

Fábián, Katalin, Janet Elise Johnson, and Mara Lazda, eds. *The Routledge Handbook of Gender in Central-Eastern Europe and Eurasia*

New York: Routledge, 2022. Pp. 554.

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The Routledge Handbook of Gender in Central-Eastern Europe and Eurasia, edited by Katalin Fábián, Janet Elise Johnson, and Mara Lazda, provides an invaluable resource for scholars of the region as well as those who study gender and women's history. The book won the Association for Women in Slavic Studies' Heldt prize for best book in Slavic, East European, and Eurasian women's and gender studies in 2022. The book does an excellent job drawing on a diverse group of scholars. The authors come from a variety of academic fields: anthropology, gender and women's studies, history, political science, and sociology. These scholars also span career stages.

The book's fifty-one chapters are organized thematically and chronologically into six sections, addressing "Conceptual debates and methodological differences," "Feminist and women's movements cooperating and colliding," "Construction of gender in different ideologies," "Lived experiences of individuals in different regimes," "The ambiguous postcommunist transitions," and "Postcommunist policy issues." Chronologically, the majority of the book's chapters cover the communist and post-communist period, with its strength in addressing the latter. While the book's essays span the region, many of the chapters address Russia, something the editors acknowledge in the introduction (4). For the field's recent interest in "decolonizing" the study of Central-Eastern Europe, the focus still remains on Russia. In turn, Yugoslavia and areas of former Yugoslavia are particularly underrepresented in this volume, as is Eurasia. This only continues to marginalize those regions that need to be recentered as part of this "decolonizing" effort.

The book's early chapters highlight historiographical debates in the field and methodological issues. For example, Eva Maria Hinterhuber and Gesine Fuchs's chapter examines the Drakulić-Funk-Ghodsee debates. Anna Krylova addresses the strengths and potential pitfalls of gender as a lens of analysis. The chapters in the second half of the book examine the extent to which the transition from communism to democracy in the 1990s did not necessarily lead to linear progress for women. Rather, women have struggled to remain in political positions, as Sharon Wolchik and Cristina Chiva demonstrate. In some cases, women have even seen a return to interwar gender roles. This is exemplified in the case of Latvia, detailed in the chapter by Daina S. Eglitis, Marita Zitmane, and Laura Ardava-Āboliņa. Women have also struggled economically in the transition to democracy, as Jill Massino shows in the case of Romania. Indeed, cuts in state services since the 1990s have had detrimental effects on women and their families, as Jennifer Utrata's examination of Russia demonstrates. Even in sports, Honorata Jakubowska shows that while women are more autonomous today and independent of state control than during the communist era, they now face less financial support and lack media coverage—the same problems women in sport deal with in the west—and in some cases, women face even worse conditions with lower rates of female participation in sports compared to elsewhere (528).

The book's chapters tend more toward addressing women than men, though a few chapters address masculinity, primarily in the context of Russia. Overwhelmingly, the majority of the book's authors are women, a sign that the field of gender studies has room for further expansion. The field has not done enough to address men and masculinity. This suggests that there remains much to be examined regarding masculinity and its relationship to power more broadly in Central-Eastern Europe.

Though not the focus of this volume, a handful of chapters do address sexuality, a nod to that field's intertwining with women and gender studies and to its growth in recent decades.

This book should be of use to a wide audience. Graduate students coming up to speed with various historiographical debates and methodological challenges within the field will find the volume instructive. The bibliographies at the end of each chapter provide a rich resource for students and scholars alike. Throughout, the book's authors provide suggestions for further research in the field, a feature especially helpful for graduate students embarking on their own thesis projects, including research that engages with gender in a broader context and that addresses masculinity. This desideratum also suggests that even with the excellent work done in recent decades, there is much work yet to be done on the subject of gender and women's history in Central-Eastern Europe and Eurasia.

doi:10.1017/S0067237824000663

Izdebski, Adam, and Rafał Szmytka, eds. *Kraków: An Ecobiography* Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2021. Pp. 224.

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Inspired by “ecobiographies” of American cities, this coedited, multiauthored book attempts to apply the model “for the first time,” the editors claim, “to European soil,” to explore Krakow’s “centuries-long, evolving—and in [their] opinion unique—relationship with the world of nature” (11). Successive chapters, written by experts including historians, archaeologists, and environmental scientists, illuminate the city’s relationship to its environment over time by exploring its climate, rivers, mediaeval relationship to plants, natural resources, and pollution in the early modern period, and industrialization, as well as the history of its smog and the myth of Green Krakow.

Although there is no concluding chapter to sum up their findings, the cumulative message of the book is clear: Krakow’s climate—as well as its geographical placement along riverine, railway, and other trade routes; in relative proximity to metals, salt, and other minerals; and with forests to the south and east and rich black and brown agricultural soils to the northeast—has meaningfully shaped its history. The experience of smog and pollution in the city is longstanding, even if the principal sources of pollution have changed over time. Prone to inversion more than half of the year, Krakow’s propensity for smog is particularly high. If, in the mediaeval and early modern period, pollution tended to come from tanneries, animal and human waste, accumulating garbage, and charcoal smoke, and the city was befouled by coal smoke from the 1830s onward, by the 1960s pollution had shifted to heavy metals and airborne particulates from the Lenin Steelworks and Skawina aluminium works, turning Krakow into an “ecological disaster zone” (141). Now, car emissions are a major culprit. Due to the city’s climatological situation, Adam Izdebski and Konrad Wnęk observe, its “contemporary problems are really nothing new. Krakow is in a particularly difficult location, and solving problems that have gone unsolved for several hundred years will require extraordinary actions” (160).

Interestingly, even though industrialization came relatively late to Krakow, the city’s modern shift from dependence on its immediate natural surroundings to the use of coal and resources from further afield came *sooner* than for many other regional cities. Thanks to the coming of the railway in 1847, the city’s voracious consumption of nearby resources significantly abated, such that by “the eve of World War I, only milk, potatoes, hay and straw (and probably fruit and vegetables) came from the