

succeeded in ensuring that the diverse topics addressed in the volume were united in their intellectual focus on law as a realm of negotiated interactions between different religious, political, or cultural groups, underscoring their interconnectedness from the early modern into the modern era.

BARBARA SKINNER  
*Indiana State University*

***Gender in 20th Century Eastern Europe and the USSR.*** Ed. Catherine Baker.  
New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017. xiv, 259 pp. Figures. Notes. Bibliography.  
Index. \$36.00, paper.  
doi: 10.1017/slr.2018.139

This book is a collection of fourteen essays dealing with a wide range of gender-related issues in various east European countries, written by scholars from Britain, the United States, Canada, and eastern Europe. Organized chronologically rather than thematically, the editor, Catherine Baker, attempts to link the chapters together, but each article stands on its own and generally addresses one aspect of gender in a specific country, whether motherhood, working women, masculinity, or homosexuality, so that it is somewhat difficult to assess differences among these countries or the distinctive characteristics within eastern Europe as a whole.

Although each country has its own history and culture, the shared commonality in this region is political rather than social, that is, the impact of socialism in the mid- to late-twentieth century and the influence of the Soviet Union. Motherhood has been considered the most important role of virtually all women in fin-de-siècle Europe and crucial to the development of nationalism, as illustrated by the essay on Czech motherhood by Cynthia Paces. The ideology of the Soviet Union in its early years, however, de-emphasized family life and aimed to transform women into full-time workers, supposedly equals to men. But priorities soon changed and women had to assume a double burden as both mothers and workers, while men de facto retained their superior status to women in the workplace, as demonstrated by Jenny Kaminer's essay on "Mothers of a New World" and Maria Adamson and Erica Kispeter's chapter entitled "Gender and Professional Work in Russia and Hungary."

In her article on "Female Red Army Soldiers during World II," Kerstin Bischl utilizes interviews of women soldiers at different times after 1945 to show that the views of women soldiers changed over the years in response to shifting attitudes of other women, moving from pride in serving their country on the same level as men, to defense of their femininity and their need to combat sexual harassment, to countering accusations of immorality. Ivan Simić's essay entitled "Gender and Youth Work Action in Post-War Yugoslavia" points out the influence of Bolshevik theory on gender roles. Despite claims of gender equality in both work and sports within the official Yugoslav youth movement, in practice the male leadership continued to believe in the natural superiority of men over women, assigning women to domestic chores, praising them for always smiling, and instituting different dress codes.

In "Soviet Masculinities and Revolution," Erica Fraser compares the Bolshevik Revolution with the French Revolution on the one hand and Latin American revolutions on the other. She argues that the early Bolsheviks, although imbued with masculinized notions of privilege, duty and honor, paid homage to gender equality. They adopted the term "comrade" rather than brotherhood or fraternity as used during the French Revolution, and promoted the idea of the "universal human worker." Unlike the Latin American revolutionaries, the Bolsheviks lacked charismatic leaders and did not

emphasize “machismo,” often sexually defined. Although Fraser implies that the idea of equality for women and the stress on humanity rather than manliness posed a threat to Soviet masculinity, she nevertheless admits that the default human worker was always male and Bolshevik leadership was preponderantly male, even in its early days.

This collection contains two essays on Poland, both of which emphasize the strength of Polish nationalism among both women and men. In “Life and Fate,” Katherine Jolluck focuses on the persecution of Poles and Jews in former Poland during World War II. She points out that more Polish men than women were conscripted as forced laborers and deported to Germany, whereas most Jewish men and women were killed, whether as slave laborers, in death camps, or elsewhere in Poland. Jolluck is more interested in the plight of Polish women than the fate of Jewish women. Her account is factual, but she somehow leaves the impression that Polish women were victimized to a greater extent than their Jewish counterparts under both the Nazis and the Soviet regime. She concludes that Polish women’s “traditional function of raising patriot children had to be curtailed” (107). For Jolluck, this was apparently a fate worse than death. The second essay on Poland, written by Anna Muller and entitled “Masculinity and Dissidents in Eastern Europe in the 1980s,” analyzes male political prisoners in Poland and their relationship with criminal prisoners, as well as their correspondence with their wives. The author sees political imprisonment as a test of men’s character and devotion to Poland that results in strengthening the value of the traditional division between men and women. The social/private realm remains feminine, while political/public/prison life remains masculine.

Several essays dealing with homosexuality demonstrate that lesbianism never became an issue in eastern Europe, whereas sodomy was rarely decriminalized before the 1990s. In her article on British-Yugoslav lesbian networks during and after World War I, Olga Dimitrijević shows that as was the case back home, Scottish nurses serving on the Balkan front could maintain sexual relationships with one another and with local women without facing condemnation. In Hungary, however, Judit Takác documents that from Habsburg days through the socialist era, the police kept official lists of suspected homosexuals in Budapest, even though they rarely arrested gays or charged them with sodomy.

The last two chapters discussing the aftermath of the Cold War and Communism provide some comparative perspective and prove that the situation in eastern Europe is not so far from the norms in western Europe or the United States with respect to the status of women in the professions, problems of glass ceilings in the workplace, the beginnings of acknowledgement of LGBT rights, and the gradual acceptance of gay pride parades.

Although the essays in this collection are somewhat uneven and sometimes raise more questions than they answer, they nevertheless further our understanding of gender relations in twentieth century eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

HARRIET PASS FREIDENREICH  
Temple University

**Arnošt Frischer and the Jewish Politics of Early 20th-Century Europe.** By Jan Láníček. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017. Xiv, 265 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Maps. \$114.00, hard bound.  
doi: 10.1017/slr.2018.140

The epilogue of this superbly researched new biography of Arnošt Frischer by Jan Láníček is aptly titled: “Who was Frischer?” Unless you are a scholar of twentieth