

H-Net Reviews

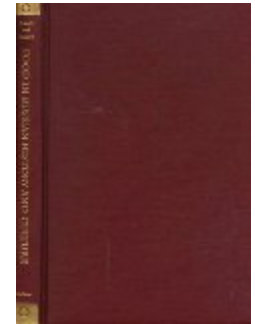
in the Humanities & Social Sciences



Musya Glants, Joyce Toomre, eds. *Food in Russian History and Culture*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997. xxx + 250 pp. \$19.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-253-21106-4; \$42.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-253-33252-3.

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Beyond *Shchi* and *Kasha*: Russian Foodways and Their Significance

In his whimsical article, “Wie es eigentlich gegessen: Some Curious Thoughts on the Role of Borsch in Russian History,” Reginald Zelnik imagines how a professional western historian of Russia, engaged in historiographical debates long grown stale, might embark upon a whole new field of study: the role of food in Russian history.[1] Winking all the while at the reader through a string of puns and pedantic excesses, Zelnik takes on the persona of this budding student of Russian food. The historian begins, of course, by grandiloquently announcing that “a new conceptual framework will be required” to give Russian cuisine its proper place in food studies and Russian history. He then waters borsch down to the point of tastelessness, turning it into a free-floating metaphor for a changeless Russian popular culture under constant assault. From the reign of Peter “the anti-borsch” to the end of the “New Gastronomic Policy” in the 1920’s, the historian recounts how Russia’s rulers, who preferred western concoctions, attempted to uproot the beet soup from Russian soil. In the final stage of this war over the soupbowl, however, Stalin and the Bolsheviks beat a retreat from the kitchen and allow a “recrudescence of traditional borsch culture” that has continued up to the present day.[2]

>From behind the article’s mirthful mask, Zelnik issues a stern warning. The study of raw, untried topics such as the history of food has little significance in and of itself. Only by immersing themselves in the cold facts of their sources and experimenting with the analytical recipes of their disciplines can scholars exploring new topics make a difference. Otherwise, what is touted as an

innovative approach will on closer inspection turn out to be old soup in new bowls.

Though “Wie es eigentlich gegessen” goes uncited in the collection, *Food in Russian History and Culture*, its two editors, Musya Glants and Joyce Toomre, and the eleven other contributors seem to have taken at least partial heed of Zelnik’s warning. Growing out of a 1993 conference held at Harvard’s Russian Research Center, the collection analyzes Russian “foodways”—the complex of signs and practices associated with the production and preparation of food—from Kievan Rus’ up to the late Soviet period (p. xii). It brings together the work of the kind of interdisciplinary group that, paeans to the virtues of area studies aside, is rarely seen.

The articles in the collection are arranged in roughly chronological order, beginning with Snejana Tempest’s article on the stovelore of the ancient (and modern) eastern Slavs and ending with Glants’ article on paintings of food in the late Soviet period. Only one contribution, Toomre’s piece on Soviet Armenian cuisine and national identity, ventures beyond the confines of what could broadly be called Russia (though some pieces do briefly discuss Ukrainian cuisine).[3] Despite such geographic limits, the collection’s wide range of topics, time periods, and approaches make it difficult to summarize. Broadly speaking, the articles are united by the conviction that, as Glants and Toomre put it in their introduction, “the lens of food symbolism” will provide a new view of “Russian civilization[,] ... history and culture.”

Because of food's fundamental role in human existence, Glants and Toomre argue, studying it allows Russianists to ground "universal themes" in the context of their chosen area of study.

The contributors to the collection avoid one of the traps that beset Zelnik's imaginary historian by delving into the details of foodways. Rather than borsch, eternal and tasteless, these articles dish up a pungent array of breads, soups, and meats—even the symbolism of cannibalism is explored! To cook up this feast, the authors have culled materials from a much larger array of sources than any one scholar would generally use—from police records to poetry, from medieval tomes to interviews. Though sometimes unappetizing, the foodways are always vividly presented. No mere garnish, the volume's illustrations actually fortify the articles. The authors have taken care not to reduce foodways to some bland metaphor for all Russian culture at all times. Their ingredients are too flavorful for that.

Yet as Claude Levi-Strauss noted (and any chef will tell you), cooking is a transformative process, one that turns nature into nurture. With such engrossing sources and the new (to the Russian field, anyway) perspective of food studies, one might expect that the articles would offer additions to the standard cookbook of ways of thinking about Russia. But, like Zelnik's imaginary historian, the contributors often fall back on old analytical recipes. With a few notable exceptions, the source materials which at first glance seemed so exotic end up tasting familiar. The editors and contributors thus miss an opportunity to change the mold of Russian studies.

Of course, as Glants and Toomre point out in their introduction, the study of Russian foodways is still in its infancy, and their collection is only meant "to initiate a dialogue and promote further research" (p. xiii). My review is meant less as a critique of the collection and more as an acceptance of the editors' invitation to critically discuss the issues it raises. I have divided the contributions into three rough-and-ready categories—representations of food, power and food, and identity and food—in order to discuss certain common lines of thought in the collection and suggest how they might be taken further. These categories are *not* meant to be taken as mutually exclusive analytical divisions. On the contrary, I intend to suggest how these and other ways of thinking about Russian foodways might be mixed together to bring forth a dish that all scholars of Russia would eat with zest.

First, however, a global comment is in order: bread is not made by culture alone. The editors and contribu-

tors think of foodways primarily as a window onto other aspects of Russian culture. But reading through the collection one gets the impression that the contributors have assumed that cultural influences and institutions are the most important determinants of foodways. The processes by which social and ecological forces interact with the food culture go largely ignored.[4]

Take the perceptive article by Cathy Frierson on the nineteenth-century populist Aleksandr Engelgardt's vision of the "rational peasant." In illuminating the structure of Engelgardt's thought, Frierson does not explicitly pass judgment on whether he was right to characterize peasant responses to "forced hunger" as reasonable.[5] But surely if we want to determine the degree to which Engelgardt's own ideological predispositions influenced his observations, we should know if peasant practices made nutritional or economic sense. Upon further examination one might find that the "rational" peasant was actually a "trickster" peasant: a person who ate oatmeal and yogurt to fool his stomach into satisfaction when his body craved foods with more energy and protein. Or, like the anthropologist Marvin Harris, one might come away with a profound appreciation for the peasant's acceptance of the constraints of human ecology.[6] In any event, one should at least grapple with the relationship between representations and reality rather than merely the ideology behind the representations.[7]

Representations of Food

Most contemporary examinations of culture take one of two approaches in analyzing the relationship between representations and external reality. One is to examine the mental tools, images and structures that a group has fashioned to comprehend and change the larger world. This is the tried-and-true "structuralist" method of Claude Levi-Strauss (who devoted considerable thought to cooking), and it offers insights into the connections between seemingly unrelated cultural phenomena. But because this approach is so abstract, in using it one runs the risk of substituting the concerns of one's own discipline for those of the culture under examination. The other approach is to trace the impact of important changes in political and social reality on representations. While such an "historicist" method has the advantage of concreteness, it tends to downplay the abiding character of symbolic structures. Ideally, one would like to strike a balance between both approaches, or at least be aware of the problems each poses.[8]

Snejana Tempest explicitly takes the structuralist approach in her article on the stovelore among the Eastern

Slavs. She piles a great deal onto her plate: the symbolic function of stoves and bread, the application of Levi-Strauss' famous distinction between the raw (natural and alien) and the cooked ("cultured") to Russian foodways, and a discussion of how the supposedly dual faith (*dvoeverie*) of Slavic peasants manifested itself in the mythology of cooking. But for all the provocative ambiguity of her materials, Tempest presents fairly standard interpretations. The instances of pagan survivals in Slavic stove-and-breadlore, for example, could be used to show that food may have been one of the prime sites where Christianity and pagan beliefs merged to form a syncretic popular religion (pp. 6-7, 10). That bread figures prominently in a number of Slavic burial customs might mean that the early Slavs would not have found it strange that "the body of Christ" offered at communion would grant them eternal life. Tempest ignores such possibilities in order to demonstrate once again what she (and many other scholars) already "know": Russian peasants, unlike their fellows to the West, were more "heathen" than Christian (pp. 6, 11).[9]

Ronald LeBlanc takes the historicist approach in his piece on metaphors of eating in Dostoevsky's writing. LeBlanc shows how Dostoevsky represented desires for sex or power in terms of eating in order to unveil their crude, animalistic essence. The "highly competitive" atmosphere of industrializing Russia, LeBlanc contends, stoked these beastly hungers, prompting Dostoevsky to warn of an impending era of anthropophagy (p. 127). Insofar as they shed light on Dostoevsky's systematic use of an important metaphor, LeBlanc's points are well taken.

Unfortunately, LeBlanc tends to accept Dostoevsky's overheated characterizations of his time as evidence for what was actually occurring (see esp. p. 129). In fact, industrialization had just begun in Russia when Dostoevsky wrote. And while LeBlanc does note the significance of Darwinism as a symbolic template for Dostoevsky and other Russian writers, he gives short shrift to other longstanding cultural predispositions that might have inclined Dostoevsky to use metaphors of eating to criticize society (pp. 127-8). I found myself hungering to know whether earlier Russian writers (such as those of the so-called "naturalist school" of the 1830s and 1840s) had described the relations between lord and serf in terms of eating. An examination of the "pre-history" of these metaphors would allow one to measure more precisely the impact of Dostoevsky's time on his art.

Musya Glants also takes an historicist approach in her article on food in post-Stalin era painting, but one which

is sensitive to the relative autonomy of artistic traditions. She argues that under the pressure of widespread disillusionment with Soviet socialism, the romanticization of foodways that dominated painting in the 1960's gave way to a trend that emphasized the isolation and even monstrousness of eating and drinking. Though marred by awkward writing and the occasional historical error (1937 was not in fact the year "when the peasantry was virtually destroyed" [p. 219]), Glants' article demonstrates an impressive command of the artistic genealogies of both official and unofficial painters. And while one might quibble with the occasionally oversimplified glosses Glants gives the paintings reproduced in the text, overall, her portrait of painting in this period is compelling. Glants' article could easily serve as a starting point for a more detailed study of the aesthetic and political conflicts over how to depict Soviet everyday life.

Power and Food

Only one article in this collection (the one by Mauricio Borrero) touches directly on the conflict between Russia's rulers and their subjects over food production and supply. This is unfortunate, for some of the most exciting recent work in Soviet history explores how this conflict unfolded in the 1920's and 1930's.[10] Even Lars Lih's imaginative discussion of bureaucrats' and politicians' use of language to assert control over food—a topic one might think would interest the contributors—warrants no more than a footnote.[11] Of course, the state's role in shaping foodways is only a part of the broader question of the relationship between food and the ideologies, practices, and mechanisms that induce changes in conscience and conduct. And, as several of the collection's contributors wittingly and unwittingly demonstrate, foodways were and are one of the most important sites for the elaboration of power relations in Russian history and culture.

George Lunt's philological study on food in the medieval *Primary Chronicle*, a key source on early Russian history, introduces two crucially important ways that groups and individuals use food to symbolize and exert power. One, which we will call the "prince's recipe," is the extravagant display and provision of food at feasts held by rulers, the main subject of the *Primary Chronicle*. Such exhibitions of abundance simultaneously showed the ruler's freedom from external constraints and obliged his subjects to remain loyal to him. The ascetic monks who crop up from time to time in the *Primary Chronicle* provide an opposite method, which we will call the "monk's recipe," of using food to exercise power: disciplining the unruly self by carefully controlling what one

eats. The monks believed that fasting emancipated them from inner desire and made their souls into more perfect offerings to God (pp. 17, 21). Unfortunately, Lunt does not explore how these competing concepts worked themselves out in the *Primary Chronicle*. Lunt would appear to be much more interested in the raw materials and recipes of twelfth-century Russian cuisine than in the “banal” question of the relationship between power and food (p. 21). As a result, the fascinating issues that Lunt’s erudite article raises are never satisfactorily resolved.

In his other contribution to the collection, Ronald LeBlanc picks up where Lunt leaves off and explores the reasons why the nineteenth-century heir of the “monk’s recipe,” Leo Tolstoy, embraced vegetarianism. LeBlanc persuasively argues that, contrary to the conventional wisdom of present-day vegetarians, Tolstoy did not choose the way of no flesh out of sympathy for the suffering of animals. In fact, like the inventor of corn flakes, John Kellogg, and other nineteenth-century “Christian physiologists,” Tolstoy believed that eating meat fueled carnal lust. LeBlanc concludes that Tolstoy derived “pleasure from no pleasure,” exulting instead in the power he exercised over his desires (p. 90). Though LeBlanc ignores the traces of Russian religious traditions in Tolstoy’s thought, he does make the compelling point that surfeit of goods produced by the industrial economy provoked crises of moral confidence from Battle Creek to Yasnaya Polyana.

Mauricio Borrero examines the early Soviet version of the prince’s recipe: the origins of communal dining facilities in Moscow and Petrograd during the Civil War. The Bolsheviks tried to turn the prince’s recipe on its head: they celebrated efficiency rather than munificent waste, novelty rather than tradition. But far from inspiring loyalty to the new regime, Borrero concludes that the unsanitary and dysfunctional cafeterias only drove hungry urbanites into the arms of the Bolsheviks’ enemies, namely, black marketers. Focusing almost exclusively on the ideas and actions of the Bolsheviks and their sympathizers, Borrero’s analysis of the politics of food comes out rather bland. Lost are the everyday negotiations between workers and bureaucrats over food, or the fears of women that communal kitchens might usurp their position in the household (on the latter, see p. 179). Neglected, too, is Mary McAuley’s fine work on food distribution in post-revolutionary Petrograd, which shows how the Bolsheviks used the “unfair” prices that city dwellers faced at market to their political advantage.^[12] The process of making foodways socialist involved more give-and-take than Borrero would have one believe.

Power, of course, is exercised over as well as through food. An intricate network of informal and formal controls generally governs how food is made and prepared, where it can be sold, and at what price. George Munro takes the records of one such control mechanism, the St. Petersburg police, and uses them to reconstruct the range of foods available to the diverse population of eighteenth-century Petersburg. The result is an interesting description of the diets of rulers, nobles, and workers. One only wishes that rather than decrying the paucity of information on prices and the range of available foods in the police records, Munro had delved more into how the policing of food markets worked (p. 34). What were the police’s surveillance mechanisms? How did the police decide what constituted a just price? Did the police’s intervention win the appreciation of the lower-class population? Answers to these questions, at least some of which appear to be available in Munro’s sources, would go a long way in capturing the day-to-day operations of the “enlightened” police-state.^[13]

Identity and Food

We are what we eat—not just literally, but figuratively as well. Our aspirations to join certain groups and differentiate ourselves from others shape our choice of foods, indeed, our very sense of taste. People have always set the boundaries of their families and circles of friends when they decide whom to break bread with. Not surprisingly, then, observers—at least since the time of Herodotus—have sought clues to ethnic, religious, and class character in foodways. Though most of the six contributors which fit into this analytical category do not take such a direct approach, one cannot help feeling that they have taken the crust of identity for the whole loaf. They give the sense of self a definition and simplicity that it generally lacks in real life.

The clearest example of treating identity as a fixed object is the one article that tries to get at the content of a nation’s character through its cuisine. Joyce Toomre’s article examines how “sovietization (defined as “intent and coercion beyond mere influence”) ... hindered the normal expression of Armenianness” (pp. 198-99). Toomre finds “Armenianness” in the intense family and communal sentiments associated with the preparation of such Armenian foods as *lavash*.

According to Toomre, this powerful melange of food and group identity threatened the Soviet political establishment. And so, in their antiseptic description of Armenian cuisine, Soviet cookbooks tried to strip away its “Armenianness.” Throughout this analysis, Toomre scrupu-

lously records facts that call into question whether these categories of identity are as fixed as she makes them out to be. The Church imposed rules for fasting in the thirteenth century, and yet no one apparently considered this a hindrance to the development of “Armenianness” (p. 204). Armenians have readily incorporated such “Soviet” imports as pork, pelmeni, and even borsch into their cuisine, but have not felt their national identity diminished thereby (p. 209). On the other hand, the very fact that Soviet publishers released three books devoted to Armenian cuisine, one of which went through a total print run of over 300,000 copies, suggests that they were more interested in spreading a variant of Armenian cuisine than in suppressing it (p. 207). Soviet and Armenian cooking and, by extension, identity were defined in part by taking on aspects of each other, a complicated process that Toomre’s analysis obscures more than it illuminates.

Darra Goldstein’s article on vegetarianism in late Imperial Russia demonstrates the danger of identifying an entire movement with a single person. In the first half of her contribution, Goldstein sketches out the answer to the question, “Who were the Russian vegetarians?” We learn that Jews and women played a prominent role in the movement, that vegetarians preferred the non-national language of Esperanto, and that they championed modern labor-saving cooking devices. But Goldstein does not stop to analyze these and other important aspects of the movement. Instead, she devotes the second half of her article to the life of the feminist Natalia Nordman, who believed that an exclusively vegetarian diet would liberate the poor from hunger, the rich from carnal poisons, and women from slaving in kitchens. Though Nordman undoubtedly cut a fascinating figure, her life does not contain the necessary clues for explaining vegetarianism’s fate in Russia. Goldstein notes at the conclusion of her article that vegetarianism is once again becoming popular but that there is as yet “no apostle” like Nordman to lead the movement (p. 118). But even Paul succeeded in founding the Christian Church only because conditions were ripe. Future students of vegetarianism would do well to analyze the conditions in which it arose and the barriers it faced as well as its “apostles.”

In a way, Pamela Chester’s article on the poets Marina Tsvetaeva and Osip Mandelstam inverts Goldstein’s mode of analysis: rather than identifying a “culinary” movement with a person, she identifies people with certain foods. Carefully gathering material from Tsvetaeva’s poetry and memoirs, Chester finds a recurring leitmotif linking Tsvetaeva with strawberries and Mandelstam with chocolate. Chester argues that for Tsvetaeva, straw-

berries represented an organic connection to the Russian soil and a firm belief in rebirth. Mandelstam’s craving for chocolate, on the other hand, reveals his love for the exotic and Western, as well as his fear that all sensation, all life is merely ephemeral.

The examples that Chester adduces, however, suggest that Tsvetaeva’s imagery is not as direct, and the identities of the poets not as concrete, as Chester would make them out to be. A key passage in Tsvetaeva’s reminiscences of her childhood presents a curiously comforting, medusa-like image of sectarian women handing out berries (p. 152). Though Tsvetaeva knows that her mother would object, she greedily takes the forbidden fruit from these marginalized women, thereby establishing herself as a daring transgressor. By contrast, the two episodes linking Mandelstam to chocolate actually show him unable to break the rules: he cannot take the chocolate from the women who deny it to him (pp. 155-6). What is important here is not so much the poets’ relationships to food as much as the far more abstract relationships between the poets and the complex, gendered system of prohibitions in which food is embedded.

Instead of searching for identity itself, both Cathy Frierson’s article on Engelgardt and Leonid Heretz’s article on peasant fasting examine the binary oppositions out of which identity is made. Taken together, the articles uncover a remarkable irony: Though both peasants and influential members of the Russian elites defined themselves as each other’s opposite in the late imperial period, both groups were actually agreed on their own and the other’s characteristics, particularly as they were expressed in eating habits. Engelgardt and peasants believed that peasant foodways were virtuous and in accord with a higher law. Elite foodways, on the other hand, were excessive, sinful, and provoked concupiscence. To be sure, the systems of thought, one religious, the other scientific, that lay behind such judgments were profoundly different. But, at least in Engelgardt’s case, one set of judgments could have been drawn from the other, as he spent a good deal of time conversing with the peasants who lived near him in western Russia.

And this points out a level of complexity that neither Frierson nor Heretz deal with adequately: Though groups and individuals may set up binary oppositions to define themselves, in fact they may often share or be attracted to the characteristics they should shun, or the opposites themselves may be deeply related. We learn from Heretz, for example, that around the turn of the century younger peasants increasingly abandoned the fasting traditions of

their elders. Did the more religious peasants conclude that these wayward youths had become akin to the atheistic nobility (pp. 76-77)? For her part, Frierson argues that Engelgardt's letters were "part of a larger discourse in which virtually all discussion of the countryside and peasant culture fit into some sort of binary category" (p. 59). And yet, as Frierson notes but does not comment upon, Engelgardt's own life did not fit into these binary categories. A nobleman devoted to the folk and its rational foodways, he nevertheless found himself repeatedly drawn to the "excessive" foreign dishes available in the city (p. 59). It is to individuals and groups such as Engelgardt and the non-fasting peasants, who find themselves caught in between the binary oppositions, that we should now look in order to better understand the process of identity formation.

The article by Halina and Robert Rothstein on culinary trends after the Revolution is not explicitly about identity. Nonetheless, one can almost hear the insistent question ringing throughout the myriad sources they have assembled: "What is Sovietness and how does it apply to cooking?" In the twenties, the Bolsheviks and the "food technologists" they patronized agreed that food preparation and meals should be communal, so as to free women from the kitchen. Yet, as the Rothsteins point out, women were nonetheless expected to take the leading role in the proper preparation of food for the community (p. 180). The creators of Soviet cuisine also felt that cooking should rest on sound scientific principles in order to create healthy and moral citizens.

But "science" could not unify cooking any more than "taste" had earlier. One group, which the Rothsteins dub the "food ascetics," claimed that food should be nutritious and simple; spices, sauces, and stimulants, according to the ascetics, were too redolent of "bourgeois" cuisine to be permitted in the workers' paradise (pp. 184-85). Another group, the "futurists," wanted to make a virtue out of the persistent shortages that plagued the Soviet economy. From concentrates and soybeans scientists would create a sort of ur-food that would allow the body to make efficient use of the available food supply (pp. 186-87). But, as in many other areas of Soviet culture in the thirties, ultimately the traditionalists won the day. Communal and scientific principles informed but did not determine Soviet cuisine, which the traditionalists insisted should be tasty and based on pre-revolutionary fare (pp. 188-191). The Rothsteins' article's broad scope allows one to see how complex the development of Soviet cuisine was. Unfortunately, they offer little insight into the political, economic, and esthetic pressures that led to the tri-

umph of traditionalism and the rejection of other models. Such an analysis might illuminate the more general process of making people Soviet, a process in which Soviet cuisine was undoubtedly an important ingredient.

Whither Russian Foodways?

A demanding reader may now fairly ask the reviewer, "Where's the beef?" After insisting on the importance of immersing oneself in the sources, I have moved into topics as seemingly far removed from food as Peter the Great is from borsch. I have taken this tack because I largely agree with the central premise of the collection: foodways do provide an unusually revealing window onto other historical and cultural phenomena. My criticism has thus asked the contributors and those who would follow in their footsteps to take the same approach and go further.

Yet, there are at least two other productive ways of studying food that neither the contributors nor I have considered. The first is the approach suggested by Smith and Christian in *Bread and Salt*: make foodways themselves the central focus of study, and examine the impact of political, economic, and cultural processes on their development. *Bread and Salt* is valuable, but it is only a beginning, and much work along its lines remains to be done. The other approach is to explore the how the production and control over food have shaped Russian history. Particularly in the past hundred or so years—from the famine of the early 1890's to the episodes of mass starvation during the civil war and collectivization, from the blockade of Leningrad to the mobilization of the army in the late 1980's to bring in the harvest—getting enough to eat has been the central problem of Russian life. And yet we have no comprehensive study of how Russian society and successive regimes have managed hunger. If these three approaches could somehow be brought together, the study of Russian foodways would truly bear fruit.

Notes:

[1]. In John M. Merriman, ed., *For Want of a Horse: Choice and Chance in History* (Lexington, Mass.: Stephen Greene Press, 1985), pp. 77-89. Zelnik apparently did not have the opportunity to digest R. E. F. Smith and David Christian's *Bread and Salt: A Social and Economic History of Food and Drink in Russia* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), before he wrote his article.

[2]. Zelnik, "Wie es eigentlich gegessen."

[3]. Another way the editors make the collection

manageable is by excluding any prolonged discussion of drink (p. xiii). Though understandable, this does make the collection somewhat less appealing. After all, not only does the Russian word “pishcha” (“food”) come from the verb “pit’” (to drink) (see Lunt’s article, pp. 21-22n22), but many eighteenth- and nineteenth-century observers believed that alcoholic beverages were almost a sort of food. Thus, not talking about drink seems a bit anachronistic and artificial. The reviewer must disclose, however, that he recently filed a dissertation on the politics of drink in late imperial Russia. See, W. Arthur McKee, “Taming of the Green Serpent: Alcoholism, Autocracy, and Russian Society, 1881-1914,” (Ph.D. Diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1997).

[4]. This perhaps explains why the contributors use Smith and Christian’s *Bread and Salt* almost entirely as a reference work. Though almost encyclopedic in scope, Smith and Christian’s book in fact aimed to explore the impact of economics and politics on patterns of consumption. See, for example, the discussion of the introduction of potato farming in Russia, pp. 278-82. George Munro’s contribution, “Food in Catherinean St. Petersburg,” is a notable exception to this characterization.

[5]. Frierson does note, however, that Smith and Christian use Engelgardt’s letters from the countryside as a source, thereby suggesting that she herself feels that they accurately represent peasant reality; see p. 51n7. Both Frierson’s book *Peasant Icons: Representations of Rural People in Late-Nineteenth Century Russia* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) and her introductions to Engelgardt’s letters in her edited collection, *Aleksandr Nikolaevich Engelgardt’s Letters from the Country, 1872-1887* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), deal with Engelgardt’s thought with greater subtlety.

[6]. See, for example, Harris’ *The Sacred Cow and the Abominable Pig: Riddles of Food and Culture* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1985).

[7]. A good example of an analysis of the relationship between the “facts” of a phenomenon and how these facts are culturally coded is Laura Engelstein’s discussion of

“everyday” (bytovoi) syphilis in the Russian countryside in her *The Keys to Happiness: Sex and the Search for Modernity in Fin-de-Siecle Russia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), ch. 5.

[8]. Though not without flaws, Fernand Braudel’s engaging discussions of food in his three volume study *Civilization and capitalism, 15th-18th centuries* (trans. Sian Reynolds) (New York : Harper & Row, 1981-1984) do try to strike this balance. Braudel goes uncited in the collection.

[9]. On the inadequacy of the dvoeverie paradigm, see Eve Levin’s incisive article “Dvoeverie and Popular Religion,” in Stephen K. Batalden, ed., *Seeking God: The Recovery of Religious Identity in Orthodox Russia, Ukraine, and Georgia* (Dekalb, Ill.: Northern Illinois University Press, 1993), pp. 31-52.

[10]. Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Stalin’s Peasants: Resistance and Survival in the Russian Village after Collectivization* (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); D’Ann Penner, “Pride, Power, and Pitchforks: Farmer-Party Interaction on the Don, 1920-1928 (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California at Berkeley, 1995), and Lynne Viola, *Peasant Rebels under Stalin: Collectivization and the Culture of Peasant Resistance* (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

[11]. Lih, *Bread and Authority in Russia, 1914-1921* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1990).

[12]. McAuley, *Bread and Justice* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), pp. 285-304.

[13]. On the origins of the police state (but not on its operations), see Marc Raeff, *The Well-Ordered Police State: Social and Institutional Change through Law in the Germanies and Russia, 1600-1800* (New Haven, Conn. and London: Yale University Press, 1983).

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