Economies of Feeling: Russian Literature under Nicholas I. By Jillian Porter. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2017. xi, 198 pp. Appendix. Notes. Works Cited. Index. Illustrations. $39.95, paper.
doi: 10.1017/slr.2018.348

Jillian Porter's new study adopts a wonderfully original approach to a selection of literary works, some canonical and some less so, written during the reign of Nicholas I. The result is a highly readable and enjoyable book that will be of value to scholars and students alike. As its title suggests, *Economies of Feeling* combines elements of New Economic Criticism with "affect theory" to examine how the works of various Russian writers, in a period of rising uncertainty and heated public debate, were inflected by and reflected upon "shifting cultural conceptions of ambition, generosity and avarice" (4). Porter's aim is to move beyond existing economic criticism of Russian literature, which has tended to focus on authors' and editors' involvement in literary institutions and commerce, so as to consider how other aspects of the economy exerted an influence on literary production.

Economies of Feeling comprises four chapters, each of which focuses on a different, though related, aspect of the relationship between economics, affect, and culture. The relatively restricted historical span of the study, 1825–55, is significantly expanded thanks to the consideration, in the opening section of each chapter, of the issue under discussion in broader temporal, geographical, and philosophical contexts. So, for instance, the examination in Chapter 1 of the depiction of "mad ambition" in Faddei Bulgarin's "Three Pages from a Madhouse," Nikolai Gogolʹ's "Diary of a Madman" and Fedor Dostoevskii's *The Double* is introduced by a fascinating consideration not only of the etymology of "ambition" in its related French and Russian forms, but also of how definitions of this term in these two countries have diverged significantly over time. The chapter then provides an eloquent illustration of the "transnational literary borrowing so essential to the flourishing of nineteenth-century Russian prose" (21) as it suggests the influence on the Russian authors both of Jean-Louis Alibert's "Madman of Ambition" (1825) and of the story, "The Madhouse at Charenton," published anonymously in the journal *The Butterfly* in 1829.

The second chapter begins with a discussion of the history of the concept of "hospitality" in European philosophy and of the ways in which it functions as a facet of Russian national identity, before moving on to address the trope of the gift in the work of Nikolai Gogolʹ. Porter traces the depiction of hospitality as a gift in *Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka*, *Mirgorod*, and *Dead Souls*, arguing that each work triggers its own affective mode respectively: the uncanny, nostalgia, and disgust. The decision to complement the analysis of *Dead Souls*, particularly Chichikov's encounter with Manilov, with a consideration of what Gogolʹ had to say about gifts and hospitality in his private correspondence provides a number of new and valuable insights into the novel. Chapter 3 looks at Dostoevskii's *Poor Folk*, *The Double*, and "Mr Prokharchin" and proposes that "the material history of Russian money fostered Dostoevskii's aesthetic of fantastic realism" (90). While relatively short compared to the others in the study, this chapter provides ample evidence of the potential that inheres in Porter's original combination of a detailed economic historical approach with sensitive literary interpretation. She reads the depiction of various forms of doubling in these works through the prism of the economic uncertainty that plagued Russia at this time, most especially between 1833 and 1843 when the country had two monetary standards, the *assignatsia* (a paper credit note) and the silver ruble, and when the practice of counterfeiting was rife.

The fourth and final chapter returns to the structure of the first, with a consideration of the figure of the miser in works by various authors: Aleksandr Pushkin's

https://doi.org/10.1017/slr.2018.348 Published online by Cambridge University Press

The Covetous Knight, Gogol′'s *Dead Souls* and Dostoevskii's "Mr Prokharchin." It discusses the broader history of the depiction of the miser from antiquity to modern times, taking in Dante, Hieronymous Bosch, Jean de La Fontaine, Ivan Krylov and Honoré de Balzac, among others, and argues for the miser's potential as a "metatype," because "no type is more typical" (110). The reconsideration in this chapter of Gogol′'s Pliushkin and of Dostoevskii's petty clerk not just as a miser but as a figure to whom additional typological layers keep being added is very persuasive. Porter's book succeeds both in terms of its historical and economic insights and of its perceptive reading of some classics of nineteenth-century Russian literature. What it demonstrates most clearly is the undeniable benefit derived by all of these fields thanks to the adoption of a truly interdisciplinary humanities approach to the discussion of literary culture.

Claire Whitehead
University of St. Andrews

Written in Blood: Revolutionary Terrorism and Russian Literary Culture, 1861-1881. By Lynn Ellen Patyk. Madison, Wis.: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2017. xii, 349 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. $69.95, hard bound.
doi: 10.1017/slr.2018.349

A generation ago it appeared that the radical populist movement had already been plumbed to its depth in numerous studies written by the leading lights of Soviet and western scholarship. By the late 1980s, it seemed high time to move on from Russia's revolutionary tradition. And move on historians did into that fecundity of new subjects that have characterized the historiography of imperial Russia since the end of the Soviet Union. In the discipline of history, however, all funerals are premature. A new generation of scholars, interested primarily in the origins of terrorism, has turned again to radical populism and begun to explore it from a variety of unexpected perspectives. Lynn Ellen Patyk's *Written in Blood*, an interdisciplinary study of the idea of terrorism in imperial Russian history and literature, may be the most original approach to date.

Early in the book's introduction, Patyk seems to assert the bold claim that literature in some sense produced radical populist terrorism: "revolutionary terrorism was just as much Russia's (literary) word as its (revolutionary) deed and. . .it issued from the bourn of a literary culture whose marks it indelibly bore" (4). Historians will understandably react with skepticism to such an assertion, and it must be said that at various points in the text Patyk emphasizes this literary-origins argument, implying that without the attention Russian writers paid to the nexus of violence, fear, and political power, populist revolutionaries might never have conceived of the violent tactics they would eventually adopt. If indeed this contention forms a part of Patyk's argument, it inevitably falters on the lack of causality. Whatever connections may have existed between Russian writers and populist terrorists remain largely obscure, so the supposition that literary imagination influenced violent actions can only rest on a foundation of parallels and continuities that are not very convincing.

Skepticism may be unnecessary, however, because Patyk assures the reader that *Written in Blood* eschews the question of causality and ought to be considered a "literary history (or better, genealogy) of terrorism" (11). As a study of Russian literature, the book is on much more solid ground and manages to open up an expansive realm of innovative analysis. It is, of course, well understood that pre-Revolutionary Russian

https://doi.org/10.1017/slr.2018.348 Published online by Cambridge University Press