memoir literature; there is no journalism; there is not even a body of fiction reflecting contemporary mores. Hughes has done what she can with the many written accounts by foreign diplomats, soldiers and travelers; these need to be treated with critical finesse, which she dispenses with abundance. She also uses the anecdotal material collected by a later generation of more culturally sophisticated Russians, who strove to save what they could from historical oblivion. Of course there is no problem with Peter himself, whose correspondence and papers were piously preserved; the project to publish them is still not complete, although it began in 1887. What remains still in the archives has been examined by the author.

An unavoidable awkwardness with this work is what to do with the discordant chorus of historical opinion which precedes it. Hughes is far too much the scholar to pretend it doesn't exist, and many times she notes her disagreement with eminent authorities on the era; on the other hand, she doesn't have the time and this isn't the right place for laying out the kind of discussion which would dispose of controversy in an intellectually satisfying way. If she disagrees with Marc Raeff or Arcadius Kahan, she disposes of him very much as Dr. Johnson refuted Bishop Berkeley. . . with a one-sentence commonsensical swift kick. It doesn't really satisfy. But we know that Hughes can take infinite pains with controversial material when she has the leisure. See for example her "Did Peter the Great Abolish the Palm Sunday Ceremony?" in the 1996 Newsletter of the Study Group on Eighteenth Century Russia. So we may be inclined to see this shortcoming not as a fault of the author's but as an inevitable condition for making her narrative manageable and readable.

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In this carefully crafted book, Professor Wigzell tells us all we ever wanted to know about Russian fortune telling from the eighteenth century to the present. Her narrative covers the history of publication of the dreambooks (mostly translated or adapted from West and Central European sources), the readers of divinational literature, traditional Russian fortune-telling, the circumstances in which people resorted to fortune-telling, the suppression of this custom in Soviet Russia and its revival in post-Communist times. We learn that the first divination books were printed under Catherine the Great who pushed the borders of the empire deeply into Europe, thus facilitating contacts and translations including those of the dreambooks. The late eighteenth-early nineteenth centuries were a golden age for fortune telling texts, from the standpoint of frequency of publication and the prestige enjoyed by them among Russians of all social classes. Dreambook publishing continued well into the twentieth century and it satisfied an obvious social need, which the author sensibly identifies as "the eternal human desire to predict the fu-
ture" (p. 183). Wigzell rightly points out that the early dreambooks in particular were often printed without an attribution of authorship, and they were pilfered from publisher to publisher without any notion of author's or publisher's rights. It would have been useful to estimate the print runs, in view of the fact that even in late nineteenth century, nine out of ten Russians could not read or write. Illiteracy was more prevalent among women than among men, which again raises the issue of the symbolic rather than empirical value of printed texts. Among the dreambooks, those allegedly authored by Martyn Zadek, a.k.a. Martin Zadeck, a.k.a. Zadeka, were well known in several countries, and Professor Wigzell adumbrates their trajectory. She brings her narrative all the way to the Institute of Dreams in post-Communist Moscow. Not unexpectedly, the fall of Communism brought an increased interest in sorcery and witchcraft, and she devotes some attention to what has already become a post-Communist institution, namely, all kinds of healers and hypnotherapists, some of whom perform on TV and claim long-distance results. Secret research into the paranormal flourished in Russia under the Soviets, and there are indications that it continues to thrive even now. On the level of ordinary people, fortune telling books are being reissued and updated to accommodate modern dream objects. Professor Wigzell points out that contemporary Russians tend to discuss dreams with friends rather than with family, and she rightly emphasizes the differences in the way the younger and older generations interpret dreams.

An interesting detour is taken in a chapter titled "Sages and Prophets" where the author discusses fortune telling as a sideshow of religiously inspired clairvoyance. This avenue however is not explored at length. Yet under Alexander I in particular, the Russian elites went through a veritable craze of quasi-mystical beliefs and practices, with one Mrs. Tatarinova holding weekly seances in her house in St. Petersburg in which Russian and foreign "media" and the Russian iurodivye regularly participated, predicting the future for all participants and even for the country itself. Tatarinova is not mentioned in this book, but a once-famous Marie Lenormand is; she was one of the many clairvoyants whom the households such as those of Mrs. Tatarinova cherished.

The author points out that Russian dreambooks tended to use "famous names" to increase their authority, whereas English fortune-telling books have not bothered to do so. This practice is one of the many instances reflecting the cultural uncertainty of Russians vis-à-vis the rest of the world: an allegedly non-Russian source increased the prestige of a prediction. But this theme is not pursued either, and the author merely comments that while English dreambooks were mostly directed at the lower classes, the Russian ones were read by the aristocracy and the upper classes.

Notwithstanding the book's professionalism, I have not learned much from it. Given the absence of a novel methodology or a striking hypothesis, it was not much of a discovery to find out that most fortune tellers were women and that they catered to women, while most printed sources declared themselves to be authored by males; and that fortune telling was more of an institution in the country than in the city. While one cannot but admire the author's crisp style and her remarkable