

Goldstein uses the Russian rather than the Ukrainian spelling of Kyiv, and explicitly identifies Kyivan Rus' as a Russian state (12, 64). This would always have bothered Ukrainians, Ukrainianists, and medievalists, but as this book appears in the same year as the Russian invasion of Ukraine—a war justified by the Kremlin as regaining historical Russian territory—this identification of Rus' as Russia has immediately aged poorly. When writing long-term histories of Russia it makes sense to include the earlier East Slavic principalities, but we need to be clear to distinguish them. Rus' is not Russia.

With general audience and long-period books like this, authors have a narrow path to tread to create a legitimate generalization of topics the author does not have space to discuss without stepping into oversimplifications and errors. *Kingdom of Rye's* presentation of what constitutes Russia and Russian elides imperial realities; its identification of Kyivan Rus' as Russian is a troubling error, especially in the current context. As a concise and readable work on Russian food history, this is excellent. As a general history of the Russian empire, it is less successful.

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***Cabbage and Caviar: A History of Food in Russia.*** By Alison K. Smith. Foods and Nations. London: Reaktion Books, 2021. 352 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Glossary. Index. Illustrations. Plates. Photographs. Tables. \$39.00, hard bound. doi: 10.1017/slr.2023.136

Alison K. Smith's knowledgeable and readable history of Russian food over the past millennium has much to offer both the specialist and non-specialist. The book is part of a series of nation-based food histories put out by Reaktion Press. As a trade book, *Cabbage and Caviar* benefits from plenty of color photographs and reproductions of historic menus and newspaper advertisements. While Russianists may already be familiar with the cultural significance of classic Russian foods like kasha, *shchi*, and sourdough rye, they may be unaware of more particular details, such as the origin story of salad "Olivier" or Minister Anastas Mikoyan's outsized influence on the industrialization of food in the USSR. The thesis of the book is not controversial: Russia is a land of contrasts in which luxury and frugality, excess and paucity have co-existed for centuries. Smith's skill is in the thick and lively descriptions she provides of this bifurcated society.

Those who are not already experts in Russian history may benefit the most from this book because *Cabbage and Caviar* successfully functions both as an overview of regional food history and a broader history of Russia as an emerging state and sprawling modern empire. I would not hesitate to assign sections of this book as reading for an introductory course on Russian history. The parts of the narrative focused on food help make the general overviews of Russian history more interesting; sections describing the ambitions and leadership style of Peter the Great eventually circle back to discussions of his heavy-handed decrees on proper dining styles, and an account of the rise of the Orthodox religion in Kyivan Rus' and Muscovy is enhanced by a discussion of the evolution of forbidden and sanctioned foods on the many fast days associated with the Orthodox calendar.

This book is especially even-handed in giving space to early Russian foodways. The Soviet and imperial periods may have the most robust sources, but for the earlier time periods, Smith draws from literature, travelogues, religious records, and early artwork to illuminate the diets of both elite and common folk in Russia before

it became an empire. Smith is able to amplify and extract meaningful assumptions from early sources and to exercise self-control by not focusing too heavily on time periods that are over-represented by more standard archival offerings. Equally admirable is Smith's commitment to puzzling out what everyday Russians ate throughout the thousand-odd years of Russian history with which she is concerned. While written accounts, especially older ones, often focus on the experiences of elites or visiting outsiders, Smith goes out of her way to triangulate sources in order to discern whether the meals and ingredients these rarified sources describe would have also been available to the masses.

Smith misses little in her overview, but I would have liked more descriptions of external culinary influences that infiltrated Russia from the north and east. What impact did East Asian, indigenous, and Central Asian cuisines have on the identity of Russian food? Do salting, drying, or smoking techniques endure in nomadic and semi-nomadic indigenous groups? Are there overlapping techniques among the fermented cabbages, radishes, and other root vegetables that are so central to Russian cuisine and those featured in Korean and northern Chinese foodways? Likewise, there is a paradox in the Russian appropriation of Central Asian and Caucasian cuisines that Smith could have explored more fully. While many of these cuisines evolved out of pastoralist lifestyles, they were embraced in major Russian metropolises as the authentic cuisine of an agrarian Russian empire. The history of Russian food is one of contrasts, but it is also one of appropriation, improvisation and at times, erasure.

In spite of this lacuna, Smith does not shy away from serious themes. Particularly impressive is her inclusion of histories of the famines that have gripped Russia and adjacent territories for centuries. While many famines occurred in impoverished and agriculturally marginal districts, Russia and the Soviet Union are also infamous for some of the most devastating and politically orchestrated famines of the modern era, with a major famine occurring in the territory after World War II. Coherently and compassionately discussing the impacts of food scarcity in a book that is usually focused more on abundance is rare but very welcome.

Smith peppers her narrative, especially the first and last chapters, with personal photographs and descriptions of Russian cuisines, food markets she encountered as a researcher in the country in the 1990s and 2000s. While these first-person accounts offer less historical insight than the chapters based around more traditional written sources, they introduce a welcome element of ethnographic observation into the narrative that makes the text more approachable.

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***Russkii vsadnik v paradigme vlasti.*** By Bella Shapiro. Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2021. 704 pp. Appendices. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Tables. ₹900, hard bound.

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Myths about horses and in particular men riding horses abound in myths about Russian nationality, Bella Shapiro observes in the opening pages of this fundamental study. "The world is a horse," (1) says one Russian proverb; in any book about iconic images of Russian life, you will find the Bronze Horseman, Gogol's firebird-troika, and a prince at the crossroads. Aiming her research at specialists in Russian cultural history, Shapiro sets out to "reconstruct not the history of the rider, but his