

THE BEST FOODS OF RUSSIA: CULINARY CLASSICS FROM THE CAUCASUS. By *Sonia Uvezian*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976. 280 pp. Illus. \$8.95.

If Feuerbach is right, if "man ist was er isst," students of Russia are duty bound to familiarize themselves with its cuisine. Even though Uvezian's excellent cookbook is not an introduction to Russian cuisine, but, as the subtitle indicates, to the cuisines of Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaidzhan, which she considers Russia's best (and many Soviet people might agree), it is of interest to scholars, particularly scholars who wish to transcend the confines of the printed word and establish a more direct sensory perception of Russian culture.

From a scholar's point of view, the title is misleading, but this has been corrected in the paperback edition, now available at \$3.95 and retitled *Cooking From the Caucasus*. In comparison with Georgia and Azerbaidzhan, Armenia is overrepresented, and it is not always clear which recipes are products of which ethnic group. It is only fair to say that Uvezian's intention was to write a cookbook, not a scholarly treatise, but her introduction on the food and culture of the peoples of the Caucasus, and the recipes themselves, furnish an excellent starting point for scholarly speculation. The directions are clear. The recipes, though in some cases time-consuming, are not difficult. And the results are delicious. Moreover, in the tradition of materialism and socialist realism, this research has a practical value—feeding the hungry, and, because of the extensive use of yogurt, it might even increase the investigator's longevity.

Feuerbach attributed the French revolutionary spirit to their wine drinking, in contrast to the then docile Germans who drank beer. In this spirit, Uvezian's book might be used to shed light on the nationalities question by contrasting the pilaf and *bulgur* wheat dishes with the Russian fare of black bread, kasha, cabbage, and borscht, while intra-Caucasian rivalries might be explained by the Azerbaidzhanis' fondness for chickpeas and chestnuts, as contrasted with Georgians' love of red beans and yogurt. Lenin's frequently quoted remark about Stalin, "this cook can prepare only peppery dishes," gains new significance when viewed from the perspective of distinctly different national tastes in food. Psychohistorians might compare Stalin's delight in shashlik and *chakhokhbili* (chicken with wine and tomatoes) with Hitler's vegetarianism, thereby adding a new dimension to our knowledge of the "authoritarian personality."

Scholars who are dubious of this unconventional approach to culture and history might note that precedent has already been set. Professor Madelin Cosman has written a cookbook on medieval feasts, Professor John Schrecker on Szechwan cooking, and the fifth volume of English translations from *Annales*, entitled *Food and Drink in History*, contains articles on the rise and fall of pork in the French peasant diet, the semiotics of food in the Bible, and the "signals" food evokes about the wider culture and society. For Russia new light might be shed on the conflict between the Slavophiles and the Westernizers and about the ingredients that have combined to make the "Russian soul."

BERNICE GLATZER ROSENTHAL  
Fordham University

GERMANS FROM RUSSIA IN COLORADO. Edited by *Sidney Heitman*. Fort Collins, Colo.: Western Social Science Association, 1978. vi, 188 pp. \$14.25. Distributed by University Microfilms International, Ann Arbor, Mich.

In addition to the editor's introduction, this work contains nine essays on aspects of German-Russian history and culture, the initial result of a research program established by Colorado State University in 1975. The first contribution offers an annotated translation and commentary of the Russian imperial manifestoes of 1763 and 1803 concerning potential immigrants. It is followed by a dense description of the efforts