structural constraints, and patterns of thought that predated the arrival of western ready-made formulas? In pushing the Albania-as-microcosm approach in the broader context of eastern Europe, is there not a risk of misreading the story of collapse and post-communist rearrangement?

That the opportunity to have these kinds of debates even exists is thanks to the painstaking work and scholarly dedication made evident in *Sugarland*. Such is the richness of Hoxha's account that it manages to speak articulately to a wide range of readers. Its present political resonance is also clear. Hoxha writes about how "development remains an elusive target that keeps slipping away, leaving behind amputated projects, unfulfilled expectations, and continuous disillusionment that is often accompanied by fresh dreams" (245–46). Just look, once again, to Maliq. Recently, Albanian newspapers reported that the former industrial base there has been granted to the company of a colorful businessman. The government-approved contract is for twenty years, at the price of *a single euro.* As in the now-forgotten past, reactions to Maliq's latest proposed transformation reflected one's political standing and perspective on the present. Some Albanian outlets quickly raised suspicions about the deal, signed in a country where land and resources have been stolen or handed out via sweetheart deals, and where the fruits of economic growth are felt so unevenly. Others rejoiced. After decades of painful neglect, the promise of development and jobs.

Natal′ia Mitsiuk, Natal′ia Pushkareva, and Anna Belova. *Chelovek rozhdaiushchii: Istoriia rodil′noi kultury v Rossii novogovremeni*.

Gendernye issledovaniia. Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2022. vi. 512 pages. Notes. Index. Rubles 1020.00, hard bound.

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doi: 10.1017/slr.2024.314

Chelovek rozhdaiushchii: Istoriia rodil′noi kultury v Rossii novogovremeni (A Person Giving Birth: The History of Birth Culture in Modern Russia) is authored by leading women's and gender studies scholars in Russia today: Natal′ia Pushkareva, Professor and Head of the Women's and Gender Studies Department at the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology at the Russian Academy of Sciences; Anna Belova, Associate Professor and Head of the Department of General History at Tver′ State University; and Natal′ia Mitsiuk, Associate Professor of the Department of Philosophy, Bioethics, and the History of Medicine and the Social Sciences at Smolensk State Medical University. These scholars examine the transformation of birth culture in Russia from the eighteenth until the early twentieth century. They research an impressive variety of sources, including but not limited to medical books and speeches on obstetrics and gynecology, ethnographic accounts of peasant birthing rituals and practices, scientific journals such as *Russian Doctor* and the *Journal of Obstetrics and Women's Diseases*, state and provincial archival materials, legal documents, and material artefacts connected to pregnancy, childbirth, early motherhood, and infancy. They also investigate both published and unpublished "ego-documents," primarily of the nobility. These documents, and the authors' analysis of them, convincingly demonstrate how the development of obstetrics as a science,

the medicalization of pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period, and the transition from a traditional to a more modern society, altered birth culture in Russia. The title, *A Person Giving Birth*, is intended to speak not only to a pregnant woman who gives birth but also to the person helping to birth a baby—typically in traditional Russia an older woman experienced but not formally trained as a midwife who continued to play a significant role in the lives of peasants despite a modernizing Russia, as well as educated professional midwives and doctors who became more common in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Ch. 1 examines how the study of birthing practices and reproductive behavior has changed over time. It focuses first on the evolution of foreign scholarship on this topic since the 1970s, then turns to Russian ethnographic and medical-historical research on obstetrics and childbirth from 1860–1917, demographic and sociological studies from 1920 to the 1990s, and finally the influence of social anthropology and gender studies on Russian scholarship from the 1990s–2010s. Utilizing ego-documents, especially letters and memoirs, Ch. 2 illuminates noblewomen's experiences of and practices during pregnancy, labor and birth, and the postpartum period from the eighteenth until the middle of the nineteenth century. This chapter also provides some information about peasant birthing culture to show how it compares to and contrasts with noble birthing culture. Ch. 3 and 4 investigate the medicalization of pregnancy and childbirth from the late eighteenth until early twentieth centuries, detailing how pregnancy went from being considered a natural condition that women could manage on their own to a special condition, an illness that required medical professionals' knowledge and supervision. The medical community also pathologized childbirth, discredited the traditional knowledge and techniques of "babki" midwives (typically older women who had experience but no professional training in childbirth), and expanded the professionalization of midwifery. Ch. 5 analyzes the emotional experiences of pregnancy and childbirth described in the ego-documents of the higher stratum of society, especially the nobility, in the second half of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. These texts show how the medicalization of pregnancy and childbirth transformed women's conceptualization of their own bodies and identities.

Attitudes toward and experiences of pregnancy and childbirth among noblewomen and the educated and urban classes changed significantly from the eighteenth to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As pregnancy and childbirth were medicalized in the second half of the nineteenth century, an ideology of "conscious motherhood" spread, which informed pregnancy itself. Doctors instructed women to behave *and* think differently to protect their own health and the health of their fetus(es), and to ready themselves for childbirth and nursing by engaging in new practices. They established the contours of "normal" and "abnormal" pregnancies, and increasingly observed pregnant women to monitor their progress. The emotional effects of this new biomedical model of obstetrics were contradictory; although expectant mothers gained new knowledge about and techniques for managing their pregnancies, and immersed themselves in a new subculture of motherhood, they also developed new fears and anxieties about their pregnant bodies and fetal development. As "conscious motherhood" among the upper stratum of society developed, so too did "conscious fatherhood," which unlike in the west, resulted in the increased presence of men during labor and delivery; this participation was viewed as a demonstration of husbands' love for their wives, and as a means for transforming men positively into affectionate fathers. Meanwhile, as trained professionals played a larger role in childbirth, they also introduced new ideas about the labor process, whether it was proceeding "normally" or not, as well as new techniques for advancing labor, lessening pain, and dealing with complications, including the use of special instruments and surgical procedures. This pathologization of childbirth increased women's fears of difficulties, including death, particularly for their first pregnancies. When industrialization and urbanization of Russia intensified in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, birthing facilities and maternity wards expanded significantly (both private and state-supported), largely serving urban populations. In these spaces, childbirth, which had long been mostly the domain of women—the laboring woman,

her mother, her mother-in-law, aunts, and a midwife—was transformed; the isolated patient, under the gaze of medical professionals, gave birth in an institutional setting, without the love, support, and religious and cultural rituals that accompanied homebirths.

Although the book provides an important window on how Russian birth culture changed over time, it offers greater insight into the transformation of pregnancy and childbirth among elite women, because as the other authors note, peasants (mostly illiterate) did not record their experiences. Nonetheless, the authors effectively utilize ethnographic accounts to detail some important similarities and differences among the birthing cultures of different social groups, primarily nobles and peasants. While it could be assigned to graduate students, it is less suitable for undergraduates. Its fifty-seven pages of notes makes it a treasure trove for researchers. Unfortunately, however, many of these references refer to archives and library manuscript departments in acronym form that do not appear in the list of abbreviations for institutions and organizations, including but not limited to the Smolensk State Archive of the Smolensk Oblast, the Russian State Historical Archive in St. Petersburg, the Russian State Archive of Literature and Art, and the Manuscript Department of the National Library of Russia. Overall, this book is invaluable to scholars of imperial Russia, women's and gender studies, the anthropology of childbirth, and the history of medicine.