

films, such as Grigorii Chukhrai's *Clear Skies* of 1961, Genrikh Oganessian's *Three Plus Two* of 1963, and Sergei Mikaelian's *Into the Storm* of 1965. The juxtaposition of films and their reception, against the background of public discussion of the issues involved (for instance, weak husbands and their grasping materialistic wives) is both fascinating and incisively analyzed.

The ultimate value of the book's thesis, often argued and demonstrated with painstaking attention to the myriad of sources, is its coupling of the public debate on masculinity with the Party's shifting ideological priorities, as the "soft" masculinity reflected in Nikita Khrushchev's Thaw is replaced by the return to the "hard" man under Leonid Brezhnev and the partial rehabilitation of Iosif Stalin. The detailed discussion of the resourceful Soviet spy *Shtirlits* (Stierlitz), who infiltrates the Nazi high command in the 1973 TV blockbuster *The Seventeen Moments of Spring*, is germane to this narrative, and analyzed in detail here.

On the negative side (and these are more quibbles than serious reservations), the book would have benefited from closer editing, with many misprints and some problems with English syntax and grammar, and the argument does tend to be repetitive in some places. The Index is just about adequate but not very helpful. Also, the "long sixties" is itself a problematic formulation, as the author concentrates his argument on the years 1953–1968 (the discussion of *The Seventeen Moments of Spring* notwithstanding), so the "extended Thaw" may have been more appropriate.

The book closes with a brief statement on Vladimir Putin's "remasculinization of the post-Soviet cultural space" that refers back to the super-hero of Stalinist ideology, with the speculation that in the 1960s the "hypermasculine myths eventually give way to alternative models of masculinity" (263). The 2022 war in Ukraine should provide us with these alternatives, or show that these myths are doomed to self-destruct.

DAVID GILLESPIE
Moscow City University

***The Life Cycle of Russian Things: From Fish Guts to Fabergé, 1600-Present.* Ed.**

Matthew P. Romaniello, Alison K. Smith, and Tricia Starks. London: Bloomsbury Academic Publishing, 2022. xii, 248 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. Maps. \$115.00, hard bound.

doi: 10.1017/slr.2023.224

Like many conference-based anthologies, this volume's diversity of topics represents its charm as well as its potential weakness. Although each chapter is short (eleven to fifteen pages), several go into remarkable detail about topics such as rendering fish guts into isinglass, or the local characteristics of limestone. Not all readers will wish for this level of detail on every topic; therein lies the potential weakness. Yet many will find themselves unexpectedly intrigued by a fresh look at materials such as limestone that are usually "invisible in their ubiquity," and yet "transform the world around them" (Alison Smith, 35), or by the "thick" meanings of textiles, which Katherine Pickering Antonova reminds us were "so well understood" before industrialization that "describing the technical details of their production or function was like describing breathing" (88).

The purpose of this anthology is to expand notions of material culture to encompass all stages of objects, from conceptualization to materialization, from use to disuse or preservation in memory or exhibit. Each stage changes cultural value, perception, and meaning. The focus on objects' life cycles undergirds the book's structure, with chapters divided into "Transforming," "Making," "Touching," and "Preserving Things."

Even more cohesive than this structural format are several thematic threads tying the disparate chapters together. The strongest lies in many of the authors' compelling arguments for approaching objects from their own cultural context, successfully undermining assumptions about Russian backwardness vis-à-vis western Europe. Audra Yoder shows that samovars, once seen as frivolous western products (the tea urn was a passing fad of the eighteenth century in the west), became household fixtures in Russia due to the material context of Russian versus British kitchens. The open fireplaces of British homes, followed by stovetop cooking, made the kettle a better appliance for boiling water there. Closed Russian stoves, for all their utility in heating homes and slow cooking, were less efficient for heating water than table-top tea urns. The difference is not one of progress versus tradition, but simply the best "fit" for the material contexts.

Erika Monahan similarly questions the dismissal of eighteenth-century Russian cartography as backward in her rich analysis of Semen Remezov's atlas of Siberia. Lacking longitude and latitude, it has been seen as a primitive work, and yet Monahan convincingly shows the suitability of Remezov's maps for travelers' purposes in early modern Siberia. These maps contained vital information such as distances, best modes and expected times of travel, and demographics of settlements. In the context of Siberia, Remezov's atlas offered far greater utility than more modern western cartography of the time. Aligned with this critique of western superiority, Antonova's article demonstrates that the mechanization of textile production did not necessarily mean advancement of quality, or even efficiency, depending on the type of fiber. And a simple, portable spindle was more useful than a spinning wheel for women fitting spinning into moments between other household tasks.

Other chapters supporting this theme include those by Claire Griffin and Matthew Romaniello. Griffin analyzes traces of apothecary ware to argue for the existence of early modern Russian science despite the lack of western-style printed works. Romaniello shows how Russia's early monopoly on knowledge of how to make isinglass, a substance derived from fish guts and used for straining beer and wine, made the country a target of industrial espionage by Britain.

A second theme of the volume is the erosion of perceived divisions between wealthy consumers of luxury goods and poverty-stricken commoners left out of such pleasures. Tricia Starks's article on Fabergé cigarette cases is an excellent example of this approach. Fabergé eggs are, of course, recognized worldwide as emblematic of Russian imperial privilege, and yet the company's most pervasive and popular products were in fact a wide range of cigarette cases. Copied in humbler versions by other firms and homemade by soldiers out of shell casings, the cases became an intrinsic aspect of tobacco consumption across all classes.

Sugar is another example of ubiquitous consumption, but Charles Steinwedel shows that its pervasiveness required state intervention against sugar industrialists who wanted to maintain the *normirovka*, or "norming" of high prices instituted to control earlier market volatility. Political leaders promoting sugar consumption as "fuel for the empire's workers and peasants" finally won out in 1910, bringing sugar within reach for everyone (104, 113).

A third major theme lies in the relationship between people and objects. Brandon Schechter's vivid description of the emotional ties Soviet soldiers felt to their tanks during WWII shows how closely the Soviet trope of man merging with machine could materialize in such times (161). On the other side of that war, Ulrike Schmiegelt-Rietig's intriguing article on Nazi art appropriation offers a case study of a Nazi ideologue whose prejudices about Russian culture are fractured by the "power of the image" in his encounter with Novgorod's icons (220).

Russian scholars demonstrated their own blinders in exploring native Siberian cultures. Marisa Karyl Franz decries the separation of anthropological objects from their owners in her analysis of the life cycle of a Chukchi shaman's threadbare coat—statedly more valuable in his eyes because of its condition, yet relegated to a store-room in favor of flashier examples for a museum audience. The relationship between people and underground material is central to Ann Komaromi's chapter on samizdat. In stressing its fragility *and* flexibility, she states, "Only the social activity around it could sustain its precarious existence" (52). Komaromi's discussion of avant-garde artists shows that non-conformists learned to live creatively within the Soviet regime, contrasting with Alexei Yurchak's exploration of ways in which *conforming* citizens found space for personal expression (*Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More*, 2005).

Each of these chapters demonstrates admirable depth of research—a tantalizing tip of the iceberg in knowledge of their fields.

SALLY WEST

Truman State University, Emerita

State Ideology, Science, and Pseudoscience in Russia: Between the Cosmos and the Earth. By Baasanjav Terbish. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2022. xxii, 286 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. \$110.00, hard bound.

doi: 10.1017/slr.2023.225

The book under review has a strong political agenda. Informed by the author's strong belief that the Marxist critique of capitalism is a priori wrong, since capitalism has produced "global progress, technological innovations, plenty, and productivity. . ." with "hunger. . . overtaken by global obesity, absolute poverty by general affluence, ignorance by education, and illness by longevity" (25), *State Ideology, Science, and Pseudoscience in Russia* looks at the course of Russian history in the twentieth and, by extension, the twenty-first century as a deviation from this capitalist "normality." This deviation has been expressed, according to the author, in Russian politicians' and intellectuals' persistent desire to obtain "a kind of 'super knowledge' capable of. . . turning Russia into a universal superpower" (xi). The three manifestations of this desire have been Soviet state ideology, Russian cosmism, and Eurasianism, which all emerged at the turn of the twentieth century as "pseudoscientific movements" in competition with each other (xiv–xv). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, all three of them merged in a peculiar regional phenomenon of the official ideology in the Republic of Kalmykia and have since then informed the revival of the ideological agenda in Putin's Russia.

The chronological scope of the book thus extends over a century, and Baasanjav Terbish combines his original anthropological research in Kalmykia (second half of the book) with a historical overview of Soviet state ideology, Russian cosmism, and Eurasianism (first half of the book). It was in Kalmykia that, during his anthropological fieldwork in the 2010s, he observed how the official ideological agenda of Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, a former President and Head of the republic, represented a syncretic system of political statements and esoteric beliefs. The argument about the collusion and interplay between state ideology, cosmism, and Eurasianism, which is developed in the first four chapters of the monograph, thus represents a projection of Ilyumzhinov's syncretism onto the past by the author.

The problem with this approach is that it is simultaneously teleological and entirely speculative. Since ideology is the key concept for this book, in Chapter 1