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   Sommario/riassunto   This is the first study in Russian or Western literature of the rise and fall of Russian naval influence in the North Pacific Ocean from the time of Peter the Great to Tsar Nicholas I. The author deals with a neglected area: inherent tension between Russian naval and mercantile interests and the origins of international rivalry in the North Pacific at large. Barratt shows that Russia's motives for early expeditions to the Pacific were to promote science, exploration, and trade. But when imperialist powers vied for territory and resources in the area, military

confrontation became a possibility.