

IVAN THE TERRIBLE. By *Robert Payne* and *Nikita Romanoff*. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1975. x, 502 pp. Illus. \$12.95.

There have been many popular biographies of Ivan IV, but this one is easily the best. It makes good reading. The text is based upon a wide range of contemporary narrative sources and is accompanied by well-chosen illustrations, maps, plans of the Kremlin, a glossary, and an index. The bibliography includes all the major works in Russian, English, and German, along with some esoterica.

The book concentrates on military campaigns, diplomatic negotiations, and the horrors of the *oprichnina*. There is next to nothing on administrative reforms, and only one paragraph on the peasantry. But the authors did not set out to write a history of the Muscovite state in the sixteenth century. They have given us an account of Ivan's life, which they divide into three sharply contrasting periods: the troubled adolescent, the good tsar (guided by Sylvester), and the "harsh and tyrannical voluptuary" (following Anastasia's death). Allowing for some hyperbole (Ivan becomes "almost an abstraction of pure evil"), this is a respectable view: it goes back at least to Karamzin if not to Kurbskii.

And yet the Ivan that emerges is an Ivan that never existed. It is not a matter of factual misstatements; there are some errors but they are not ruinous. The authors have failed by following their sources all too well. There is no attempt to assess the reliability of the sources, no awareness of historiographical problems. Thus we are told about the Chosen Council, or about "Ivan's vast private library of manuscripts," without any hint that their existence is at best dubious. Foreign accounts are taken at face value; the most improbable anecdotes are repeated, even in the face of warnings issued by the editors of the texts cited. The conventional pieties of Muscovite chronicles are taken for stenographic reports. One example must suffice. The Nikon Chronicle contains a long and rhetorical farewell address which Ivan allegedly delivered to his wife in his chambers on the eve of his departure for the Kazan' campaign in 1552. The authors give it to us word for word as a precise record of the tsar's actions and feelings, apparently never stopping to consider how improbable it is that the speech was ever made, let alone that someone was standing by taking notes.

Platonov once remarked that "a biography of Ivan the Terrible cannot be written, for we know extraordinarily little of the man himself." It is an admonition still worth heeding.

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GORODSKIE VOSSTANIIA V ROSSII V PERVOI POLOVINE XVII VEKA (30-40-E GODY). By *E. V. Chistiakova*. Voronezh: Izdatel'stvo Voronezhskogo universiteta, 1975. 243 pp. 90 kopecks.

This small volume is an important reevaluation of the central role of violence in the development of Muscovite social and political life during the middle of the seventeenth century. The author focuses on the context and development of the events commonly called "urban uprisings" during the 1630s and 1640s, ending with the uprisings in Moscow and other towns during the summer of 1648. The period chosen for this study is a good one, emphasizing the continuity in the violence and in the groups which participated. On the other hand, the traditional

breaking point of 1648 is disappointing, for there is no sustained inquiry into the larger outcome of the violence or the influence of these events on urban life during the second half of the century. Furthermore, the continued acceptance of the venerable view that these violent incidents were urban in nature is unfortunate. Indeed, the title of this work is misleading, given the evidence presented in the study, and Chistiakova herself is apologetic about continuing to use the term urban to describe the general character of the violence. Following M. N. Tikhomirov, she notes that these events were more than urban uprisings—that popular uprisings better describes them given the variety of social groups, townsmen, musketeers, peasants, and slaves who actively participated.

The author discusses the three major locales which endured violence in these two decades, giving special attention to Moscow but also providing a comprehensive discussion of the provincial violence in the southern towns and in the White Sea littoral. In her work on Moscow especially, new evidence and interpretations alter traditional understanding of the incidents. For example, the role of service nobility in the Moscow uprising in 1648 is reexamined in light of P. P. Smirnov's thesis that the nobles took an active role in the violence. Chistiakova finds that the nobles were not active participants in the violence of June 1648, and that the Lazarev regiment was composed of musketeers and lower service groups, rather than members of the nobility. Similarly, the author argues, in contrast to Bakhrushin's view, that the middle-level townsmen were not active in the violence either. The leadership in the violence came from the *chern'*. Thus, the cooperation of the townsmen and the service nobles against the Morozov government fades in the light of new archival evidence. The two groups did share a common concern over the problem of *Zakladnichestvo*, however, and did cooperate on this issue at the time of the writing of the *Sobornoe Ulozhenie* in 1648–49.

In Chistiakova's view, the outcome of the violence was not particularly significant. The new legal norms in the Law Code of 1649 did not constitute a step in the direction of "bourgeois" development for Muscovy's townsmen. Essentially the situation remained unchanged, even though she argues that the year 1649 marks an important new stage in the development of the class struggle.

In her introduction, the author rejects the notion that the violence of the 1630s and 1640s was part of a larger series of incidents in the "crisis of the seventeenth century." The material presented tends, however, to reinforce the idea that Russia's experience was strikingly similar to that of Western European countries during the seventeenth century (despite cogent criticism of the "crisis" thesis by both Soviet and other historians). Indeed, Chistiakova's view that the post-1649 years were part of a new period encourages potentially fruitful discussion of Russia's political and social development. This is especially important given T. K. Rabb's recent reinterpretation of the "crisis" (for example, the increased stability and calm in European life after the middle of the century) and the character of the late seventeenth century. Russia's history of violence must be viewed in the larger European context. Although Chistiakova fails in some respects, her reinterpretation of these popular uprisings is an important contribution toward a fresh understanding of the importance of violence in Muscovite life and the relationship of Russia to larger problems in European history.

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