

the final decades of the empire. Saburova and Eklof conclude: “State and society, the authorities and the opposition turn out to have been more closely linked, than has been thought. The manifest rupture between them was caused by the subsequent revolutionary upheavals” (419).

The closing chapters examine the “memory wars” that were fought repeatedly throughout the twentieth century over the political and cultural legacy of the Populists. Through their post-revolutionary Society of Former Political Penal Laborers and the journal, *Penal Labor and Exile*, which was devoted to recording the experiences of political exiles, the Populists championed a less dogmatic revolutionary narrative more concerned with individual freedom that was clearly in conflict with the increasing ideological intolerance of the Bolsheviks. They sought to deploy their own “symbolic capital” in order to press, for example, for the abolition of the death penalty in the new Soviet judicial system (374). In the second half of the twentieth century, the Populists’ “belief that freedom and social justice were indivisible proved appealing to a new generation of intellectuals” (408). This richly researched and compelling study situates the Populists not only in the revolutionary movement of the 1870s and 1880s but also reintegrates them into the wider history of Russia.

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“City of the Future”: Built Spaces, Modernity and Urban Change in Astana. By

Mateusz Laszczkowski. Integration and Conflict Studies. New York: Berghahn Books, 2016. xii, 205 pp. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Photographs. Tables. Maps. \$95.00, hard bound.

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Even as recent years have witnessed significant geographical diversification, scholarship on cities has continued to disproportionately privilege both the study of western locations and the focus on large, “global” megalopolises. Thus, the rising surge in research on urban problematics in east Asia, south Asia, Africa, or Latin America has mostly attended to the metropolitan Leviathans of the Global South. By and large, despite accommodating the greater share of the world’s urban population, mid-size and so-called “ordinary” cities have hardly come under scholarly scrutiny and have therefore remained peripheral to the principal theoretical debates in the field. At the same time, concepts that have emerged out of the European and North American experience have maintained the dominance and have often been applied uncritically to urban processes elsewhere. *City of the Future*, Mateusz Laszczkowski’s theoretically erudite, splendidly composed, and outstandingly researched ethnographic study of Astana, Kazakhstan’s newly-crowned national capital, joins a handful of fresh studies that attempt to address this lingering bias.

Despite its medium size and its geographical remoteness from the much-studied urban cores of south and east Asia, Astana’s story is anything but ordinary. A former Soviet agricultural outpost, the city’s population of under 300,000 residents exploded to almost 700,000 within the decade or so following its designation as Kazakhstan’s capital in 1997. During the same years, a massive construction boom drastically transformed broad swaths of its landscape, giving rise to brand new, shiny quarters overflowing with monumental constructions and the latest architectural and urban planning fashions. Laszczkowski’s study navigates masterfully between, on the one hand, these colossal historical transformations of large-scale immigration and accelerated city-building, ceremoniously and ostentatiously imbued with

national futurities, state projects, and political imaginaries, and, on the other hand, the often muddy, frosty humdrum of hazardous playgrounds, kitchen conversations, and unfolding lives where hopes, aspirations, and expectations mingle uncomfortably with anxieties, disappointments, and disillusionments. Ethnographic data remains more or less limited to the Russian and Russophone inhabitants of the city, touching only offhandedly and at some distance on the poorer ranks of rural Kazakhs that compose the majority of newcomers. Yet, Laszczkowski considers at some depth both long-term residents who arrived during the Soviet period and recent arrivals who have benefitted from new employment opportunities, all the while engaging in a lively conversation with literature in urban anthropology and related fields.

Laszczkowski sets out to question some of the fundamental assumptions and dichotomies—space and place, construction and production, urbanity and rurality—that have informed (and arguably obstructed) research on urban contexts. To do so, he draws on an impressively wide range of interrelated materials and narratives: the history and evolution of the city; state ceremonies and public celebrations; the life trajectories of migrants old and new; the quotidian practices of local place-making; even the playful, creative participation urban games. Throughout, he traces the slippages between seemingly disparate categories of both social life in Astana and academic research on urban space. To be sure, other authors have already voiced similar critiques, and more than a few of them appear as key interlocutors in this book (though some, such as for example the debate on urbanity and rurality in critical geography, are oddly absent). Nevertheless, *City of the Future* represents a particularly remarkable achievement not only in its sophisticated consideration of such sources and the fascinating dialogues into which it brings them, but equally in how Laszczkowski skillfully grounds them within the open-ended ambivalences that his sharp ethnographic eye brings to light with impressive lucidity.

Accordingly, *City of the Future* promises a rewarding read to several potential audiences. Scholars of the post-Soviet region will no doubt find the book's engagement with literature in their field and its detailed, empirically-informed reflections on the afterlife of the Soviet era in this unique setting absorbing. Researchers in the fields of urban studies and the anthropology of space and place stand to gain important insights from the key theoretical debates that guide the study, which is often as successful in provoking questions as it is in providing conclusive answers. Finally, the book could come in handy as a clear, concise, and critical ethnographic exposition of crucial theoretical debates and indispensable literature that would no doubt serve well in advanced undergraduate as well as graduate courses in urban anthropology.

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Jews and Muslims in the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. Ed. Franziska Davies, Martin Schulze Wessel, and Michael Brenner. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015. 168 pp. Notes. Photographs. Figures. €50.00, hard bound.

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This wonderful edited volume is a welcome contribution to knowledge about tsarist and Soviet policy toward Jews and Muslims, the two largest groups of non-Christians in the nineteenth-century Russian Empire and the early Soviet Union.

The volume is original in its comparative approach to the histories of Jews and Muslims in Russia—they are usually written in isolation from one another—and consideration of how their histories were connected over two centuries of tsarist and