
REVIEW ESSAY

RUSSIANS IN THE PACIFIC: A REVIEW OF NEW BOOKS, 1974-1979

by Patricia Polansky

Soviet interest in the Pacific, while of importance strategically, has on the whole attracted very little scholarly attention. A review of the monographs published in the past six years reveals thirty-five titles. There are some good works among them; and to give Pacific scholars who do not read Russian an idea of the subjects being researched, the following survey is offered.

By far the greatest interest has been in general works about the peoples and places within Oceania. The first volume is available in a projected series on the world's oceans edited by the Admiral of the Fleet of the Soviet Navy, S. G. Gorshkov. It is called *Tikhii Okean* [The Pacific Ocean] (Moskva: Gl. upr. navigatsii i okeanografii, 1974), has 302 pages of colored charts and maps and is an oversize volume of 47 x 36 cm. While much of the scientific material is dated, it is significant to have a Soviet treatment of this most vital ocean in one volume. It is interesting to look at the maps--Honolulu, for example. One wonders whether the Soviet Ministry of Defense chose to leave out half the roads or whether they did not have access to more current information. ¹ In 1976, a separate physical map with a scale of 1:25,000,000, *Tikhii Okean [The Pacific Ocean]* (Moskva. 2d ed.), was published by the Main Board of Geodesy and Cartography. There is an inset on the Geomorphology of the Ocean Bottom.

Three volumes address the political situation of Oceania. The book *SShA I Problemy Tikhogo Okeana: Mezhdunarodno-Politicheskie Aspekty [The US and Problems of Oceania: International Political Aspects]* (Moskva: Mezhd. otnosheniia, 1979) examines US relations in the Pacific basin. The role of Hawai'i as a transportation-communication center of the Pacific is discussed in chapter 2, "Tikhookeanskoe Proberezh'e i

¹Pergamon Press has issued a translation of the table of contents, introduction and geographic index with the title *Atlas of the Oceans: Pacific Oceans* (New York, 1976).

Ostrovnye Territorii SShA [The Pacific Shores and Island Territories of the US]" by I. B. Bulai. Bulai also devotes chapter 10 to "Mesto Avstralii i Novoi Zelandii v Tikhookeanskoi Politike SShA [The Place of Australia and New Zealand in US Pacific Politics]." Boris Slavinsky discusses trade and scientific projects as a positive basis for future friendship in chapter 13, "Nekotorye Voprosy Sovetsko-Americkanskogo Sotrudnichestva na tikhom Okeane [Some Questions on Soviet-American Cooperation in the Pacific]." Of a more historical nature is a new work by Kim. V. Malakhovskii called *Istoriia Kolonializma v Okeanii [The History of Colonialism in Oceania]* (Moskva: Nauka, Glav. red. vostochnoi lit-ry, 1979). The process of colonialism from the sixteenth to the twentieth century, the life of indigenous peoples under colonialism and new developments toward creating independent states are the broad subjects covered. This work has a bibliography of 287 items, the majority being in English, and a geographic index. A more specific treatment of colonialism is provided by V. L. Reznikov in his *Politika Kaizerovskii Germanii v Okeanii [The Policies of Kaiser Germany in Oceania]* (Moskva: Nauka, Glav. red. vostochnoi lit-ry, 1975). Micronesia, New Guinea, and Samoa are some of the particular areas discussed, as well as plantations and the effects of colonial rule on the inhabitants.

The Soviets often issue collections of essays. Three have appeared from the Institute of Oriental Studies which cover a wide variety of topics and represent the works of several authors. Most of the articles are accompanied by references. The first of these is *Avstraliia i Okeaniia: Istoriia, Ekonomika, Etnografiia [Australia and Oceania: History, Economics, Ethnography]* (Moskva: Nauka, Glav. red. vostochnoi lit-ry, 1978) and contains articles on the foreign relations problems of an independent Papua New Guinea, the dynamics of urban population movements in Papua New Guinea, the economic policy of E. Whitlam, the state regulation of New Zealand's economy, several aspects of the hard-currency policies of Australia in the 1970s, Western Samoa as a special historical-ethnographic region, the Polynesian system of kinship, and the terms of kinship of the Rapa-nui islanders. The second work *Problemy Avstralii i Okeanii: Istoriia, Ekonomika, Etnografiia [Problems of Australia and Oceania: History, Economics, Ethnography]* (Moskva: Nauka, Glav. red. vostochnoi lit-ry, 1976) presents essays on the foreign policy of Australia's Labor Government, Australo-Chinese relations in the 1970s, the fight of Catholic and Protestant missionaries in Tahiti in the nineteenth century, the tendency of forming a Pacific economic complex and developing economic ties between these countries and the USSR, the theory of "democratic socialism" in the Australian Laborites ideology, the

development of Australia's mining industry, several problems of New Zealand's economic development, the ethno-linguistic problems of Oceania, natural and ethno-social levels of integration in Oceania, the anthropological classification of Australians, contemporary data about the origins and characteristics of Oceanic agriculture, several aspects of the ethno-cultural problems of Pacific Ocean basin countries, and the calendar of the Polynesians. The final work is titled *Proshloe i Nastoiashchee Avstralii i Okeanii [The Past and Present of Australia and Oceania]* (Moskva: Nauka, Glav. red. vostochnoi lit-ry, 1979) and provides articles on the study of New Zealand in Soviet historiography, the early stage of English penetration in New Zealand, the question of German colonial expansion in Samoa, questions about the general aims and basic conflicts between Japan and Germany in 1940-41, the historical prerequisites for the formation of the general Australian Congress of Trade Unions, the state and the development of education in modern Australia, 1945-75, the development of Port Moresby, Australia and Japan--two approaches to economic cooperation with developing countries of the region, the development of New Zealand's agriculture in the 1970s, the initiation rites in New Guinea, the Australian community, the beginning stage of missionary activity in Polynesia, the power of a spiritual leader on Easter Island, the Maori syncretistic religion in the past and present, the ancient Philippines and their connection with Oceania, and the establishment of the shamanism of Malaysia's Semangs and the Australian aborigines.

O Iazykakh, Fol'klore i Literature Okeanii [Concerning the Languages, Folklore and Literature of Oceania] (Moskva: Nauka, Glav. red. vostochnoi lit-ry, 1978) is another collection of articles on topics not included in the previous three works. There are six essays on the social, linguistic, and psychological factors of the linguistic situation in Papua New Guinea, the nominal possessive construction in the Melanesian languages, several characteristics in the development of the Rapanui language based on folklore texts, problems of studying the singing folklore of Oceania, the connections of the musical folklore of the Papuans of New Guinea with their mythology, and the formation of a national literature in Oceania.

The development of a singing folklore tradition and its connections with mythology and legends among the peoples of New Guinea, Polynesia, Melanesia, and Micronesia is explored by the ethnographer B. N. Putilov in his work *Pesni Iuzhnykh Morei [Songs of the Southern Seas]* (Moskva: Nauka, 1978).

Five monographs are available as a result of the 1971 cruise of the research ship *Dmitrii Mendeleev* through the Pacific. D. V. Naumov,

Director of the Leningrad Zoological Museum, in his book *Na Ostrovakh Okeanii [Through the Islands of Oceania]* (Moskva: Nauka, Glav. red. vostochnoi lit-ry, 1975) recounts his impressions from a scientific point of view. His own photographs accompany the text in which he discusses the flora, fauna, atolls, coral reefs, and marine life of Fiji, the Maclay Coast and other parts of New Guinea, Samoa, Nauru, the New Hebrides, and Australia. The leaders of the research expedition, A. A. Aksenov and I. M. Belousov (the latter died before the book was published) describe the people and work of the geographers, geologists, zoologists, biologists, and ethnographers on the cruise in the book *Zagadki Okeanii [Riddles of Oceania]* (Moskva: Mysl', 1975). A map on the inside front cover shows the route of the *Mendeleev* and there are chapters covering each of the places visited. Two sections of good quality photographs accompany the text. G. M. Ignat'ev bases his volume on the *Mendeleev* cruise and the *Kallisto* cruise in 1976-77. The author discusses the geographical features and zones of the Pacific islands and factors which created the landscapes and the problems of nature conservation. There is also a substantial bibliography and very good color photographs by the author. The historian Irina M. Meliksetova tells about her impressions of the traditions, schools and technical progress of Western Samoa, Nauru, Tonga, Fiji, and Papua New Guinea in her work *Vstrecha s Okeaniei 70-kh Godov [An Encounter with Oceania in the 70's]* (Moskva: Nauka, Glav. red. vostochnoi lit-ry, 1976). Perhaps the most substantial work to be published in all the resultant literature of the *Mendeleev* cruise is the ethnographic volume entitled *Na Beregu Maklaia [On the Maclay Coast]* (Moskva: Nauka, Glav. red. vostochnoi lit-ry, 1975). This work will be more welcome to Western scholars since it is accompanied by English abstracts of each chapter. The authors who contributed to the fourteen essays in this work are N. A. Butinov, D. D. Tumarkin, G. M. Ignat'ev., I. A. Suetova, O. M. Pavlovskii, V. N. Basilov, M. V. Kriukov, B. N. Putilov, and I. M. Meliksetova. Since the cruise of the *Mendeleev* was to commemorate the one-hundredth anniversary of the famous nineteenth century Russian anthropologist Nikolai Miklukho-Maklai's stay on the Maclay Coast of New Guinea, much of the material is about the Bongan village which he studied. A foldout map and photos accompany the text.

The most prolific writer award must go to Kim Vladimirovich Malakhovskii. Not only is he the editor of several books already discussed and author of one mentioned so far, but in the Academy of Sciences USSR series *Peoples of the World*, he has written six monographs on different Pacific islands, and one on Australia (see later). Although more popular in

format and with few references, they serve to bring these islands to the attention of Soviet readers. In the volume *Pod Iuzhnym Krestom [Under the Southern Cross]* (Moskva: Nauka, 1974) the history and contemporary situation of the states of Western Samoa, Nauru, Tonga, and Fiji is discussed. After the history and general description is given, the importance of its strategic position is discussed in *Ostrov, Otkrytyi Mugellanom (Guam) [The Island Discovered by Magellan (Guam)]* (Moskva: Nauka, Glav. red. vostochnoi lit-ry, 1975). The history and struggle for independence is presented in *Ostrov Raiskikh Ptits: Isotoriia Papua Novoi Gvinei [The Island of Birds of Paradise: The History of Papua New Guinea]* (Moskva: Nauka, 1976). The effects of colonialism on the Marianna, Marshall, and Caroline Islands are portrayed in *Posledniaia Podopechnaia (Istoriia Mikronezii) [The Last Trust Territory: A History of Micronesia]* (Moskva: Nauka, 1977). The last two publications are about *Solomony Ostrova [The Solomon Islands]* (Moskva: Nauka, 1978) and *Istoriia Ostrovov Kuka [History of the Cook Islands]* (Moskva: Nauka, Glav. red. vostochnoi lit-ry, 1978).

Research on people who were important to the history of the Pacific is well presented in biographies by B. N. Komissarov about *Grigorii Ivanovich Langsdorf, 1774-1852 [Georg Heinrich von Langsdorff]* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1975) and T. A. Lukina about *Iogann Fridrikh Eshshol'ts, 1793-1831 [Johann Friedrich Eschscholtz]* (Leningrad: Nauka, 1975). Both of these studies have references, cite Soviet archival materials and clear up a number of previous bibliographical problems on just what these men published in Russian. M. I. Ios'ko presents the fascinating life of *Nikolai Sudzilovskii-Russel': zhizn' revoliutsionnaia deiatel'nost' i mirovozzrenie [Nicholas Sudzilovskii-Russel: The Life, Revolutionary Activity and World Outlook]* (Minsk: Izdvo BGU, 1976). V. A. Divin's biography on V. M. Golovnin is nicely illustrated and referenced and was useful to Ella Wiswell in her recent translation³ of Golovnin's Kamchatka voyage. Divin's work is called *Povest' o Slavnon Moreplavatele [A Story About a Famous Seafarer]* (Moskva: Mysl', 1976). IA. M. Svet's illustrated account of the life and voyages of *Dzhems Kuk [James Cook]* (Moskva: Mysl', 1979) is intended for a lay audience.

Australia is the subject of five volumes: *Vneshniaia Politika Avstralii, 1939-1974 [Australia's Foreign Policy, 1939-1974]* (Moskva: Nauka, Glav.

²For an English study of the 'Hawaiian phase of his man's life, see R. Hayashida and D. Kittelson, "The Odyssey of Nicholas Russel," *Hawaiian Journal of History*, 11, (1977), 110-124.

³V. M. Golovnin, *Around the World on the Kamchatka, 1817-1819* (Honolulu: Hawaiian Historical Society and University of Hawaii Press, 1979). Translated by Ella Wiswell.

red. vostochnoi lit-ry, 1975) by I. A. Lebedev examines the growth of foreign relations from the eve of World War II to the present, emphasizing its dependence on the US. There is also a chapter on Australia's adventures in colonialism. One of Australia's authors most widely translated into Russian is the subject of a complete bibliography (English and Russian works) compiled by G. M. TSapenko entitled *Katarina Susannah Prichard, biobibliograficheskii ukazatel'* [*Katharine Susannah Prichard, A Bio-bibliographical Index*] (Moskva: Kniga, 1975). The growth of trade unions and the workers movement, as well as the foreign and domestic policies of the Labor Government since 1972 is presented by K. V. Malakhovskii in *Budni Piatogo Kontinenta* [*Work-a-Day Life of the Fifth Continent*] (Moskva: Nauka, 1975. Series "Peoples of the World"). Another work examines the formation, organization and eventual coalition of *Liberal'Naia i Agrarnaia Partii Avstralii, posle vtoroi mirovoi voiny* [*Australia's Liberal and Agrarian Parties after World War II*] (Moskva: Nauka, Glav. red. vostochnoi lit-ry, 1976). Finally, V. Kidinov provides notes to *Mify i Legendy Avstralii* [*The Myths and Legends of Australia*] (Moskva: Nauka, Glav. red. vostochnoi lit-ry, 1976).

The tragic, yet eternally interesting, ethnographic study of *Tasmaniitsy i Tasmaniiskaia Problema* [*The Tasmanians and the Tasmanian Problem*] (Moskva: Nauka, Glav. red. vostochnoi lit-ry, 1975) is recounted by Vladimir R. Kabo. He examines the mystery of the origins of the Tasmanians, explores archaeological evidence, the art, material culture, economy, society, religion, and language. There are 275 references in the bibliography. There does not appear to be as much political exploitation as this topic could have allowed a Soviet, but rather it is more a description and examination of what is known.

B. A. Bogomolov writes about the *Ekonomika i Politika Novoi Zelandii* [*New Zealand's Economy and Politics*] (Moskva: Mysl', 1978). Special features of economic development, agriculture, industry, the socio-political structure of society and New Zealand's international relations are analyzed.

The last group of books to be brought to the reader's attention is on languages. In the series *Languages of the Peoples of Asia and Africa*, three works have been published. They are A. A. Leont'ev's *Papuasskie Iazyki* [*Papuan Languages*] (Moskva: Nauka, Glav. red. vostochnoi lit-ry, 1974), V. Krupa's *Polineziiskie Iazyki* [*Polynesian Languages*]⁴ (Moskva: Nauka, Glav. red. vostochnoi lit-ry, 1975) and V. Krupa's *Gavaiskii Iazyk* [*The Hawaiian Language*] (Moskva: Nauka, Glav. red. vostochnoi lit-ry, 1979).

⁴This work was published first in *English--Polynesian languages. A survey of research.* (The Hague: Mouton, 1973. *Janua linguarum, series critica*, 11)

Each work includes a substantial number of references and covers roughly the same topics--phonetics, phonology, lexicology, morphology, and sentence structure.

As the titles of the above works suggest there is varied interest in the Pacific islands. The ethnographic contributions --*On the Maclay Coast* and the work on the Tasmanians--are probably the least politically tainted and among the most substantial scholarly efforts. The biographies of Langsdorff and Eschscholtz are particularly good, especially since they quote archival materials. These research efforts can also be assessed by examining the Western sources to which Soviet scholars have access.

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