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<<http://h-net.msu.edu/cgi-bin/logbrowse.pl?trx=vx&list=h-earlyslavic&month=1105&week=c&msg=owuVitZ9O8iknLuz2s6ulA&user=&pw=>>

Perhaps the following three items may be of interest. I apologize if I appear to be sending coals to Newcastle. Three parts here:

1. Sotheby's Russian art sale;
2. S. A. Kirillina's "*Ocharovannye stranniki*";
3. The website "*Vostochnaia literatura: Srednevekovye istoricheskie istochniki*."

1. Sotheby's is having three days of Russian art sales in London, June 6-8. You can find links here to the three online catalogues:

<http://links.mkt2449.com/servlet/MailView?ms=MzkyOTMwMgS2&r=NzM3OTQ0MTMyMwS2&j=MjMyOTY1NjQ2S0&mt=1&rt=0>

There are some very good paintings by some of the big names in Russian art, some work by lesser-known artists that will be of interest if your subject is Russian Orientalism, a bunch of gaudy Fabergé stuff, and a few icons, at least some of which are fairly interesting ones from the 17th century. Sotheby's e-catalogues are very nicely done, allowing one to zoom in for details, select items and their descriptions of interest and copy them into a file that then can be printed as a pdf and saved to your computer (the image quality is good enough so you can use the pictures for teaching purposes). Of course if you are thinking of buying anything in the sales, I hope you are in the category of oligarch in exile as far as your bank account is concerned.

2. A new book: Svetlana Alekseevna Kirillina, "*Ocharovannye stranniki*". *Arabo-osmanskii mir glazami rossiiskikh palomnikov XVI-XVIII stoletii*. Moskva: Kliuch-S, 2010. 564 pp. ISBN 978-5-93136-095-9.

The author is a well-published Arabist in the Institut stran Azii i Afriki at MGU; so she brings to the task a good knowledge of the places the Russian pilgrims to the Holy Land described. The book is arranged by thematic chapters ("Tiagoti puti," "prirodnye iavleniia," "Kul'tura povsednevnosti" etc.), in each of which she provides considerable detail, often long quotations, from the various sources. Some of her travelers are well known (e.g., Arsenii Sukhanov), others, at least for me (e.g., Ioann Luk'ianov, who traveled 1701-1703) less so. A number of these accounts have been recently republished. The weight of the material is on the 18th century, but the diachronic comparisons of how similar subjects are treated should interest Muscovy specialists. Kirillina is familiar with Western literature on the Middle East, on travel literature, etc.; the book has a good bibliography, glossary, indexes and a nice selection of contemporary b/w illustrations.

### 3. A website.

I suspect this one has been brought to your attention before, but perhaps a reminder is in order. If I had looked once, I had forgotten about it.

The site is "Vostochnaia literatura. Srednevekovye istoricheskie istochniki Vostoka i Zapada <<http://www.vostlit.ru>>.

This is a very extensive collection, in the first instance of historical texts in Russian translation. They range from a lot of "eastern" ones--i.e., originally in Arabic, Persian (e.g., Rashid al-Din), some Chinese (e.g., Sima Qian), etc.) to Latin (or other Western language) ones that may be relevant to the "East" loosely defined (a fair amount deals with Central or Western Europe...). A good many of them are the standard repertoire of the important foreign accounts pertaining to Rus. So you find here Mayerberg, Bowes, Bussow, Paul of Aleppo, Barbaro and Contarini, etc. etc. There are Byzantine sources; at least a fair number of the important Russian chronicles. Where there is an older translation, e.g., in ChOidr, that is the one reproduced; so most of the translations are previously published. Texts do have explanatory annotation, but I have not checked to see how much of it is newly added or whether most is simply taken from the earlier publications. The project is one where they are trying to post new translations where the text does not yet exist in Russian; they have a call for volunteers who know German...

The site also has a smallish section of historical maps (that is, usually modern ones, showing, e.g., areas ruled in different periods); also a valuable section of indexes to important historical journals that you can download in pdf format. You can access the primary source texts alphabetically by author. There is a blog page, but I have not explored it yet to see what, if anything its value may be.

I have not been able to get the search function box on the page to work properly, even if I cut and paste a name on their site in Cyrillic into the box; nor have I yet figured out how one might access the long list of newly translated texts that is on the opening page, many of them being more modern ones. In any event, they are not yet included on the pages accessible alphabetically. The site is obviously a work in progress.

All in all this has to be an incredibly valuable resource if you are sitting where you cannot otherwise access such materials. I leave aside here issues of whether the translations, old or new, are good ones and whether we might not want as well the texts in the original languages (the editors of the site address that issue of why they are not posting the originals in their FAQs). Fact is, if I am not mistaken, that many of us have to rely on some translation of many texts and do not always have the languages to read them in the original.