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Building Fortress Europe: The Polish-Ukrainian Frontier (Democracy, Citizenship, and Constitutionalism)

By Karolina S. Follis



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What happens when a region accustomed to violent shifts in borders is subjected to a new, peaceful partitioning? Has the European Union spent the last decade creating a new Iron Curtain at its fringes? *Building Fortress Europe: The Polish-Ukrainian Frontier* examines these questions from the perspective of the EU's new eastern external boundary. Since the Schengen Agreement in 1985, European states have worked together to create a territory free of internal borders and with heavily policed external boundaries. In 2004 those boundaries shifted east as the EU expanded to include eight postsocialist countries—including Poland but excluding neighboring Ukraine. Through an analysis of their shared frontier, *Building Fortress Europe* provides an ethnographic examination of the human, social, and political consequences of developing a specialized, targeted, and legally advanced border regime in the enlarged EU.

Based on fieldwork conducted with border guards, officials, and migrants shuttling between Poland and Ukraine as well as extensive archival research, *Building Fortress Europe* shows how people in the two countries are adjusting to living on opposite sides of a new divide. Anthropologist Karolina S. Follis argues that the policing of economic migrants and asylum seekers is caught between the contradictory imperatives of the European Union's border security, economic needs of member states, and their declared commitment to human rights. The ethnography explores the lives of migrants, and their patterns of mobility, as framed by these contradictions. It suggests that only a political effort to address these tensions will lead to the creation of fairer and more humane border policies.



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Editorial Review

Review

"A very well written, authoritative, and clear piece of work. It is a book that fills a gap—while there are many books within the social sciences on new borders and new migrations, few present such a finely honed mixture of sociological analysis and ethnographic case study."—Frances Pine, Goldsmiths College, University of London

About the Author

Karolina S. Follis has taught at the University of Pennsylvania and the National University of Ireland, Maynooth and is currently affiliated with the Law School at Lancaster University.

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