

Konservatory i zemstvo: Plany i rezul'taty deialel'nosti, 1864–1914. By Svetlana Gennad'evna Kulikova. Moscow: Novyi Khronograf, 2019. 336 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. P660, hard bound.
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Historians used to associate the Russian *zemstva* of the fin de siècle with liberal opposition to government policies and look at it as at a kind of nursery for liberal leaders who attained national prominence during and after the Revolution of 1905. Only in the last decades of the twentieth century and in the 2000s, the works of American historians Roberta T. Manning (*The Crisis of the Old Order in Russia: Gentry and Government*, 1982) and Francis W. Wcislow (*Reforming Rural Russia: State, Local Society, and National Policy*, 1990), and Russian academics Vladimir Ia. Laverychev (“‘Beseda’ i tendentsia k konsolidatsii konservativnykh sil v Rossii kontsa XIX–nachala XX vv.,” *Otechestvennaia istoriia*, no. 3, 1994) and Kirill A. Solov'ev (*Kruzhok “Beseda”: V poiskakh novoi politicheskoi real'nosti, 1899–1905*, 2009) demonstrated the conservative wing's existence in the *zemstvo* movement. Now it is the subject of a special monograph for the first time.

S.G. Kulikova analyzes social characteristics, views, and practices of the conservative *zemstvo* activists on the basis of two provinces in the central Russia—Moscow and Tver'. Shifting attention to this specific level of conservative politics helps to deepen the understanding of Russian conservatism after the Great Reforms. Such a perspective gives the possibility to go beyond the narrow circle of conservative politicians and ideologues, who occupied dominant places on the national political scene, and to see the expressions of Russian conservatism on the level of local self-government.

The author finds much in common between conservative and liberal local politicians, and comes to the conclusion that they followed the norms of behavior, traditional for the majority of the Russian gentry (95–96). At the same time, the conservative *zemtsy* (members of *zemstva*) had some social characteristics that to a certain extent might explain the specific aspects of their Weltanschauung and political practices. They had higher percentages of people with military, engineering, scientific, or mathematical education and a bigger proportion of high-ranking officials than their liberal colleagues (85–89). They paid more attention to rationalizing their estates, were more often interested in developing food processing businesses and demonstrated better economic skills than the liberals (“individual'nuiu khoziaistvannuiu khvatku,” 79–82). “In general,” Kulikova remarks, “they were wealthier and more fortunate, from the economic point of view, than the liberal *zemtsy*” (301).

They concentrated on improving the social and economic infrastructure: education, health service, communication, organizing available loans, fighting drinking and poverty. More than half of the book—three of five chapters—describes the practical activities of the conservatives, which, according to the author, were quite successful and helpful for the local population (143–299). Conservatives from Moscow and Tver' *zemtsy* demonstrated tactical flexibility: on the one hand, they were ready, if necessary, to use their contacts with the administration to oppose local liberals, and, on the other, to confront the former in alliance with the latter (302). The conservative *zemtsy* are presented as active and pragmatic leaders of local communities, anxious to adapt them to the new circumstances. This picture is so impressive that when Kulikova explains the failure of Russian conservatism by its “gentry and landlord origins and the appropriate corporative preferences and prejudices” (304), this conclusion looks ill-founded, if not totally incorrect. The author shows how many conservative *zemtsy* from Central Russia did their best to

overcome the limitations from their social group's narrow self-interest and became the genuine leader of *all* the local population. This book by Kulikova deepens our vision of Russian conservatism during the years covered, showing its heterogeneity and inner contradictions.

At the same time, the author's argument could be stronger, particularly if she had made the chronological limits of her work wider, to include World War I. It might provide a possibility to find out what political position the conservative zemtsy took during the war, especially after the emergence of the Progressive bloc in August 1915. Did they oppose or support it, or simply abstain from local political activities? Then, it would be useful to pay more attention to the interaction between conservatives' views and their activities at the local and all-Russian levels. In particular, it might be extremely interesting to know about the reaction of the Moscow and Tver' conservative zemtsy to the pamphlets *Samoderzhavie i samoupravlenie* (The Autocracy and Self-Government) by Sergei F. Sharapov (1899), and *Pogreshnosti obnovlennogo 17 oktiabria 1905 goda Gosudarstvennogo stroia i popytka ikh ustraneniia* (The Drawbacks of the State Order, Renewed on the October 17, 1905, and the Attempt of Removing Them) by Klavdii N. Paskhalov (1910). Both these authors were influential conservative publicists, who suggested serious changes in the Russian government, in particular, raising the importance of district zemstvo in comparison with the provincial one.

In any case, in spite of these reservations, the book by Kulikova substantially enriches our knowledge about the political ideas and practices of conservatives and local self-government in late Imperial Russia and should prove highly stimulating for historians researching in these fields.

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Gendered Violence: Jewish Women in the Pogroms of 1917 to 1921. By Irina Astashkevich. Brighton, Mass.: Academic Studies Press, 2018. xxi, 147 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$35.00, paper; \$89.00 hard bound.
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Recently, the transitional phase from World War to peace in 1917–23 has attracted increased scholarly attention as a research field on its own. Irina Astashevich's book on the mass rape of Jewish women in the course of hundreds of pogroms in Ukrainian-speaking lands thus comes at the right time. It is the author's declared intent not merely to wrest this suppressed dark chapter of east European history from oblivion, but to meticulously analyze the structure, underlying mechanisms and implementations of the pogroms, thus countering recent trends in the history of violence to see it as merely perpetrated by armed men in so-called "violent spaces" which "enable" them to loot, rape, and kill arbitrarily. Instead, Astashkevich reads meaning and intent into the pogroms in Ukraine in times of revolution and civil war, and she does so convincingly.

In its first chapter, the book structures and narrates very comprehensibly a story that is extremely difficult to tell in a nutshell: Ukraine in World War, revolution, and civil war, with its ever-changing coalitions and confrontations of armies and governments, and the as complex situation and agency of the Jewish population in this part of the former Pale of Settlement. Drawing on the findings of recent pogrom studies, in the second chapter the author describes the notion of the "pogrom script" as a succession of meaningful, repetitive patterns which preceded, accompanied,