

life did not last (although it was to recur in the late 1930s). Thus, following the establishment of German rule in Poland, a Jewish journalist could write on August 11, 1915, in the *Opinia Żydowska* that “as soon as the National Democratic leaders fled Warsaw, the Polish capital took on a new aspect,” and its inhabitants “discovered, to their great astonishment, that the peaceful coexistence of Poles and Jews, far from harming Polish interests, created an agreeable atmosphere of peace and calm.” While all Poles felt a certain satisfaction with this remarkable change, the Jews greeted it “with enormous enthusiasm.”

The triumph of Zionism and Jewish autonomism on the Jewish street was not as complete as Ury suggests. By the late 1930s, the majority of Jews in Warsaw were voting for the socialist General Jewish Workers’ Alliance (the Bund). Nevertheless, this major study is a valuable account of the emergence of mass politics in the Polish lands and how this greatly complicated the problem of finding an appropriate place for Poland’s large, unassimilated Jewish minority.

**Antony Polonsky, Brandeis University**

Gorshenina, Svetlana. *Asie centrale: L’invention des frontières et l’héritage russo-soviétique*. Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2012. 381 pp. €27.00 (paper). ISBN 978-2-271-07398-3.

Svetlana Gorshenina, in this monographic version of her doctoral dissertation, has produced an ambitious effort to assess the modern history of Central Asian borders both spatially and chronologically. She begins the work by discussing stereotypes of Central Asia as the “roof of the world” and the “silk road.” She traces the story of a region with consistent strategic importance but whose “integration into the geopolitical world was accomplished in an extremely brutal manner” (p. 19). The work explores how older geographical unities have persisted, despite many recent upheavals and fragmentations. It explains how the history of the creation of Central Asian frontiers reveals particular ways in which the heritage of the Russian and Soviet colonial past has contributed to the present situation of the region.

In her introduction, she notes the difficulties of locating “center” and “periphery” in Central Asia and presents the concepts of “natural” and “constructed” frontiers there. Gorshenina’s study is divided into two sections. The first assesses developments in the Tsarist era, with a subsection focusing on the Kuldzha region as a case study: a city (Kuldzha [Kulja]) situated between the early modern Russian and Chinese empires. The second section delves into the complexity of border delineation in the Soviet period that revolved around the definition of “good,” “natural,” and “artificial” borders.

The first part of the work shows how nineteenth-century Russian thinkers used then-prevailing theories of “natural borders” to justify their empire’s expansion. The establishment of Russian colonies farther and farther to the east is examined as being promoted by Pan-Slavic Russian nationalist adherents to Mackinder’s “Heartland” theory on Eurasia. Gorshenina next provides a case study of how imperial borders became determined by examining how Russian authority was briefly established but then relinquished over the area of Kuldzha. This region (now within the borders of the People’s Republic of China just east of modern Kazakhstan) was occupied by the Russians in 1871 but then surrendered to the Chinese in 1881.

A discussion then follows on how the creation in Tsarist Russia of a bureaucracy to administer Turkestan helped shape the region’s later borders. In this section, Gorshenina

examines the myriad boundary questions involving independent protectorates such as Khiva and Bukhara, as well as frontier issues with the neighboring regional powers of Iran, Afghanistan, and British India at the turn of the twentieth century.

There is finally an analysis provided of how Soviet authorities reread earlier theories in order to establish frontiers on a more “scientific” basis that in effect cloaked political maneuvers by the central government. Here, the author wishes to show the impossibility of applying any “realist” clichés to the examination of ethnic consciousness in a region so marked by migrations and the mixing of groups. In the end, as Gorshenina notes, the history of drawing borders in Central Asia resembles that of many other regions of the world, with non-geographical factors playing a greater role than is often credited. The last part of the work discusses the recent attempts by newly independent Central Asian nations to solve the problems created by the delineation of borders in the Soviet period in the context of the rise of local nationalisms on the one hand and the pressures of globalization on the other.

In general, this work is very successful in presenting a comprehensive study of early modern border delineation in Central Asia. Gorshenina succeeds in shifting the discussion about borders away from demonization of Tsarist imperialists, Soviet commissars, or local potentates. She rightly focuses instead on the constant interaction of local and national factors that, over time, has resulted in the frontiers which now exist, but will always remain subject to alteration.

**Ernest Tucker, U.S. Naval Academy**

Novikova, Liudmila. *Provintsial'naia “kontrrevoliutsiia”: Beloe dvizhenie i Grazhdanskaia voina na russkom Severe, 1917–1920*. Historia Rossica. Moscow: Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie, 2011. 377 pp. R338.00. ISBN 978-5-86793-897-0.

Liudmila Novikova’s monograph is one of the most challenging and original works in the wave of local studies of the Russian Revolution and Civil War to be published in the last fifteen years. It is a unique, detailed study of the relatively small (and undoubtedly “minor” in the grand scheme of the revolutionary epoch) White government in the northern territory that included all of Arkhangel'sk *guberniia*, and (at various times) parts of Olonets and Vologod *gubernii*. The place of this sparsely populated area in the history of the Civil War is strongly associated with the Entente expeditionary forces that, sent to protect the main ports in 1918, became embroiled in the Russian civil conflict as the benefactors of the anti-Bolshevik resistance. Novikova’s study focuses on the local political dynamic that both gave rise to the White government in the territory in 1918 and shaped its policies and conduct during the nearly two years of its existence. The title of her monograph places the word “counterrevolution” in quotation marks as her central claims relate to the moderate, even progressive, policies and practices pursued by the White government in the north, which challenge the blanket generalizations regarding the White movement that continue to predominate in the historiography of the Russian Civil War.

Without a doubt, and with legitimate reason, Arkhangel'sk was considered a political and cultural backwater (as Tsarist officials quoted by Novikova make clear). Its economy revolved around fishing and logging, its peasantry was free from the historical burdens of serfdom and communal land tenure, and its urban population was miniscule, making the conventional sources of political radicalism in the pre-1917 era relatively weak. The First