

Abramovich's *So this is Russia!*, Katharine Susannah Prichard's *The Real Russia* and Betty Roland's *Caviar for Breakfast* – arguing how far they were from reality. In 'Russians in Australia: the cultural contribution (The first half of the twentieth century)' Petrikovskaya explores the introduction into Australian circulation of the riches of Russian culture by Russian émigrés and renowned stage performers. She deals in particular with the efforts and achievements of Inocento Serishev, Russian priest and publisher, Danila Vassilieff, painter and sculptor, Dolia Ribush, stage director, and Nina Maximova-Christesen, founder of Russian studies in Australian academia.

Russian studies of anthropology and ethnohistory of Aotearoa (New Zealand) date back to Bellingshausen-Lazarev visit in 1820. Moscow historian Ludmila Stefanchuk explores recent developments of the Maori struggle for economic and cultural autonomy. The collection also includes papers about Russian connections with countries of South-Eastern Asia and a valuable overview of published catalogues of Australian and Pacific ethnographic collections in the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography by V.N. Kisliakov.

The book is a high quality production by the new academic publishing house, Peterburgskoe vostokovedenie, and is well illustrated, but it lacks an index. Unfortunately, the publisher omitted providing on the imprint page the names of the members of the editorial board headed by Alexander Reshetov whose devotion to the memory of Nikolai Butinov made this publication possible.

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Jakob Hedenskog, Vilhelm Konnander, Bertil Nygren, Ingmar Oldberg, and Christer Pursiainen, (eds), *Russia as a Great Power: Dimensions of Security under Putin*, London and New York: Routledge, 2005, 366 pp.

At his seventh state of the nation address delivered in early May 2006 Russian President Vladimir Putin compared the United States to a ravenous wolf: 'Comrade Wolf knows whom to eat, and it eats without listening'. This stark pronouncement came in the wake of a denunciation of Russia's checkered democratic record by American Vice-President Dick Cheney. What had

happened to the Russian/American *rapprochement* that had materialized after the terrorist attacks on Washington and New York in September of 2001? 9/11 had been something of a godsend for Putin. Now, at last, the festering civil war in Chechnya could be presented in a new light, and Russian atrocities in the Caucasus could be justified. What had seemed virtually impossible for many decades suddenly appeared to come true: Putin and his American counterpart George W. Bush forgot their historical differences and almost overnight became fellow warriors in a crusade against terrorism. This astonishing reconciliation is the key theme that runs like a red thread through the essays in this collection.

*Russia as a Great Power: Dimensions of Security under Putin* is the result of a conference on Russian security policy held in Stockholm in March 2003. Its authors include international relations experts, professors in political science and economics, and a number of security analysts and research fellows. The preponderance of Scandinavian contributors to the volume (ten out of fourteen) is of course no accident. As a number of essays indicate, Scandinavia in particular has much to fear from a politically unstable and economically struggling Eastern neighbor, great power status or no. On a more general level the contributors to this volume seek to establish Russia's nature and potential in the field of security and to investigate her regional and global priorities and capabilities. In attempting to provide an answer, the analysts focus on traditional military threats (the so-called 'hard' security) as well as investigating 'soft security' issues such as environmental hazards, infectious diseases, cross-border crime, and drugs trafficking. Indeed, the holistic method adopted in this book reveals the impossibility of separating the two realms. As might have been expected, Russia under Putin has been more adept at dealing with the former than with the latter, particularly since Putin has increasingly opted for a pragmatic and, one is tempted to say, opportunistic approach in his bid for great power status.

The book is divided into four parts. Part One provides a discussion of external security. Iver B. Neumann points out that, similar to its transatlantic partner in the ongoing global war on terror, Moscow has increasingly succumbed to 'panic politics' and an aggressive 'securitization' of society. The result has been a curtailing of civil liberties – again a process mirrored across the Atlantic. On the other hand, the seemingly ever-present threat of a terrorist attack has also led Russia to band together with her erstwhile enemy NATO

and in May 2002 to form the NATO-Russia Council. Part Two concentrates on dimensions of regional security. Individual chapters in this section deal with aspects of security in the Baltic Sea region; Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova; Georgia; and Central Asia and Iraq, a chapter of particular relevance given current events. Part Three, perhaps the most outstanding in a volume of consistently superior quality, deals with internal dimensions of security including military reform, economic security, and nuclear safety. It is in this section that we find some of the most interesting, and most disturbing, soft security issues Russia will have to come to term with in the foreseeable future. Two of these are an alarming decrease in population (according to one estimate the population of Russia will shrink from 143 million in 2003 to 134 million by 2015) and, even more devastating, the skyrocketing growth rate of individuals infected with HIV/AIDS. Part Four, finally, provides an assessment of terrorism as a 'new' security threat. Not surprisingly, the events of September 11 have served to muddle high-level thinking on terrorism, and on the whole few distinctions are being made between conflict-related terrorism like the Chechen case and the so-called 'super-terrorism' of the al-Qaida variety. Undoubtedly, there is something to be gained from disregarding this crucial distinction. Pavel K. Baev does not mince words: '[T]he struggle against Chechen terrorism has been remarkably useful for consolidating the foundations of the semi-authoritarian quasi-market regime in Russia, which has maintained the aura of "normalcy" around its deformities' (p. 323).

It is impossible in a review of this scope to do justice to the multiple arguments and conclusions advanced in this volume. A few general remarks will have to suffice. Although the recent pursuit of a common agenda with the U.S. has allowed Russia to reclaim the status of global security power, this power rests on an exceedingly shaky foundation, since it does not seem to be underpinned by sufficient economic growth. In order for Russia to retain her ambitious role in the global political sphere, the economy will have to do better than the meagre 3-4 per cent annual increase prognosticated for the long term. Moreover, it is unclear how long the government will be able to continue to distract from these more pressing problems by conjuring up the terrorist spectre. Does this mean that Russia will eventually once more retreat to the sidelines of world politics? Though it is impossible to answer this question with any degree of certainty, what is clear is that Russia will continue to believe in her right to 'greatness'. For obvious reasons, Putin seems to

subscribe to the concept of a multipolar world in which Russia can be expected to play a substantial part – rather than a world in thrall to the one remaining superpower, the ‘ravenous wolf’ of his recent address. Regional hegemony has been and in all likelihood will continue to be a major goal as well. Though something of a commonplace (and, one suspects, a convenient stylistic device for reviewers desperate to find a proper closing statement), in this case it holds true: *Russia as a Great Power* is indispensable reading for anyone wishing to understand Russia’s role as a great global power player. Time spent reading the fourteen essays that constitute the core of this book will indeed be time well spent.

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Pamela Davidson, *Vyacheslav Ivanov and C.M. Bowra: A Correspondence from Two Corners on Humanism*, Birmingham: Centre for Russian and East European Studies, 2006 (Birmingham Slavonic Monographs 36). 132 pp. ISBN 07044-2570X. £15.00

The starting point for this intriguing volume is the correspondence between the Russian symbolist poet and classical scholar Viacheslav Ivanov and the Oxford classicist, literary critic and Professor of Poetry Maurice Bowra that took place in the years 1946 to 1948. The association between the two men began in 1941, when Bowra discovered some volumes of Ivanov’s early poetry in the London Library; he later included his own translations of three poems in the anthology *A Book of Russian Verse*, which he published in 1943. Direct personal contact was initiated in 1946, when Ivanov, encouraged by the Oxford Professor of Russian, Sergei Konovalov, contacted Bowra with the aim of enlisting his support for the publication of a new volume of Ivanov’s verse. In this first approach, Ivanov sent Bowra a selection of offprints of some of his recent articles published in German in areas calculated to appeal to Bowra’s own interests – on humanism and religion, Gogol and Aristophanes, and *The Lay of Igor’s Campaign* – together with his German translations of poems by Baratynskii and Tiutchev on the death of Goethe. He accompanied these offprints with an inscription in Latin distichs, again designed both to flatter Bowra and to link the two writers in a shared tradition of humanistic