

Karolina S. Follis. *Building Fortress Europe: The Polish-Ukrainian Frontier.* Democracy, Citizenship, and Constitutionalism. Ed. Rogers M. Smith. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012. 296 pp. Illustrations. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$69.95, cloth.

In *Building Fortress Europe*, anthropologist Karolina Follis explores the reshaping of the border between Poland and Ukraine around the time of Poland's 2008 accession to the EU and its expanded Schengen security zone. The study analyzes the processes and impact of the changing migration policies as both a territorial and social boundary. Follis' method of "ethnographic zooming" (215) provides a multisited view of the negotiation of European migration policies. These sites include close observation of a litany of key actors interspersed across both sides of the border and further afield: they range from Ukrainian "itinerant" women workers as well as asylum seekers from other countries, legacies of ethnic conflict in communities on both sides of the emerging EU divide, to the meetings of officials and state experts in asylum and border security from Warsaw, Kyiv, and Brussels.

Follis' central goal is to understand rebordering, or the redefinition of "spatial, cultural, and conceptual boundaries" (12), as both a "civilizational" and "civilizing" process (21). It is civilizational, because new boundaries serve to re-establish longstanding national and regional social boundaries. The rebordering of Europe involves the inclusion of previously excluded groups, who, in turn, are trained to hold their "frontier of civilization" (21), so as to maintain a strict regime of control over the entry of "undesirables." The beginning and final chapters take this focus, foregrounding the ways in which legacies of ethnic conflict become recast in daily life and popular culture, when a region familiar with moving borders at the crossroads of several empires experiences a more controlled and supranational partitioning. Chapter 2 looks at how circular mobility, such as petty smuggling and labour migration, re-established a *korydor* (corridor) across the former Soviet border, rediscovering lost civic ties between Poles and Ukrainians; the introduction of the Schengen regulations served to institutionalize this mobility. However, the way this circular mobility became unevenly regulated to the benefit of EU-member insiders also served to resurrect collective memories of trauma based on a regional history of "competing nationalisms" (30) during Austro-Hungarian rule; ethnic strife under German occupation; and the mutual estrangement of "Soviet isolationism." Chapter 7 returns to the topic of the legacy of borders with some context residue (172), linking contemporary public debates on Polish-Ukrainian relations with the unintended consequences of European policy discourse on migration. In addition, beyond recalling national divisions, the

supranational character of the EU boundary introduced an additional layer of “vexations by implicating the Polish-Ukrainian border in the larger Western trends of controlling migration and other forms of human mobility” (52).

The middle chapters provide the rich ethnographic core of the work, where Follis goes inside state and international institutions to analyze the character of external European policy as a “civilizing mission,” identifying the changes that cultivate the legal and bureaucratic construction of boundaries that exclude Ukrainians just as they exclude ethnic “others” from asylum through the same practices of border securitization. These chapters are organized not only by sites but also by actors, investigating how Ukrainian migrants and returnees (chapter 3), Polish border guards (chapter 4), asylum seekers and bureaucrats in Poland (chapter 5), as well as asylum seekers, bureaucrats, and international experts in Ukraine (chapter 6) negotiate rebordering.

Chapter 3 stands out for the biographic method by which Follis narrates the “itinerant lives” of three Ukrainians shuttling to work in Poland. Follis points out how ethnic and gendered tropes of Ukrainian women workers—desirable yet invisible and desperate—emerged from the same Schengen regime that, on one hand, institutes a restrictive visa procedure for Ukrainians, and, on the other hand, facilitates unhindered mobility of millions of Poles to the EU—whom Ukrainian workers ostensibly replace.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 deal with the ways in which the new regime focuses efforts on containing people who seek to enter Poland from countries other than Ukraine. Chapter 4 is the longest, detailing the institution of new border policies and technology, showing the resulting dilemmas of Polish border guards, who must balance adherence to EU policy *and* limiting illicit cross-border mobility with their government’s interest in maintaining recently renewed ties with its neighbour to the east. The expansion of the EU remains consequential for states and people outside of its boundaries as well. Thus, scholars of international relations may also find chapter 6 interesting, where Follis turns her attention to Ukraine and the externalization of migration control efforts. Focusing on the detention of asylum seekers, she points to the uneven power dynamics driving EU cooperation with its neighbours and the limits of law for both advancing and understanding human rights.

Chapter 5, “Economic Migrants Beyond Demand: Asylum and the Politics of Classification,” is innovative for its contributions to migration studies. Follis uses Arrendt’s view of the state and refugees to understand the construction of the figure of the “bogus asylum seeker.” Using interviews from inside the offices of Polish immigration authorities, the book asserts that barriers to migration result not from the “ideological zeal” of xenophobic polities but represent “an outcome of technocratic logic, bureaucratic

involution, and the modern international legal responses” that strip access to EU territory needed to make a legal claim to the human right of asylum (136-40). True, there could have been deeper theoretical and comparative engagement throughout the book. This would have been aided by an analysis of the legal, political, and ethnic opportunity structures for the selection of some refugees over others for both admission and expulsion (e.g., the predominance of Russian Chechens among those admitted, 131). An explanation of the deviation from international nondiscrimination standards in the selection of refugees could have shed light on the international relations of Poland or the EU with Ukraine, Russia, and perhaps other states. Still, the book argues quite convincingly that it is not who is considered a refugee but the maintenance of “distinction[s] between voluntary and forced migration” (133) that plays a central role in legitimating today’s restrictive immigration policy. In the final chapter, Follis concludes that social and political relations across the edges of Europe should be theorized as “qualified postcoloniality” (203). The book’s theoretical contribution, then, lies in the way it points to the uses and limits of empire and postcolonialism, identifying the complexities of the EU’s shifting relationship to its neighbours, their citizens, and emerging “others.”

One lacuna concerns the resilient importance of territory. What is the relationship of territorial border spaces in the context of heightened attention to unauthorized mobility? While Follis briefly touches on perceptions of human smuggling by border guards themselves and of petty trade on both sides of the border, the study pays little attention to how states have engaged with those who live around the territorial border. For instance, largely missing is a discussion of the reactions of local communities to control of cross-border mobility of non-Ukrainian nationals, who constitute the core subject of the investigation. While formidable access concerns may have produced barriers to a relevant field study in border communities, a more site-based and territorial approach to learning about this border may have yielded somewhat different findings and conclusions.

Nevertheless, *Building Fortress Europe* is a rich study of impressive methodological scope and a critical contribution bridging a range of research fields. In particular, it is the first major synthesis of the East-West policies of the EU and the South-North practices of the securitization of migration. It will be of interest to scholars of EU governance, migration and securitization, and border studies as much as to scholars of postsocialist transformation and social change.

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