

attention to the brutal Soviet leadership that callously sent millions of unprepared soldiers to die. As Carleton put it, Astafev insisted that victory “came at so great a cost that pride in sacrifice should become shame in carnage” (91). Recent Putin-era treatments of the war such as the twelve-volume history sponsored by the Defense Ministry in 2015 vigorously rebut the revisionist works and depict the war as a “sacred” event.

Carleton then turns to the Russian soldier, his “*stoikost* (courage, resilience and defiance [122])” and his contempt of death; how Russia’s war myth reframed defeats into mythic victories; and the constant threat to Russia of internal disunity during “times of trouble” and civil war. The latter two chapters allow Carleton to focus on how national disasters that challenge the myth such as the Crimean War, the Russo-Japanese War, the First World War, the 1918–21 Civil War, and the war in Afghanistan could be rewritten into the myth. For instance, Carleton argues that in Fyodor Bondarchuk’s 2005 film *Ninth Company*, the war in Afghanistan is not viewed as a tragic mistake but rather an exploit in which loyal Russians sacrificed their lives while fulfilling their duties. In these chapters, the analysis moves back and forth from Napoleon to World War II, from Afghanistan to Crimea, addressing the key elements of the myth more fully than the progression of its development.

In the final chapter and the epilogue, Carleton points to the contemporary political resonance of the war myth and how it justifies Russia’s military actions as necessary in a world in which it is once again “encircled” by the expansion of NATO. The myth suggests that: “tomorrow is always June 22; every action taken by outsiders reflects a plot with fatal designs on Russia; and a Judas is born every day” (246). These narratives continue to emphasize pride in Russian achievements and in “victory” despite the continued presence of accounts both inside and outside of Russia that challenge the “glorious war” myth. Gregory Carleton has thus ably exposed the mythological underpinnings of Russia’s wars as well as of other key events like the Stalinist purges of the 1930s.

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Lebenswelten Sibiriens: Aus Natur und Geschichte des Jenissei-Stromlandes. By Carsten Goehrke. Zürich: Chronos Verlag, 2016. 684 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Glossary. Index. Illustrations. Plates. Photographs. Tables. Maps. €71.00, hard bound.

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Siberia hovers indistinctly in the western imagination as a remote, frozen, unforgiving expanse. Its sheer vastness makes Siberia a subcontinent, stretching from the Urals to the Pacific, from the northern perimeters of Central Asia, Mongolia, China, and North Korea to the Arctic littoral and Bering Strait. Siberia’s diversity poses formidable obstacles to anyone undertaking a comprehensive history. Climates, terrains, ethnicities, and cultures abound, undermining the resolve of even conscientious historians to eschew reductionist expedients. Siberia’s past is generally (the works of Iurii Semenov, Benson Bobrick, W. Bruce Lincoln, Mark Bassin, and Janet Hartley come to mind) viewed through a metropolitan Russian prism. Standard scripts tell a familiar tale of discovery, conquest, exploitation, settlement, incarceration, development, and ecological blight. Deploring man’s inhumanity to man from a distance requires less effort—and entails fewer risks—than immersion in one or more locales to apprehend and capture the sights, sounds, smells, and rhythms of Siberian realities.

Lebenswelten Sibiriens offers a fresh approach, intellectually rooted in Robert Kerner's *opus magnum* on Siberian rivers (*The Urge to the Sea: The Course of Russian History; the Role of Rivers, Portages, Ostrags, Monasteries, and Furs*, 1942) but unencumbered by Kerner's *idée fixe*: the "urge to the sea." It tackles one great river, the Yenisei, which flows over 2,000 miles from south to north from the Sayan Mountains in the Tuva Republic to the Kara Sea appanage of the Arctic Ocean. The Yenisei divides western from eastern Siberia and with its tributaries forms the heart of Krasnoyarsk Krai. Readers are metaphorically immersed in the Yenisei and the lands that its drains and floods. They learn about how sprig thaws and tides determine not only water levels but the outcome of an ongoing struggle for existence by flora and fauna. Daily life of peasants, fishermen, merchants, and missionaries along the river is vividly and authentically portrayed. Ambitious schemes by tsarist and Soviet regimes to explore, settle, and exploit the Yenisei Basin are subject to critical scrutiny.

Carsten Goehrke, Professor of east European history at the University of Zürich from 1971 until 2002, is eminently qualified to undertake such an ambitious project. Fluent in all the relevant languages, he has invested the time and effort to acquaint himself not only with Russian and western sources, but with the Yenisei Basin at first hand. Author of a three-volume study of daily life in Russia, he impresses this reader as having a discerning eye for gritty, at times comic, realities. He detects, and deftly conveys the gap between aspiration and achievement, between the ways things are and the way they should be. The Volga, it turns out, was not the only Russian river adorned by Potemkin Villages.

Encyclopedic in scale, scope, and style, *Lebenswelten Sibiriens* does not reveal its riches to the roving eye. But it rewards the attentive reader and reminds us of Johann Gottfried von Herder's words: "History is geography in motion." The text of *Lebenswelten Sibiriens* is beautifully illustrated with lithographs, engravings, and over a hundred illustrations, many taken by the author. Particularly instructive are those of the same scene taken in different epochs, such a 1913 and a 1993 panoramic view of Krasnoyarsk. A generous selection of historic and contemporary maps helps readers to examine a particular settlement or scene in different historical contexts.

Lebenswelten Sibiriens accommodates a formidable scholarly apparatus: 150 pages of appendices offering a selection of tsarist and Soviet documents, accounts of travelers, statistical tables (including one of GULAG), a biographical roster, a regional gazetteer, glossary, notes, and a detailed, comprehensive, and up-to-date bibliography. Both as an analytic narrative and as a work of reference, *Lebenswelten Sibiriens* makes an important contribution to the historiography of Siberia. It belongs in every research library and merits translation to reach a wider readership.

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Tsar and Sultan: Russian Encounters with the Ottoman Empire. By Victor Taki.
London: I. B. Tauris & Co., 2016. Xii, 305 pp. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography.
Index. Plates. Maps. \$110.00, hard bound.
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From the sixteenth century until the Russian Empire's end, the Ottoman Empire loomed large in the Russian imagination, was a constant concern of Russian diplomats, and often the foe of Russian military forces. For these reasons, Victor Taki's *Tsar and Sultan* represents a welcome contribution to imperial Russian history. Taki addresses the Russian-Ottoman engagement from the sixteenth century to the