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Sommario/riassunto	This book looks at the different ways in which Russian historians and authors have thought about their country's first Antarctic expedition (1819-21) over the past 200 years. It considers the effects their discussions have had on Russia's Antarctic policy and may yet have on Antarctica itself. In particular, it examines the Soviet decision in 1949, in line with the cultural policies of late Stalinism, to revise the traditional view of the expedition in order to claim that it was Russian seamen that first sighted the Antarctic mainland in January 1820; this

claim remains the official position in Russia today. The author illustrates, however, that the case for such a claim has never been established, and that attempts to make it damaged the work of successive Russian historians. Providing a timely assessment of Russian historiography of the Bellingshausen expedition and examining the connections between the priority claim and national policy goals, this book represents an important contribution to the history of the Antarctic. .
