

Kievan origins of Rus' historical writing; Novgorodian historical writing; and the role of Rus' annals. The book has three informative appendixes: (1) on how time was reckoned in Rus'; (2) "A List of [sixteen] Rus' Pre-1400 Manuscripts Containing Historical Writing"; and (3) a list of his published works that served as bases for sections of the book.

In several sections, he adds previously unpublished material. For example, in §2.1–2.2, he discusses the predecessors, both textual and hypothetical, of the *Povest' vremennykh let* (PVL). (Personal note: I appreciate the amount of attention Guimon devotes to describing my own views concerning the PVL, especially since he finds himself in disagreement with many of my conclusions.) Guimon also discusses, among other things, what he calls "the problem of the Oldest Tale" and its relationship to the PVL in particular and to early Rus' historical writing in general. The hypothetical work he is calling "the Oldest Tale" Guimon sees as the pre-annalistic narrative that was later incorporated into what became the first part of the PVL.

In §3.7 Guimon discusses *The Archiepiscopal Annals* in comparison with the "living chronicles" of western Europe. In §4.2 he discusses the "patrons, supervisors, and authors of the annals." In §4.6 the Annals and Legal Texts. In §4.8–4.11 he presents his reasons for considering the 1130s–40s as crucial to documentary and annalistic writing.

Of particular significance among the previously published material is §4.3, where Guimon provides a typology of the "kinds of events" the four major early Rus' annalistic texts (PVL, Kievan, Laurentian, and Novgorod First chronicles) report on (political and military events; events in princely families; changes of ecclesiastical hierarchs; building of churches; natural phenomena, omens, and disasters; construction of fortifications, bridges, and other civil structures, and so forth).

The contents and analyses within this monograph are rich, well worth the effort spent to read them closely. We have a great deal to learn about the time in which these sources were written and the characteristics of their authors. Guimon's book contains an accurate summing up of the state of the field, as well as well-thought-out hypotheses for testing in further research. Yet he also includes much of his own original research. For anyone interested in studying early Rus' chronicles/annals, this book is an excellent place to start.

DONALD OSTROWSKI
Harvard University

Harbin: A Cross-Cultural Biography. By Mark Gamsa. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020. x, 383 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Glossary. Index. Photographs. Maps. \$90.00, hard bound.
doi: 10.1017/slr.2023.58

This interesting book purports to be a double biography of Harbin and one of its inhabitants, Roger Budberg. The example provided as an analogy is Alan Bullock's double biography of Adolf Hitler and Iosif Stalin (244). Budberg was also quite a character and Mark Gamsa has done a remarkable job of sleuthing him out. Born to Baltic German nobles in Russian service, Budberg took his nobility seriously, although he was a third son and would have to make his own way. For fourteen years, he studied at Tartu, took a medical degree and practiced women's medicine. His parents were unhappy with this choice and cut off support. He was named Privatdozent in January 1903 and seemed on his way to a university career, when something untoward

happened leaving him looking for a wet nurse for a baby girl. Within a month, he had fled to the Russian interior “to improve his Russian” (49) and shortly thereafter he moved further, to war in the Far East.

The Russo-Japanese war was neither successful for the Russians, nor Budberg. The Budberg connections allowed him to try out his pet idea, floating hospitals, but this was a failure, although the barges became billets. Budberg accused those who had tried to block his idea of corruption (51–52). A relative in the high command freed the troublesome Budberg from his duties, giving him “the leisure to explore China” (53). He seems to have learned a smattering of spoken Chinese and to have bought a Chinese boy “to be his servant” (52). Although Budberg insisted that others did not understand China, there is no evidence that he was ever literate in Chinese. At war’s end, he was not decorated. By 1906, he had settled in Harbin and would stay there for twenty years, sending some letters and postcards and writing memoirs that misrepresent his military service and maybe much more (50).

A year later, in October 1907, aged 40, he married a 14-year old. Gamsa conjectures that “Budberg took her from a brothel” (87). Three years later, he published expertly on “how a woman sold into prostitution could become free...” (95). His “work” with prostitutes also caused Chinese society to “brusquely” turn away from him (110). His wife died at age twenty-seven and his daughter at age twenty-five. This rare case of intermarriage at Harbin did not end well for the Chinese side of the bargain.

Roger Budberg was an unabashed antisemite. He disliked Jewish doctors and thought that Jewish prominence at Harbin smacked of “conspiracy” (109). He referred to Georgians, Armenians and Persians as “criminal nations.” The Japanese were “the most horrid people in the world” (108). In short, filled with racial prejudices, the baron had come to China to buy people on the cheap and live out his fantasy of “sinicization.” When his wife of thirteen years died, he immediately wanted to marry up, possibly a Manchu noblewoman, like Roman Ungern von Sternberg did (296), but Budberg could not afford it. The “friend” who was supposed to arrange the marriage declared Budberg “mentally ill” (162). Shortly afterwards, he died. His father would be the last Budberg buried in the family cemetery.

As a biography of Roger Budberg, the book succeeds with fresh genealogical detail about the Budberg clan as well as a very careful reading between the lines of Budberg’s own letters home and limited scholarly output. I think this will be the definitive biography of a rather repulsive character.

As a biography of international Harbin, the book is less successful. Harbin was a mix of nations from its founding as a city in 1898 until 1954 when Mao Tsetung sent the Russians home. At best, the story of cross-cultural Harbin intertwines with Budberg’s life for the first half. The second half requires an eye for the increasing influence of China and Japan, but there is not a single Japanese source in the book and limited material in Chinese. There are also numerous minor inaccuracies and omissions, especially about the complex international relations that make this book inappropriate for undergraduates. Non-chronological treatment is also confusing at times. There is nothing on the city’s economy. Specialists will, however, draw much eclectic material about Harbin from Gamsa and enjoy the author’s often insightful ideas about cross-cultural contact and more. If a second edition is contemplated, I would recommend that University of Toronto Press rename the book after Budberg.

DAVID WOLFF
Hokkaido University