Italian translations of Russian fiction in late nineteenth and early twentieth century

by Giulia Baselica

This paper presents a brief overview of the different routes through which some of the most famous nineteenth century Russian novels and short stories entered Italian culture between the 1860’s and the first decade of the twentieth century. Russian literature became an integral part of the Italian cultural tradition thanks to the gradual diffusion of translated editions: initially they were mostly indirect translations (although this was not always the case — as, for instance, for the first foreign edition of some extracts from *War and Peace*), subsequently major publishers printed renowned and accurate translations from the original Russian version, most of which nowadays are no longer in circulation. Such a peculiar period in the history of translation is characterized by the complex intertwining of publishing vicissitudes — a succession of acquisitions, refusals, misunderstandings — with the charismatic personalities of various translators and scholars who all came from different cultural backgrounds but who were all moved by the same passionate and ambitious intents.

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