

Abstract

The thesis focuses on different conceptions of Russia developed throughout the philosophical-journalistic and prose works of an eminent Russian thinker of the 19th century – Alexander Herzen, who had lived and worked in Russia and later on continued his work as emigrant elsewhere in Europe. Applying E. Said's Orientalism, I. Buruma's and A. Margalit's Occidentalism, and A. Etkind's internal colonization, a representative sample of Herzen's work has been analyzed to embrace the changes of the author's perception of Russia. In particular, Etkind's concept is used to bridge the divergence between a conventional understanding of Orientalism directed upon Middle East and the canonical texts of the Russian 19th century (pre-revolutionary) intelligentsia. Herzen's work has been thus situated within the context of postcolonial studies. The analysis studies the images and scenes used by Herzen to build up his ideas and understandings of Russia and Europe, or more precisely his constructions of East and West, indirectly intertwined with the social characteristics of Russia and his various conceptions, including the imaginary role of Russian intelligentsia and the author's own role in Russia and Europe.