

Schedrin's main story: describing the expert Jew over the three generations of their existence as a state institution until 1917. Schedrin uses the biography of Moisei Berlin (1821–1888) to describe the first generation (roughly 1850 to the early 1860s). Born in Shklov, a center of the Russian *haskalah*, Berlin was rooted firmly in the maskilic tradition of modernizing Jews and Judaism and fighting “fanaticism” in the form of Hasidism. He, like most first generation expert Jews, collected “basic information about the religion, history, and traditional lifestyle of Russian Jews” (98) and then published this information in a series of government-funded publications: *A History of Hasidism* (1854) and the *Ethnography of the Jewish Population in Russia* (1861), the latter undertaken on behalf of the Imperial Russian Geographic Society.

The second generation of expert Jews—trained in the government-sponsored rabbinic seminaries in Vilna and Zhitomir (both lasting from 1847–1873)—undertook proactive institution-building as part of the Great Reforms. Schedrin uses the biography of Barats (1835–1922) as a representative for this generation. This is the moment when expert Jews had the most influence on government policy and when Alexander II paid a personal visit to the Vilna Rabbinic Seminary.

The third generation, which Schedrin dates from the late 1870s to the end of the Old Regime, “was made up of professional bureaucrats, for the most part motivated by pure career goals and a conservative ethos, conforming to the general conservative politics of the late imperial MVD” (108). Here, he turns to the life story of Moisei Kreps (1866–1942), who was mired in the minutiae of bureaucratic and legal procedures concerning Russian Jewry as well as rooting out sedition among Jews.

Schedrin's book is a rich descriptive history of three generations of expert Jews serving the Russian empire, about whom I personally knew very little. And yet, his book fails to explain what their service meant not just to them as individuals but to Russian Jewish society as a whole. Here, an approach informed by postcolonial theory might have revealed the ways the state managed its multiethnic empire. Schedrin seems to unwittingly show that the state created a category of people resembling native elites in other imperial contexts, who were trapped between the metropole and its colonial (in his case, Jewish) subjects. Ultimately, the expert Jew's role in the late imperial period came to resemble the very caricature that Schedrin had hoped to humanize.

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Pogrome im Zarenreich. Dynamiken kollektiver Gewalt. By Stefan Wiese.

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In recent years historians of late imperial Russia and the Soviet Union have begun to focus on the history of emotions, and in so doing interrogate well-established research pathways in the field, such as the history of revolution, the role of violence in establishing the early Soviet state, and histories of everyday life. Stefan Wiese's monograph has a number of virtues: the author makes extended use of a wide variety of archival sources and also the regional press, a much under-used resource. In addition, his arguments are rooted in the voluminous secondary literature on the subject. Wiese's narrative places a number of pogrom events in regional perspective, examining their impact on everyday life and influence on the actions of the administrators of tsarist Russia. The work seeks to address comparatively well-worn

questions such as the role of the police and the military in anti-Jewish violence in the late imperial period. Its innovation lies in addressing the impact of this violence on a number of areas in Russian society, not least those who perpetrated the pogroms and those who sought to resist. In a detailed introduction where Wiese asserts that pogroms in the late imperial period were a phenomenon concerning both the state and the imperial periphery, he states that pogroms were “contingent, complex and dynamic” (10). Wiese argues that such events need to be understood in regional perspective as well as alongside other major processes occurring in imperial Russia. Wiese engages with a wide variety of secondary studies of the pogroms that sought answers to the question of state intentions. He also investigates patterns of regional development, how the diverse ethnic and political identities of local populations transformed patterns of collective violence, the relationship between epidemics and pogrom violence, and how new technologies allowed for a more rapid spread of violence.

The five chapters follow a broadly-chronological structure, focusing on pogrom events from 1881 until the early Soviet period in 1919. Wiese bases each chapter on a geographical case and explores major questions relating to each one. The first chapter, “pogroms as improvisation,” starts with a case study of Elizavetgrad during 1881 (35). The following sections explore who was involved, the role of the police and the military, dynamics of violence, the status of bystanders and protectors, and who were the victims. Wiese concludes that the 1881 pogrom was a contingent and multi-faceted process containing a pronounced element of unpredictability: “the pogrom ended as if by itself” (77). The second chapter shifts its focus to the Volga region and explores the relationship between violence that broke out following the cholera epidemic of 1892. Wiese treats what occurred as one result of modernization processes occurring within the Russian Empire: improved infrastructure and communications aided the quick spread of the riots. The third and most substantive chapter explores the pogrom in Zhitomir during 1905, a case chosen for the ordinariness of its setting rather than outstanding features. This detailed study considers the responses of a number of bystanders, perpetrators and resisters, including Jewish self-defense groups and the extreme right in the region. Wiese argues convincingly that in Zhitomir the so-called “Black Hundreds” did not have the organizational ability to conduct large-scale pogromist violence, and the ineffective response of the police can be attributed more to organizational and structural deficiencies. On the other hand, the actions of the Jewish self-defense forces can be understood as an emotional response to pogromist violence that presented a campaign of heroic and effective resistance; on occasion, this stance had the unfortunate effect of contributing to dynamics of violence, despite its admirable intentions.

Wiese’s argument that we need to bear in mind local factors when studying pogroms is sensible, and his study grounds each case effectively in the wider context. Such arguments are broadly convincing, though this approach does understandably produce variety in the analytical depth and originality of each chapter. The work is most useful in providing a series of innovative case studies rather than a consistent thesis on violence; indeed, Wiese is keen to stress the individuality of each case and the complex origins of pogroms. Wiese’s work is a significant intervention in the debate on pogroms, particularly in providing much more detail on the example of Zhitomir than we previously knew about. It also presents a comprehensive survey of the field. It should prove useful to those researching pogroms, and also those studying social and cultural history as well as the history of the periphery in late imperial Russia.

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