

Review

Reviewed Work(s): Ten Years After: A History of Roma School Desegregation in Central and Eastern Europe by Ed. Iulius Rostas and John Shattuck

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The study is methodologically sophisticated. Regression analysis is used as one way of explaining the varying rates and nature of corruption across central and eastern Europe. The author selects five primary independent variables—electoral systems, business freedom, per capita gross domestic product, European Union aspirations, and openness of trade—for this part of her project. While other variables, such as Gini coefficients and educational levels, could have been used, regression tends to work better if the number of independent variables is limited, reducing the potential problem of collinearity, for example; the five used in this study are probably as good as any. The analysis suggests that “excessive regulation, the economy, and the EU integration status” (59) have clearly had an impact on corruption rates, while the role of electoral systems and European Union financial assistance is more ambiguous.

Regression is better than correlation analysis for drawing inferences about the relationship between variables. But determining causal directionality is typically problematic even using regression. Kostadinova adopts the most common and popular method for addressing this problem, temporal lagging (of one year). This is an acceptable approach in the absence of process tracing or—even better—conducting an experiment, which is now widely recognized as the best method in social science for determining causal directionality. Although an experimental methodology is not used in this study and would be difficult to devise for the type of social phenomenon analyzed, it is good to see that regression analysis is supplemented by a single in-depth case study. That chosen is the so-called friendly circles between business and political elites in Bulgaria, which are analyzed in impressive depth and remind us of how much violence (including killings) has been involved in some forms of state capture.

Inevitably in a study of corruption—especially elite corruption—some of the “evidence” is based on allegations, rumors, and perceptions. But since perception is a form of reality that often informs decision making, such soft data should be included in any study seeking to provide a holistic explanation of a serious problem that does not appear to be declining in many central and eastern European countries almost a quarter of a century since the collapse of communist power.

This polished and persuasive study deploys a wealth of methods and is rich in detail; unfortunately, it is not possible to do justice to this richness in a review of this length. Anyone seriously interested in postcommunist corruption should read this book, and it is to be hoped that there will soon be paperback and e-versions.

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Ten Years After: A History of Roma School Desegregation in Central and Eastern Europe. Ed. Iulius Rostas. Foreword, John Shattuck. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2012. xiii, 377 pp. Appendix. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Tables. \$60.00, hard bound.

While I was reading this volume edited by Iulius Rostas, I accidentally came across E. H. Carr’s classic book. One particular passage captured my attention: Carr writes that “what the historian catches will depend, partly on chance, but mainly on what part of the ocean he chooses to fish in and what tackle he chooses to use—these two factors being, of course, determined by the kind of fish he wants to catch. By and large, the historian will get the kind of facts he wants. History means interpretation” (E. H. Carr, *What Is History?* 1987, 23). This both describes what this edited collection does and what it is lacking.

I could not agree with Rostas more when he writes in the conclusion that “this is not the history some readers may have expected. It is not focused on events, dates or characters” (343). But our agreement ends here, as he continues, “it is the history of a process” (343). Although the reader was warned in the foreword by John Shattuck that the subject of this book is “the civic, legal and political dimensions” (vii) of the Roma Rights Movement, many more general readers will be left feeling somewhat shortchanged.

Even if the targeted public of the book is intentionally narrowed down to academics and policymakers involved in education and in the development of policies for desegregating Roma children within the education system, the book still misses an important aspect: the broader socioeconomic context within which the Roma population lives. And why would this be important? Because researchers in the United States have shown that legal instruments alone are not powerful enough to change everyday, society-level attitudes and practices, that is, the factors that lead to *de facto* segregation.

So, what does this book have to offer? The book is organized into three parts. Part 1 contains three studies concerned with institutional actors and the legislative framework of school desegregation. The opening text by Marius Taba and Andrew Ryder offers a good overview of how national and international organizations approach integration programs in general and school desegregation, in particular. Although they aim to evaluate how successful actors shape state policy, they only actually describe the programs, concluding that there is only superficial political commitment from the governments. From a methodological point of view, the text does not support such a conclusion. Chapter 2 by Anita Danka and Rostas, more juridical and human-rights centered, aims at highlighting the role of international organizations in combating school desegregation. In their introduction, the authors set forth aims and ideas that are not well developed in what follows. Still, the remainder of the chapter draws a quite clear picture of the role of institutional bodies and organizations by providing an overview of the relevant documents regarding human rights, the right to education, the problems of discrimination and segregation—also describing their development over the years and the different approaches by various actors (even if this is somehow redundant as these details are presented already in the first chapter).

The next chapter by Rostas explores the ambiguous juridical world of school desegregation more deeply. This text again poses the methodological challenge of assessing “the impact the segregation cases had on the larger Roma community and society” (91). Our expectations remain unfulfilled, however, because instead of this assessment we receive a passionately biased and detailed description of the three desegregation cases brought before the European Court of Human Rights; others have already thoroughly discussed these cases. If this chapter had indeed addressed the question of impact, it would have shed new light on this issue. Moreover, Rostas’s article makes us think that we should expect more from judicial policymaking than can actually be achieved. One of the reasons for this might be that the author’s starting point is the American understanding of the role of the courts in shaping public policies, although European courts have different roles and practices.

The second part of the book is definitely the most interesting and substantial part of the volume. The highlights are the policy reviews written by Orsolya Szendrey and Gwendolyn Albert. Both succeed in describing those aspects of segregation and desegregation that the reader might miss in the rest of the book, namely that desegregation happens in the society involving communities and people, and the judicial level—be that of any type—is just one aspect of the whole process. It also contains a number of interviews with prominent personalities involved in the school desegrega-

tion process, presenting ideas and thoughts somewhat overlooked in other parts of the volume.

The title of the book reflects the editor's ambitions to offer a historical overview of the process of desegregating the education of Roma children. Yet a decade is not long enough to make history (and write about that as a process) in the field discussed. The American experience offers many examples and ideas about ways to avoid replicating the failures of desegregation policies. One of these lessons is that every intervention reveals its expected and unexpected effects only in the longer term.

To return to Carr's idea and project it on this volume, it is clear that the editor chose to focus on a narrow aspect of the question of school segregation, rather than using a broader lens that would have offered a more innovative approach to this topic and interested a larger segment of readers. But this book definitely provides an interesting approach to the question of school segregation and desegregation for researchers working in this field, as it is itself a part of the fieldwork containing the opinions of most of the scholars actively working in the domain.

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The Gypsy "Menace": Populism and the New Anti-Gypsy Politics. Ed. Michael Stewart. Preface, Misha Glenny. London: Hurst and Company, 2012. xxxviii, 382 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Figures. Tables. \$55.00, hard bound. \$25.00, paper.

Sumptuously produced, in bindings at different prices to suit a range of pockets on both sides of the Atlantic, this volume stems from a conference "organised and funded by the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights . . . in September of 2009 and subsequent online discussions" (xix). The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) retain the copyright, but the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) warns that "the opinions and information it contains do not necessarily reflect the policy and position of the ODIHR" (iv).

Not necessarily! But responsible European NGO-crats need not worry too much. This book is a wonderful confection of deep and punctilious scholarship and the higher propaganda of an earnest neoliberal commitment to human rights. Nineteen different authors have contributed a preface, a foreword, and fifteen chapters. Some are well known; others are "early-career" researchers, academic acolytes of the better-known figures, and the best pieces are not necessarily by the most established. All have been thoroughly worked over, however, to make this a coherent, collective book. It is not only a devastating catalogue of the atrocities committed by the growing neo-fascist groups, it is a fair representation of a school of thought that aspires to present itself as *the* reasonable position of enlightened, educated people on Gypsy politics. It seeks a synthesis of previous approaches that can sustain outrage at and resistance to the numbing tide of anti-Gypsyism (though only in Europe; there is a Eurocentric failure in this book to compare with the situation of Gypsy groups and politics in the other five continents). It does so not as the voice of any particular political interest, not as activism, but as disinterested, Mannheimian intellectualism, gallantly seeking to speak truth to power, draw the attention of European policymakers to great present dangers, and urge them to do something about it, to ban inflammatory hate speech, and prosecute effectively those thugs who beat and murder in the streets, as well as those state officials who segregate schools or lure women into unwanted sterilization. No one in Romani Studies can dissent from this exhortation, least of all this reviewer.