



The Image of Ivan the Terrible in Russian Folklore (Cambridge Studies in Oral and Literate Culture)

Maureen Perrie

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Ivan the Terrible has long been a controversial figure. Some historians regard him as a crazed and evil tyrant; while others (especially Soviet scholars of the Stalin period) have viewed him as a progressive and far-sighted statesman. The folklore about Ivan has played an important part in these debates. Was Ivan's depiction in folklore favourable or hostile? And how far can it be regarded as evidence of contemporary popular attitudes towards the tsar? In this unusual and far-ranging study, Maureen Perrie discusses the nature of Ivan's image in Russian folklore; its historical basis; its development; and the controversies which have surrounded it in pre-revolutionary and Soviet Russian scholarship. She argues that Ivan was in general portrayed in folklore in a positive light, but that this image does not necessarily reflect sixteenth-century views.

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