

Title: Empire in Microcosm: Russian Women in Central Asia
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Varvara Dukhovskaia, the wife of a prominent general and government official in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, wrote a memoir which exemplified the construction of the Russian Empire as a multinational entity benevolently ruled by Russian autocracy. She traveled to all of her husband's military and governmental postings, from Tbilisi to the front of the Russo-Turkish War, to Khabarovsk and Tashkent, and played a prominent in official role. The 1900 Paris Universal Exhibition, to which she traveled with her husband from Tashkent as official government representatives, epitomized Russia's representation of itself as an imperial power composed of multiple nationalities, combining a fully-realized Kremlin back-to-back with a Central Asian market scene, along with exhibits depicting the spoils of Siberia and a state-of-the-art cinematographic "train journey" from Moscow to Peking. In this paper I place Dukhovskaia's construction of the Russian empire into context with that of the 1900 Paris Exhibition and with those of other women writers and memoirists of the same time period.

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