

Title: Settlers and Titans: Inhabiting the Russian Frontier in Sergei Aksakov's *A Family Chronicle* and Ivan Goncharov's *Frigate Pallas*

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The phenomenon of the frontier, its space and culture and the discourse of frontierity, has been closely and fruitfully examined in recent years in the American context, but has been comparatively less considered in the Russian case. Russian scholars have addressed the issue of Siberia in historical terms and they have examined Siberia's role in the Russian imagination as a place of exile, source of untapped resources, and as a potential site of renewal for Russian society. Yet the *topos* of the frontier itself has received little attention. This paper seeks to initiate an articulation of a Russian poetics of frontierity as it emerged in nineteenth century literature through a comparative reading of Sergei Aksakov's *A Family Chronicle* (1856) and Ivan Goncharov's *Fregat Pallas* (1858) as narratives of Russian settlement. Diverse texts that have not previously been considered in relation to each other, these seminal works appeared in print within two years of each other, and at a time that coincided with a peak in interest in Russia's eastern frontier territory in the 1850s. Both texts serve as a form of literary domestication of the "wild" spaces of the frontier and its borderlands, and, in so doing, allow for a nuanced consideration of the complex discursive interrelationship of Russian national expansion and imperial growth.