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IVAN THE TERRIBLE. By *Ruslan G. Skrynnikov*. Edited and translated by *Hugh F. Graham*. Gulf Breeze, Fla.: Academic International Press, 1981. xxiv, 220 pp. \$20.00.

This translation of the popular biography of Tsar Ivan IV written by Skrynnikov in 1975 has features that should recommend it as the introduction to Ivan's reign which we have long sought for our students. It presents the ideas of a scholar who has made valuable contributions to our knowledge of the sources for the reign and reinterpreted some of its major problems. A large amount of information is compressed here into a readable package that avoids the sensationalism of most popular biographies of the Terrible Tsar.

Unfortunately, this is still not the book we need. It lacks balance. Topics the author has studied in detail in his monographs, for example, boyar intrigues and the sources on the *oprichnina*, receive disproportionate attention at the expense of matters such as the formation of the central bureaucracy and the "first moves to enserf the peasantry." Religious matters are dealt with arbitrarily. Adashev's piety is praiseworthy, but Sil'vestr is a religious fanatic. The church was supposedly the main opponent of the introduction of printing in the early 1550s, but there is not a word about the actual appearance of the printing press and the fact that the church was its primary beneficiary.

While Skrynnikov has received deserved praise for his innovative work on certain sources, he has also been criticized as a "romantic" in his treatment of the evidence. The reasons for this criticism are apparent: his willingness to believe the words the chroniclers put in Ivan's mouth and his assertions about the impact of the works attributed to Ivan Peresvetov. In nearly a single breath, Skrynnikov calls Peresvetov one of the initiators of the reform movement and one who responded after it had already begun. There is no evidence that his writings (normally dated ca. 1549) were known to anyone (but possibly Ivan) at the time. Yet we are told that "the sweep of Peresvetov's views dumbfounded contemporaries." Adding to our dismay is the totally unsubstantiated assertion that he would have met prison or death for his attacks on the boyars, had not his protectors, the reformers, stood behind him.

Although the editor touts the book as "sophisticated," the conceptual framework for discussing subjects such as elite politics is muddled, potentially fruitful psychological approaches to Ivan's character are brushed off, and the profound conclusion to it all is that Ivan was "a man of his time."

As translator, Graham has done a pretty good job. I object, however, to "gentry" for *dvoriane* because of its misleading implications, and to "associate boyar" for *okol'nichii*. And in a random check I have found some mistakes: for example, "of Sorsk" for *Sorskii*, "cousin" for *brata*, "cannonball" for *pulia*, and "its members were willing to fight only for a few acres of land" for *ne zaiaviali bolee, chto gotovy*. Unfortunately his additions to the somewhat erratic annotation are not always helpful (for instance, the erroneous information on the Lithuanian Metrica). We can be thankful for his index of names (there was none in the original), but note that Anastasiia (wife of V. V. Shuiskii) is listed under Anastasiia Romanovna and I. S. Shakhovskoi undoubtedly should be S. I. Shakhovskoi (the error is Skrynnikov's).

The maps are a puzzle: a fuzzy early seventeenth-century English one (would not Jenkinson's have been more appropriate?); one labeled "Russia in the Sixteenth Century" that apparently was pirated (and slightly altered), without any credit given, from the more accurately entitled map of "Russia around 1530" in George Vernadsky's *Russia at the Dawn of the Modern Age*; and finally, a curious item that includes the boundaries of expansion under Tsar Aleksei Mikhailovich, an ungrammatical legend, and someone's scribbling that makes "seas" into "seals." What is Academic International up to anyway?

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