

Patriarch Kirill I, evaluating these views with references ranging from Carl Schmitt to Alexander Solzhenitsyn to the Strasbourg case at the center of this volume, *Markin v. Russia*.

Preklik's chapter takes on "the reluctance of human-rights discourse to acknowledge the role of various ideas and notions behind its concepts" and seeks to break what he perceives as a post-World War II, western European-centric "monopoly on the conceptualization" of what counts as universal human goods (32–33). He does not endorse relativism but explores what he sees as a paradox: universality is unachievable, which cannot be acknowledged without corroding the international human rights framework. Culture oils that friction.

Schönfeld surveys violations of journalistic freedoms, drawing on interviews with media professionals and human-rights activists in Tartu, St. Petersburg, and Moscow (98). Schönfeld's observations lead her to prioritize "a radical bottom-up approach": to promoting such freedoms in civil society itself before insisting on government-led reforms (147).

Hallinan's chapter compares the freedom of religion under Russian law with the requirements of the European Convention. Russian laws that privilege "traditional religions" and burden "new religions" abrade a constitutional mandate for a secular state. Hallinan finds the state's special relationship with the Russian Orthodox Church so different from the state-church relationship in other European state that Strasbourg principles "are recognizable but have been emptied of much of their original purpose" (197).

Concluding thoughts are provided by Starzhensetskii and Mälksoo. The former gently criticizes the preceding authors, finding himself "looking through the same window but having a different view" (207). He views continued problems "in terms of difficulties with implementation of standards into the Russian legal system rather than any antagonism between Russian and European attitudes toward human rights" (208). Mälksoo provides a useful comparative and historical perspective in his conclusion to round out the volume.

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Sweet Burdens. Welfare and Communitarity among Russian Jews in Germany. By Sveta Roberman. Albany: SUNY Press, 2015, 234 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Illustrations. Plates. \$85.00, hard Bound.

This book by an Israeli cultural anthropologist of Russian origin is a valuable addition to the scholarship on post-soviet immigration to the west and an insightful ethnographic study of post-soviet subjectivity. Based on Roberman's fieldwork with ex-Soviet Jews in different German lands and cities conducted between 2005 and 2010, this volume weaves a rich and authentic tapestry of the experiences among middle-aged and elderly immigrants who moved to Germany after its reunification in 1990 as "contingent refugees." Nowadays her informants find themselves living in the "golden cage" of the German welfare state that provides for all their needs (housing, healthcare, transportation, even entertainment) but excludes them from the circle of productive work, with over half of working-age adults being chronically unemployed. In a nutshell, the book explores the moral dilemma of taking and giving in these immigrants' lives.

It is split into three sections that focus on the spheres of consumption, work, and Jewish practices. Part I shows that consumption has become the major arena of these immigrants' lives, given their access to welfare aid and "forced leisure" due to their redundancy on the German labor market. It wryly introduces the old Soviet concept of *khaliava* (free handout, freebee) that attains new meanings and invents novel ways to milk the generous German welfare system. Tracing back their pre-migration desires for quality western goods, non-existent before 1991 and unaffordable in post-Soviet years, Roberman then follows her informants into the German stores and supermarkets, happily filling their shopping carts with possessions they'd always longed for. Alas, soon many of them discover that these goods fail to bring satisfaction and fill the void of meaning in their new lives on the margins of the German society.

Part II, "Work and Employment" explores the attempts of many educated immigrants, former professionals and civil servants, to find partial solutions to their chronic unemployment and forced idleness (reflecting their discarded Soviet credentials, poor German, and job scarcity even for native Germans, especially in eastern lands). While some immigrants resent living as "parasites of the German state" and struggle to contribute to the local economy at least as volunteers, temporary unskilled workers, or by opening small business ventures, many others give up this effort altogether and succumb to the role of *sotsialshik* (welfare recipient) for good. Roberman convincingly shows that their failure to become economically productive and self-reliant residents (if not citizens) causes the feelings of marginality and humiliation experienced by many adult immigrants—that are compensated neither by their cultural rights nor by the joys of consumption. High unemployment and social dependency are also the source of embarrassment and moral discomfort reported by many informants, who distance themselves from other "Russians" as carriers of this collective stigma, thus thwarting the formation of community networks.

Part III, "Reinventing Tradition" describes the uneasy relationship between ex-Soviet "Jewish refugees" and their tenuous Jewish identities. Since the chief reason for this migration for the German hosts was the rebuilding of Jewish life destroyed by the Holocaust and the aging of the local Jewry, ex-Soviet Jews feel obliged to "perform Jewishly" in order to hold their end of this deal. Given their prolonged detachment from the Jewish traditions in atheistic USSR (where *Jewish* meant an ethnic rather than a religious identity), this "reinvention" of themselves along religious lines comes at a price of low authenticity, if not sheer faking (thus aggravating the above-said embarrassment). On the other hand, some entrepreneurial newcomers find lucrative ways to draw upon their Jewishness as a source of income, becoming functionaries in the local Jewish communities generously funded by the state. As many immigrants are ethnically-mixed (having a Jewish father rather than mother), less than half of them became members of Jewish communities. Even "kosher" Jews often distance themselves from community life that's been tainted by bitter conflict between the numerically-dominant Russian-speaking newcomers and veteran leaders. Some immigrants posit their presence in Germany as a retribution for the war crimes and see it their duty to rebuild Jewish life on German soil. Many others, especially the elders who survived the war (or fought the Nazis in the Red Army), experience deep qualms about living in the lands of the former nemesis, attenuating their guilt by the tenet "they owe us because they killed our ilk." In Conclusion, Roberman writes: "But for many, the macabre past creates a desire to escape their Jewish descent once and for all, to assimilate and blend in among the Germans. Many questions remain about what kind of future exists for Jewish life in Germany . . ." (191).

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