

through the 1650s, culminating in the mission to England, led by Menasseh, and the Whitehall Conference overseen by Cromwell in December 1655. The conference closed without a clear outcome, and the final chapter deals with the aftermath: Menasseh would die within two years, deeply disappointed by the apparent failure of his mission (though Jews were in fact tacitly accepted into England almost immediately) and broken by the death of his son, the third of his children to die before him. The volume closes with an appendix, in which the evidence for a relationship between Menasseh and Rembrandt is subjected to detailed scrutiny.

The story of the Jewish readmission to England is one that is widely known, while Menasseh ben Israel's significance within that episode, and to the wider Jewish community in the seventeenth century, is often acknowledged. However, this volume does an excellent job of fleshing out Menasseh's role within those events, and of setting them within the context of his career as a whole. Nadler successfully interweaves the personal elements of Menasseh's career (his achievements, his familial and financial difficulties, and his tribulations in Amsterdam) with insightful analysis of his theological and philosophical writings and discussion of broader themes demonstrating the issues that faced Jews not only in Amsterdam but in seventeenth-century Europe more broadly. On top of this, it is written in a lively and engaging manner. There is much here for specialists and nonspecialists alike.

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CELIA DONERT. *The Rights of the Roma: The Struggle for Citizenship in Postwar Czechoslovakia*. (Human Rights in History.) New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017. Pp. xi, 297. Cloth \$105.00, e-book \$84.00.

Celia Donert's *The Rights of the Roma: The Struggle for Citizenship in Postwar Czechoslovakia* is crucial reading for anybody interested in the politics surrounding the Roma people in twentieth-century Europe, and in the complexities of the Communist treatment of social and national questions. The book also successfully shows the limits of the human rights agenda in different political contexts, up to recent times and in the European Union's policies.

Donert proceeds chronologically. She argues persuasively that addressing the context of the legal, social, and economic situation of Roma before and during the Second World War is inevitable when analyzing the new approaches as well as the continuities in politics directed toward Roma in the postwar period. For Donert, the period of the first Czechoslovak Republic (1918–1938) was a period when Roma were criminalized and when restrictions were placed on nomadism. In 1927, the Czechoslovak parliament adopted the so-

called Law on Wandering Gypsies, which identified “nomadic Gypsies” and obliged them to carry a “Gypsy passport” (25). These restrictions paved the way for “anti-Gypsy” legislation during the Nazi occupation, which was largely implemented by Czech gendarmes (26). These “anti-Gypsy” sentiments and policies did not disappear with the end of the war, either, despite the fact that the vast majority of Roma and Sinti in the Bohemian Lands (today's Czech Republic) did not survive the war. The Romani population in the Bohemian Lands grew, however, in the postwar period, thanks to thousands of Slovak Romani migrants.

Starting with chapter 2, Donert analyzes the policies directed toward Roma from the late 1940s, when the Communist Party seized power in Czechoslovakia. Using a remarkably broad range of sources, Donert puts together a complex mosaic of Communist promises, propaganda, and attempts to improve the hygienic and economic situation of the Roma, as well as the many failures, the restrictive and racist measures, and the daily discrimination they experienced. A vision of society where Roma would be finally accepted as full and equal citizens and would contribute to the building of the socialist dream was clearly appealing to some Roma, especially after their wartime experience and the discrimination they had faced already before the war. Some Roma also profited from new projects related to housing, the right to employment, and access to free medical care. Nor does Donert hide the dark side of the Communist policies directed toward Roma; in doing so, she reveals continuities with the period before the war in the thoughts and actions of the people in power. The authoritarian Communist regime was moreover able to apply its repressive orders more directly. This is true for the Law on the Permanent Settlement of Nomadic Persons of 1958, which, as Donert explains, came into effect when most Roma were not itinerant; the law nevertheless hit thousands of Romani migrant workers and slum dwellers (126). The 1965 policy that aimed “to ‘solve the Gypsy question’” through “a nationwide programme to ‘liquidate undesirable concentrations of gypsies’” also deepened the misery of many Romani families when their dwellings in Romani settlements in Eastern Slovakia were destroyed but new housing was not offered, often because of the refusal of the non-Romani population to accept Roma as their neighbors (159). Other examples of interventional social policies of the Communist state include the repressive measures used when treating Roma with DDT, forced sterilization in the 1970s, and taking Romani children into institutional care.

The title and subtitle of the book suggest that Donert is writing a history of the Romani struggle for social and national rights. This is true only in a very limited way. Donert's book is largely written from the perspective of the state administration. It describes in detail the views of politicians as well as of “experts” on

Roma, which are mostly full of prejudice and paternalism. Donert tries, however, to add at least responses from the Romani community. She quotes from letters by Roma to the Communist press and from their memoranda and complaints in the archives of the president or of different ministries, and she also conducted interviews. About a dozen Romani activists as well as some key non-Romani personalities who were in favor of the rights of Roma are introduced in more detail. The vast majority of them were keen Communists who, thanks to their positions in the lower ranks of the Communist apparatus, could dare to raise their voice in favor of the Romani community. Between the lines, and more openly in periods of increased freedom in the 1960s, the Romani community demanded to be acknowledged as a national minority and get support for their Romani-language press. The vast majority of these attempts ended in vain—and in disillusionment. The Communist regime pushed on with assimilation and viewed the Roma as a socially defined (problematic) group of people.

The main thesis of the book, according to Donert, is “that socialist regimes in the Soviet bloc played a crucial role in the future development of discourses and practices of Roma rights by providing the Roma with equal rights and economic opportunities as citizens after 1945” (273). This comes rather as a surprise. Donert herself brings many clear proofs that the situation of the Roma under Communism was often extremely precarious and that equality remained largely only on paper. For me, Donert’s book is superb in the way it shows continuities in attempts to improve the situation of the Roma, on the one hand, and to discipline them, on the other hand, in different political settings before and after the war, both during and after the Communist regime, in Czechoslovakia as well as in the broader European context. It shows clearly that the politics and policies surrounding the Roma are not a marginal topic, but one that points to crucial limits of the concept of citizenship in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

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TRICIA STARKS. *Smoking under the Tsars: A History of Tobacco in Imperial Russia*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2018. Pp. xiii, 320. Cloth \$42.95.

Tobacco smoking, a practice Europeans appropriated from Native Americans in the early sixteenth century, spread rapidly around the world. It was being widely cultivated and consumed across Eurasia by the seventeenth century. As the new habit took hold, political authorities from the Ottoman Middle East to Ming China attempted to ban smoking, but these prohibitions were short-lived nearly everywhere except Mus-

covite Russia. After tobacco first appeared in Russia in the early 1600s, Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich famously blocked all imports of tobacco, initiating a ban that was only reversed in 1697. Thereafter, Russian tobacco use rose slowly through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with a precipitous increase occurring only in the late nineteenth century, largely—as Tricia Starks posits in *Smoking under the Tsars: A History of Tobacco in Imperial Russia*—due to the development of a unique type of Russian cigarette known as the *papirosa*.

Centering her discussion on the growing popularity of *papirosy* from the 1860s to World War I, Starks analyzes how tobacco went from being a product of only occasional use in Russia to one widely consumed by people from all social classes and both genders. She argues that Russia’s exceptional history of tobacco—evident in the relative success of the earlier prohibitions against tobacco—continued into the late imperial period as well, principally because of the unusual qualities of *papirosy*. These usually unfiltered cigarettes consisted of a hollow cardboard mouthpiece on one end, and a shorter section on the other. *Papirosy* were filled with makhorka tobacco, a nicotine-heavy variety of *Nicotiana rustica* (Turkish or “Oriental” tobacco) grown in Ukraine and other parts of the Russian Empire. Smoking *papirosy* made for an idiosyncratic sensory experience: the pungent smell and intense taste of makhorka leaf was distinctive, and the filter-less tube delivered more nicotine to the body quickly and was thus potentially more addictive than cigarettes rolled with the milder Chesapeake *Nicotiana tabacum* used in American and European cigarettes. *Papirosy* were also different from other cigarettes because unlike those produced in mechanized factories in Durham (North Carolina) or Bristol (United Kingdom), *papirosy* were rolled by hand in workshops that predominantly employed low-wage female workers.

Although *papirosy* first appeared in the 1830s, their increased circulation in the 1870s and their arrival as a heavily advertised item of mass consumption in the 1890s coincided with the period of rapid urbanization and industrialization that followed in the wake of the Great Reforms, implemented by Alexander II in the 1860s. Associated with modern urbanity, *papirosy* were embraced not only by Russia’s liberal educated elite but also by newly arrived rural-to-urban migrants who sought to refashion themselves as city dwellers. *Papirosy* were not universally popular, however. Medical experts, social reformers, and religious authorities raised many objections, arguing that smoking threatened morality, endangered individual health, and disrupted social order. The argument that resonated most powerfully with late nineteenth-century opponents of tobacco was the social Darwinist notion that smoking would gravely weaken the nation by destroying the health and procreative potential of men and