- Sosnina, O.A., ed. 2016. *Voobrazhaemyi Vostok: Kitai "po russki" XVIII—nachalo XX veka* (The Imagined Orient: China "in Russian," Eighteenth to Early Twentieth Centuries). Moscow: Kuchkovo Pole.
- Starosel'skaia, Natal'ia. 2006. *Povsednevnaia zhizn' "russkogo" Kitaia* (The Everyday Life of "Russian" China). Moscow: Molodaia Gvardiia.
- Startsev, A.V. 2009. Kiakhtinskii torg (The Kiakhta Trade). In *Istoricheskaia entsiklopediia Sibiri* (Historical Encyclopedia of Siberia), ed. V.A. Lamin. 3 vols. Novosibirsk: Istoricheskoe nasledie Sibiri: 2: 256-7.
- Styles, John. 2000. Product Innovation in Early Modern London. *Past and Present* 168: 124-69.
- ten-Doesschate Chu, Petra, and Ning Ding, eds. 2015. *Qing Encounters: Artistic Exchanges between China and the West*. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute.
- Tolstoy, A.N. 1922. *Kitaiskie teni* (Chinese Shadows). Berlin: Ogon'ki.

- Tolz, Vera. 2005. Orientalism, Nationalism, and Ethnic Diversity in Late Imperial Russia. *The Historical Journal* 48, no. 1: 127-50.
- Urbansky, Sören. 2014. "Vasily" of China and his Russian Friends: Smugglers and Their Transcultural Identities. In *Entangled Histories: The Transcultural Past of Northeast China*, ed. Dan Ben-Canaan et al. Heidelberg: Springer: 15-33.
- Vasil'eva, Elis. 1988. "Dve veshchi v mire dlia menia vseгда byli samymi sviatymi: stikhi i liubov" ("Two Things in the World Were always most Sacred to Me: Poetry and Love"), *Novyi Mir* 12: 132-70.
- Venclova, Tomas. 2012. *Vil'nius: Gorod v Evrope* (Vilnius: A City in Europe). Trans. Marija Čepaitytė. St. Petersburg: Iz-vo Ivana Limbakha.
- Weeks, Theodore R. 2012. Adam Mickiewicz (1798-1855). In *Russia's People of Empire: Life Stories from Eurasia, 1500 to the Present*, ed. Stephen M. Norris and Willard Sunderland. Bloomington: Indiana University Press: 139-47.
- Welch, Evelyn. 2006-7. Between Italy and Moscow: Cultural Crossroads and the Culture of Exchange. In *Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Robert Muchembled, vol. 4, *Forging European Identities, 1400-1700*, ed. Herman Roodenburg. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press and European Science Foundation: 59-99.
- Wilson, Ming. 2003. China. In *Tea East & West*, ed. Faulkner: 30-43.
- Winzenburg, John. 2012. Aaron Avshalomov and New Chinese Music in Shanghai, 1931-1947. *Twentieth-Century China* 37, no. 1: 50-72.
- Wu Hung. 2005. *Remaking Beijing: Tiananmen Square and the Creation of a Political Space*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Yan Li. 2014. Building Friendship: Soviet Influence, Socialist Modernity, and Chinese Cityscape in the 1950s. *Quarterly Journal of Chinese Studies* 2, no. 3: 48-66.
- Yang, Hon-Lun. 2012. The Shanghai Conservatory, Chinese Musical Life, and the Russian Diaspora, 1927-1949. *Twentieth-Century China* 37, no. 1: 73-95.
- Yu, Pauline. 2007. "Your Alabaster in This Porcelain": Judith Gautier's *Le livre de jade*. *PMLA* 122, no. 2: 464-82.
- Znamenov, V.V., ed. 2008. *Imperatorskii farforovyi zavod 1744-1904* (The Imperial Porcelain Factory). St. Petersburg: Sankt-Peterburg Orkestr and Global View.
- Zuroski Jenkins, Eugenia. 2013. *A Taste for China: English Subjectivity and the Prehistory of Orientalism*. New York: Oxford University Press.