

Ivan the Terrible in Russian Historical Memory since 1991. By Charles J. Halperin. Boston: Academic Studies Press, 2021. xvi, 290 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Tables. \$119.00, hard bound.
doi: 10.1017/slr.2023.207

Charles J. Halperin's book is full of irrelevant details that he does not—and cannot—use in his analysis. Here is a typical example: “Volume 1 [of a recent essay collection on Ivan the Terrible] contains sixteen articles, volume 2 seventeen articles. Each includes a directory of information about contributors. . . the contributions appear in alphabetical order of their authors' last names or the last name of the first author of the three co-authored articles” (164). Most of Halperin's book is just a retelling of sources, which, to be fair, are rich and diverse. His summaries of them, however, could have been more concise and to the point. Some are many pages long (32–36, 76–85, 89–102, and 124–27), while analytical sections are much shorter. In addition, he typically retells his sources one by one and repeats similar claims made by different authors many times.

Nevertheless, the author demonstrates a solid knowledge of recent Russian publications on Ivan the Terrible ranging from academic historiography to the writings of religious activists and from school textbooks to the phantasies of the “New Chronology” authors (a group of amateur historians claiming that medieval history has been fabricated by modern writers). In addition to the Russian non-fiction publications, which according to Halperin, are his main source, he examines two English-language books—Nancy Kollmann's *The Russian Empire* (2017) and Joan Neuberger's *The Thing in Darkness: Eisenstein's Ivan the Terrible in Stalin's Russia* (2019). He also discusses two Russian films—Sergei Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible* (1944) and Pavel Lungin's *Tsar* (2009). Both books and Eisenstein's film fall outside the scope of the book. As for Lungin's *Tsar*, it is one of many recent Russian productions on Ivan and his epoch, and there was hardly any reason for including it in a book focused on non-fiction sources. Due to these thematic extensions, the book's genre is between a monograph and a collection of essays.

Halperin's approach to his sources is significantly different from most works on historical memory. His analysis focuses almost exclusively on whether this or that claim is historically accurate—an approach he applies to all his sources without distinction. The present reviewer can see why showing that Ivan's fans have little knowledge of history would be helpful in the context of Russian political debates. It is far less evident that western readers need to be persuaded that the New Chronology authors, Russian nationalists, and Orthodox fanatics do not care about and have no qualification for establishing historical facts.

Examining some parallels between academic historiography and “profane” literature could help demonstrate the far-right political agendas of some Russian “academic” historians. But this is not what Halperin does. One can hardly escape the impression that he seeks to downplay some of the distinguished historians' ideas that he does not share (those of Ruslan Skrynnikov, for example) by conflating them with the absurd claims of New Chronology or Orthodox fundamentalists (42).

To be fair again, Halperin's criticism of some misinterpretations of Ivan's rule looks convincing to this reviewer. I have found relevant Halperin's warnings against the abuse of the Imperial Studies' approaches with regard to medieval history (127–31). Another merit of the book is that it examines the perception of Ivan in Tatarstan, Russia's largest autonomy, the historical predecessor of which, the Kazan Khanate, was conquered by that tsar. Halperin shows that Ivan's image in local textbooks differs significantly from how he is viewed in “metropolitan” Russia. However, Halperin avoids discussing Tatarstan's political and cultural situation and its impact on interpreting the past.

The most problematic aspect of the book is that it avoids a discussion of politics, which is shocking given the centrality of history to Putin's ideology. Halperin

occasionally mentions the political sympathies of some of the authors he studies but does not link the changing conceptions of Ivan's reign to Russia's political evolution over the last thirty years. His "classification" of the authors he studies is based on how they assess Ivan (apologetically, critically, and so on) rather than their political sympathies (3–29). Halperin overlooks the central role of the Putin regime and its proxies in celebrating Ivan's memory. He does not mention Vladimir Medinsky, Putin's former Minister of Culture and currently his advisor, the creator and head of the Russian Military Historical Society (which plays a central role in Putin's history politics), and the Chairperson of the Interdepartmental Commission on Historical Education. Medinsky, however, is also a "historian" of Ivan the Terrible. His dismissal (in his 2011 doctoral dissertation) of foreign sources that give a negative account of Ivan's rule as politically biased and his "postmodernist" rejection of the notion of historical truth have been central to the tsar's rehabilitation under Putin, not to mention his backing of many pro-Ivan academic and cultural initiatives (including monuments to Ivan and films about him).

Historical memory is imminently political. Halperin's choice not to discuss history politics (5) results in a distorted picture of the Russian debates about Ivan and the normalization of the Russian far-right interpretations of the "terrible tsar" who is often viewed today (as he was under Stalin) as a model to be imitated by Russia's new rulers.

NIKOLAY KOPOSOV
Emory University

Intimate Empire: The Mansurov Family in Russia and the Orthodox East.

By Alexa von Winning. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022. xiv, 219 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. Figures. \$100.00, hard bound. doi: 10.1017/slr.2023.208

Most historical research on Russia's noble families has focused on the domestic sphere, showing how their intimate "gentry nests" were both mainstays of social stability and incubators of political change. Alexa von Winning's study of the Mansurov family, meanwhile, emphasizes mobility and empire-building. In doing so, the author draws on studies about the involvement of the Russian nobility in imperial expansion to show how family networks enabled agents of empire to reach out into the world while staying connected with the metropolis.

Von Winning follows three generations of the Mansurovs on their peregrinations within and beyond the tsar's lands, tracing their "record in paper and stone" (6). For the Mansurovs were empire-builders in the literal sense, whose service to the imperial state and the Orthodox Church left a visible architectural legacy. The Mansurovs repeatedly managed to instrumentalize their family network to advance their political goals and their personal careers. In her analysis of the family's epistolary practice, von Winning shows that letter-writing was not only the organizational basis of the network, but also an emotional substitute for the intimacy of a common family home that these itinerant noblemen and -women lacked (32–38).

The descendant of a distinguished but not particularly wealthy lineage of Tatar origin, Boris Mansurov (1828–1910) found success as a war correspondent during the Crimean War. His career blossomed under the patronage of Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich and his reform-oriented naval ministry, but he also profited from his brother's promotion of his writings in the St. Petersburg salons. Turning to religion in the reform era, Mansurov made it his mission to improve the relationship of the Russian