



Women's History in Russia: (Re)Establishing the Field

By Marianna Muravyeva

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This book is the first English language, all-Russian book on women's history, and translates the knowledge, theories and methodologies in use within Russian national historiography to tackle gender and women's history. It represents the research results of Russian gender and women's historians who are devoted to advancing women's rights and gender sensitive agenda in the Russian academic community and Russian society in general. This book appears in the context of a deep backlash from the liberal ideology of Russian modernization. This backlash has manifested itself in the constant and persistent calls for traditional values and the rebuke of gender as a concept, allowing people to choose their sex. Women have been expected to return to their "natural state" as mothers and housekeepers; feminism once again became a pre-condition for bad motherhood and a general threat to family and was even held responsible to "unnatural vices". Such an attack on gender and feminism as academic concepts and their further politicization makes women's history especially sound. It also prompts scholars to reflect on the reasons and roots of such hostility. Furthermore, it brings up the imminent question of what these traditional values are and where they come from. These are questions that this book answers.

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Review

"This volume is most certainly a very welcome addition to the English-language literature on Russian and Soviet women's history, even more particularly so because it brings together a range of papers reflecting the current state of research on topics in this field from across the Russian regions. As such, its chapters serve to reorient the historical focus of research on Russian and Soviet women beyond the country's old and new capital cities. It is evident from the collection that some of the most exciting developments in the field are now taking place outside the major metropolitan centers of Moscow and St. Petersburg, which still remain the locations most often visited by western researchers and where most international collaboration is located. Also welcome is the fact that the individual chapters demonstrate the growing penetration and awareness of western historiographies and research methodologies in post-Soviet publications across the Russian Federation, and this opens up the prospects for the further development of cross-cultural exchange, networking, and the publication of shared and comparative findings." Melanie Ilic University of Gloucestershire and University of Birmingham *Slavic Review*, 75: 1 (2016) "This volume marks a milestone in the development of women's history in Russia. It reflects the accomplishments of scholars in this field since the late 1980s and expresses concern about the politicization of gender issues in Russia today. [...] All the authors connect with Western publications on their topics, to a greater or lesser degree. Western scholars also assisted in the preparation of the volume for publication. This speaks to the creation of a single international scholarly community of specialists in Russian gender studies - a very welcome development." Eve Levin University of Kansas *The Historian*, 78:4 (2016)

About the Author

Marianna Muravyeva is a Professor and Marie Curie Senior Research Fellow at Oxford Brookes University, UK. She specializes in the history of crime, legal history, gender history, and the history of sexuality in early modern Europe. Her publications include the edited volumes *Gender in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (2013); *Shame, Blame, and Culpability: Crime and Violence in the Modern State* (2012); and *Bytovoe nasilie v istorii rossiiskoi povsednevnosti [Violence in the history of Russian everyday life]* (2012). Natalia Novikova is an independent scholar. She received her doctorate from Yaroslavl' State Pedagogical University, Yaroslavl, Russia, and worked as an Associate Professor of History for more than 15 years for this university. She has published a number of articles on Russian women's movements, including "Early Historical Accounts of the Russian Women's Movement: a political dialogue or a dispute?" in *Women's History Review* 20(4) (2011).

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