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far those ideals remain relevant in modern times' and he asks 'whether social cohesion and human happiness are possible without them'.

In such an ambitious and large-scale work, table manners inevitably jostle for attention with many other topics. But it is not hard to find gems, which on the whole flesh out the general view painted by Elias. The English appear to have lagged behind other Western European countries in such matters as the adoption of the fork, or feeling disgust at belching, spitting and sharing dishes and drinking vessels. That did not, of course, prevent English people looking down upon habits in countries that lagged even further behind the Western *avant garde*, examples including Charles II's ambassador to Muscovy being shocked not to be offered a napkin at dinner. Yet that was not universal: Thomas also records English travellers to Africa or the East Indies recognizing that conventions, though different in form, could be equally 'civil'.

Some details were entirely new to me, like the nineteenth-century recommendation to eat peas with a spoon, or the injunction that bread served with soup should never be less than half an inch thick. Too little is known, remarks Thomas, about the eating arrangements of ordinary people, though his book is full of unfamiliar glimpses of that; it is clear that there has always been considerable 'cultural lag' in social standards governing behaviour as one goes down the social scale. As late as 1816, an Essex farmer, using his own knife to carve a piece of fowl for himself 'unluckily helped himself to a gentleman's middle finger' when his fellow diners all had their hands on the dish at the same time. Keith Thomas's command of historical sources is formidable, daunting to a humble sociologist like me. His book is a fascinating goldmine of information. However, the reason that food historians should pay it attention is less because of the wealth of informative nuggets, but rather because of the picture that emerges of long-term processes of cultural change, of which matters relating to eating are a small though significant part.

Stephen Mennell

Sharon Hudgins (with recipes by Sharon and Tom Hudgins): *T-Bone Whacks and Caviar Snacks: Cooking with Two Texans in Siberia and the Russian Far East* (Great American Cooking Series, book 5): University of North Texas Press, 2018: 448 pp., hardback, £41.50.

When discussing Russian food, Siberia hardly springs to mind as a centre of gastronomic excellence. *T-Bone Whacks and Caviar Snacks* by Sharon Hudgins reveals this remote area of Russia is far from being the culinary backwater we may imagine. *T-Bone Whacks and Caviar Snacks* bills itself as a cookbook but is so much more. Its pages delve into the culinary adventures of two Texans who spent a year living in Siberia and the Russian Far East during the early 1990s. It is part memoir, part food history and cultural digest combined with an eclectic mix of recipes inspired by the authors' time living in this part of

Russia. As expected the book contains more well-known Russian recipes like Salmon Kulebyaka but also things like Texas Chili which Hudgins and her husband Tom (whom she credits with writing many of the recipes in the book) cooked for their new friends. The recipes themselves are straightforward but sound incredibly appetizing (Hudgins is also great at recommending Western alternatives for different 'Russian' ingredients like their cream cheese *tvorog*). Food and travel purists may be a little put out by the presence of 'American' recipes in what they believe should be a strictly 'Russian' cookbook. Cooking for others and sharing recipes is a great way to develop friendships and is integral to the Hudgins' story. It would be somewhat naive to assume they totally abandoned the cooking of their motherland when abroad (although they did have to be quite inventive with the ingredients they had to hand in order to do so). The recipes are interspersed with anecdotes and folklore such as the *domovoi* (a 'house spirit' which lives underneath or behind the oven in Russian kitchens – effectively a gremlin blamed for anything that goes awry in the home although some believe the *domovoi* can also heal the sick). She also describes their festivals like Butter Week in Irkutsk (celebrated just before Lent, a bit like the UK's Shrove Tuesday) rendering this book a charming and engaging read, even if you decide never to cook from it. This book is perfect for the armchair traveller who is interested in far-flung locations but unable to visit them at present. If you're an adventurous cook who likes discovering new cuisines (but not necessarily complex or difficult to replicate) then this will be just the ticket for you. Sharon Hudgins is a respected food and travel writer and author of five books. She freely admits to being addicted to travelling and has visited more than 50 countries around the world. As well as writing and award winning cookbook on the regional cuisines of Spain she has also been a *National Geographic* Expert on the Trans-Siberian Railroad tours.

Sam Bilton

Sharon Hudgins, ed.: *Food on the Move: Dining on the Legendary Railway Journeys of the World*: Reaktion Books, 2018: 256 pp., hardback, £25.00.

Food on the Move is all about the refreshments enjoyed (or not) on rail journeys across the world. Crisscrossing continents, nine seasoned rail travellers describe the food and drink available to passengers on these routes from their beginnings in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to the modern day. They cover the culinary highs (the opulence of the Orient Express) to the lows (watery cabbage soup on the Trans-Siberian Express) of these famous journeys incorporating historical accounts of travellers' experiences. This is not a detailed travelogue but rather a digest of the victuals consumed both on board and at the station. Plus there are several recipes in each chapter for the armchair traveller to try at home should they feel inclined.

Sam Bilton