



## We are not Barbarians: Literature and the Russian Émigré Press in England, 1890–1905

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If any single factor militated against late Victorian support for a Russian revolution, it was the entrenched belief that Russians were barbarians, incapable of governing themselves, a race of 'besotted savages utterly unfit for civilisation'. Yet during the last years of the nineteenth century, England faced a challenge to her conception of the Russian race. Educated and cultured Russian exiles toured up and down the country lecturing on Russian themes; they also published propaganda aimed at winning English hearts over to the Russian revolution. This paper examines two émigré magazines – the pro-Nihilist Free Russia (1890–1914) and its ostensibly less radical rival, The Anglo-Russian (1897–1914). Specifically, it explores how they used fiction, commentaries on Russian literature, and descriptions of Russian literary culture to advertise the race's creative and spiritual potential and its readiness for self-government.

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