The consistently excellent translations of the individual plays lend themselves well to staging by English-language theater practitioners. Along with John Freedman's *Real and Phantom Pains: An Anthology of New Russian Drama* (2014), Hanukai and Weygandt's volume effectively introduces New Drama—one of the most confounding, important, and dynamic Russian cultural movements of the twenty-first century—to the broader audience that it so richly deserves.

Jenny Kaminer
University of California-Davis

This Thing of Darkness: Eisenstein's Ivan the Terrible in Stalin's Russia. By Joan Neuberger. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2019. xvii, 404 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. $48.95, hard bound.
doi: 10.1017/slr.2020.143

There are few historians who can write about Sergei Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible* with Joan Neuberger's academic authority. Indeed, Neuberger has been studying the film's historical, political, cultural, and narrative contexts and nuances for over two decades. Her excellent I.B. Tauris "film companion" to *Ivan the Terrible* has been on the reading lists of many undergraduate film courses since the volume's publication in 2003, while her numerous articles have offered additional important insights into the conception, production, and reception of Eisenstein's unfinished trilogy. *This Thing of Darkness*, the volume under review, builds on Neuberger's earlier studies, while introducing new archival research and offering a wide-ranging survey of the latest scholarship on Eisenstein's film. The resulting monograph is a systematic, comprehensive, theoretically-sophisticated, and multilayered scrutiny of a work that some scholars have described as the "most complex movie ever made" (Yuri Tsivian, *Ivan the Terrible*, 2002, 7).

Neuberger begins her discussion by mapping out the film's extraordinarily complex production history (Chapter 1, "The Potholed Path"). Drawing on material from a wide array of sources (including Eisenstein's film production notes, personal diaries, theoretical writings, and correspondence with Mosfilm administrators), the author traces the various ways in which the director had to "maneuver in the Stalinist political-cultural labyrinth" (37). Chapter 2, "Shifts in Time," looks at Eisenstein's own theoretical writings (especially *Method* and *Nonindifferent Nature*), as well as literary works, documents, and secondary sources that the director studied and / or consulted while working on *Ivan the Terrible*. Neuberger argues that Eisenstein's vision of history as a dialectical, three-dimensional spiral not only informed the film's structure and narrative, it also profoundly challenged both "Stalinist historicism" (122) and the regime's attempt to make Russia's pre-revolutionary past useful to the Soviet state. To illustrate this point, Chapter 3, "Power Personified," offers a thorough analysis of several scenes from *Ivan the Terrible* while demonstrating how the director's theories regarding historical processes shaped his depiction of Ivan's biography "as a dialectal spiral" (128). After briefly alluding to the standard interpretation of Tsar Ivan as a reflection of Stalin, Neuberger further elaborates on the theoretical intricacies of Eisenstein's notions of how a life, especially a political biography, should be narrated.

Chapter 4, "Power Projected," begins with a discussion of Eisenstein's concept of the "fugue" as a structural model for narrating Tsar Ivan's complex and "polyphonic" relationships with his antagonists and then moves on to analyze the use and abuse of power presented in the film. Chapter 5, "How to Do It," examines (and illustrates through an exceptional in-depth analysis of several individual sequences from

the film's Part I) yet another concept central to Eisenstein's cinematic theory and experimental approach to filmmaking, namely polyphonic montage or "the weaving of audio, visual, sensory, and intellectual voices in every frame" (300). Here, Neuberger also chronicles Eisenstein's collaboration with composer Sergei Prokofiev, cinematographer Andrei Moskvin, and actor Nikolai Cherkasov. Lastly, chapter 6, "The Official Reception," deals with the Soviet authorities' varied reception of Eisenstein's project, from awarding it the Stalin Prize for Part I, to preventing the revision of Part II, and, finally, to proscribing the production of Part III.

In the volume's Introduction, Neuberger writes that one of her book's goals is to take *Ivan the Terrible* out of the "museum of film studies" and to make the film "watchable and watched again" (7). While one hopes that this meticulously-researched, empirically-rich, and theoretically-informed study will indeed inspire a greater appreciation of the complexities of Eisenstein's film, the volume will surely become essential reading for anyone interested in early Soviet cinema or Eisenstein's oeuvre. Interdisciplinary in its scope and combining "historical, political, cinematic, and cultural approaches" (2), the volume has much to offer to historians, as well as film and culture scholars. One should also add that, although this book is ultimately a history of Sergei Eisenstein's film, Neuberger's compelling insights into the director's views on recurrent cycles of violence and the nature of absolute power will also convince the reader of *Ivan the Terrible*'s relevance to any moment or milieu.

Olga Mesropova
Iowa State University

The Igor Moiseyev Dance Company: Dancing Diplomats. By Anthony Shay. Bristol, Eng.: Intellect Books, 2019. ix, 224 pp. Photographs. Notes. Bibliography. Index. $33.00, paper.
doi: 10.1017/slr.2020.144

In *The Igor Moiseyev Dance Company: Dancing Diplomats*, Anthony Shay explores Igor Moiseyev's legacy and influence on world events. In the 1930s, Moiseyev founded the State Academic Ensemble of Folk Dances of the Peoples of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, commonly referred to in the west as The Igor Moiseyev Dance Company. Shay's study of Moiseyev adds to the expanding research on the Cultural Cold War as well as the political role of dance within the Soviet Union. Specifically, Shay argues that Moiseyev created a new dance genre, "ethno-identity dance" (4), which is a staged folk dance that serves as a representation of an ethnic group.

Shay begins his book with a discussion of the types and meanings of various spectacles. He notes that the dance company was a spectacle in the sense of being a "'megagenre'" (26) with opulent costumes, music, and lights, as well as a large cast of dancers who performed highly precise movements. This type of staging often conveyed a political message via the choreography. In subsequent chapters, Shay notes the political messages that the dance company imparted to both Soviet citizens and international audiences.

In the following section on Russian nationalism, Shay observes that in the 1930s, when the Moiseyev Dance Company was founded, Soviet leader Iosif Stalin aimed at increasing Russian patriotism amid the growing Nazi threat. A key component of Russian nationalism was a "nostalgia for the village" (69). This nostalgia had first developed in the tsarist era and continued into the Soviet period. Shay relates that Moiseyev translated this nostalgia into choreographies that exude an idealized peasant life. These portrayals of content peasants and optimistic scenes supported