

developments that otherwise might have escaped our notice. Indeed, Werth shows us arrays of links and ties with Russia's futures that Herzen would always have denied: the provincial press (Ch. 5); a tsarevich's public journey (Ch. 4); a palace fire (Ch. 10) as a nascent tsar-and-people sort of civil society; a railway to the Summer Palace (Ch. 9); a joust with Khiva (Ch. 7) that shows a regime as ready as most other post-1812 hegemonic European societies to try to "develop" Russian society, but perhaps not quite as ready to follow through (137–40, 174–75); an activist Interior Ministry eager to enable Orthodox clerics to put Uniates in the shade (Ch. 6); and a Ministry of State Domains ready to re-engineer the agronomy and society of the residual villages it owned in the guise of guardianship (*opeka*). We certainly glimpse agendas of "The Great Reforms" and way beyond, which is indeed Werth's key point: "a quiet revolution that unified and integrated the country, while also serving to embody a Russian nation in institutions and practices" (201). Werth begins with the familiar ground of the death of Aleksandr Pushkin (Ch. 1), and then takes us through the cultural and intellectual history of Mikhail Glinka (Ch. 2) and Piotr Chaadaev (Ch. 3). But he always adds fresh details and suggestive contrasts, and each episode is narrated with skill.

Werth's central thesis is beguilingly persuasive. Werth finds much more "dynamism, innovation and consequence" (2) in an era most others take pains to avoid. I am ready to believe now in his "Quiet Revolution" even if I still admire Herzen—and Mikhail Bakunin—and even if I still want to offer advice to the Decembrists. Werth's excellent book has shifted the conversation and re-animated the field.

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***War and Enlightenment in Russia: Military Culture in the Age of Catherine II.*** By Eugene Miakinkov. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020. xvi, 313 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Photos. Figures. Tables. Maps. \$75.00, hard bound.

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Probably the majority of those asked about the attitude of Enlightenment philosophers toward war would recall some passages from Jean-Jacque Rousseau's or Voltaire's works of clearly pacifistic message. Taking this into account, it could seem paradoxical that the thought of that epoch, in the history of culture mostly perceived as a period of promoting rational motives in the conduct of human beings, may have influence reflections concerning war. The connection between war and culture of the Enlightenment existed anyhow. It is an object of studies existing for several years. To this kind of historical reflection belongs Eugene Miakinkov's book concerning military culture in Russia during the reign of Catherine II.

The author assumes that in the eighteenth century debates that created the sphere of Enlightenment reflection also contained an intellectual movement inspired by war. This strand, labelled by Christy Pichichero as Military Enlightenment, created a framework for the discussion on the nature of war and armed forces. The author's research objective was to trace to what extent and in what way Military Enlightenment influenced the Russian military culture defined as a sphere that includes "the political culture of the army, its administrative culture, its disciplinary culture, and its military-technical. . . culture, as well as the culture of relations *within* the military" (8).

Miakinkov analyzes different types of impacts of the Enlightenment on Russian military culture and the different ways of their transmission to Russian military

circles. He starts from the problem of the effectiveness of the military education system in Russia and its ability to implement the Enlightenment ideas in the milieu of Russian officers. Analysis of this issue provided the basics for further exploring mechanisms encompassing promotion in the army, the impact of the Enlightenment on military regulations, changes in the image of soldiers, new methods proposed to train and motivate them, as well as demonstrations of individualism derived from west European culture that could be seen as a useful tool for some commanders to strengthen their leadership. The last two chapters deal with the problems and tensions between the principles of Military Enlightenment and the reality of the battlefield, on the one hand, and the attempts to modify some features of the Russian Military Culture and centralize it around the ruler, Paul I, on the other. The conclusion traces the different kinds of Enlightenment influence, including strategy, warfare, and propaganda on Russian military culture in next centuries. The author underlined “long lasting and deep influence of the Enlightenment on Russian military culture” (235).

The author undertook the question of the important changes on the dividing line between culture and the military sphere that was occurring in many European countries in the second half of the eighteenth century. His considerations are based on the solid collection of historical sources—memoirs but also manuscripts from Russian archives. His conclusions derived from analyses of many small case studies are clear and presented in an attractive way for the reader. The author’s ability to explain complex issues in a manner not simplistic is unquestionable.

I suppose that Miakinkov nonetheless overestimated the possibilities of the Russian educational system to spread more complex ideas of the Enlightenment (68). In the majority of Russian officers’ personal documents from the years of 1796–1815, having dealt with their level of education, I would described it as rather elementary: *chitat’ i pisat’ umeet* (he can read and write). This could significantly limit the absorption of Military Enlightenment by the wider military milieu.

A chapter in the book contains an interesting analysis of the Izmail storm by Russian forces and the violent scenes of looting and murder after the battle allowed by Aleksandr Suvorov. In Miakinkov’s opinion, this episode “showed the limits of ‘Enlightenment and reason’ in times of passionate struggle” (199). One may consider that war crimes committed by soldiers with the commander’s consent should be treated as an exception and not as the rule. I wish that the author paid attention to the storm of Warsaw in 1794, when Russian soldiers, again with Suvorov’s permission, massacred at least 5000 civilians. The repetitiveness of such episodes suggest that Izmail was not an isolated incident but a constant element of Russian military culture. As Miakinkov states, “the influence of Enlightenment on Russian military culture was. . . also a work-in-progress” (234). This process has not been completed to this day.

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***On Russian Soil: Myth and Materiality.*** By Mieka Erley. Ithaca: Northern Illinois University Press, distributed by Cornell University Press, 2021. xi, 204 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. \$39.95, hard bound.  
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This fascinating book examines Russian and Soviet literature through the lens of soil, providing an enlightening re-interpretation of Russian and Soviet identity and culture. The focus on soil allows Mieka Erley to interpret familiar authors and their