

THE JOURNAL OF
POLITICAL STUDIES

Editorial Committee of The Journal of Political Studies

Source: *The Journal of Political Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (Jul., 2014), pp. 180-205

Published by: Joomag on behalf of Editorial Committee of The Journal of Political Studies

Stable URL: <http://www.journalofpoliticalstudies.com>

The Journal of Political Studies is a private company located in Edinburgh, Scotland.

Contents

Articles

Flirting with the EU: Georgia's Anti-Corruption and Pro-Transparency Reforms after the Rose Revolution 2
by Nyiri DuCharme © 2014

Politics of Eugenics: Productionism, Population, and National Welfare 16
By Alberto Spektorowski and Liza Ireni-Saban
by John Glad © 2014



THE JOURNAL OF POLITICAL STUDIES

The rights of all written works herein are held by their respective authors. Nothing within this work necessarily represents the view of the Editorial Board of The Journal of Political Studies. Not for distribution or sale.

USE + NOT FOR COMMERCIAL USE + NOT FOR COMMERCIAL USE + NOT FOR COM

Flirting with the EU: Georgia's anti-corruption and pro-transparency reforms after the Rose Revolution

By Nyiri DuCharme

“Soviet-style vote rigging is no way to lead a nation with aspirations of joining the West, nor is it feasible in a country with a high level of literacy and free mass media. Indeed, the Georgian people acted out one of the purest renderings of the social contract. No longer seeing Shevardnadze’s government as legitimate, they invoked their right to remove it. Although a significant obstacle to Georgia’s future development has been removed, the story is by no means finished.”

– Eric A. Miller on the Rose Revolution¹

The post-Soviet legacy of Georgia has been described along two distinct models: as a triumphant and unwavering success story or as a troubled journey along an uncertain path to stability. In the 23 years since its independence from the USSR, Georgia has gone from being a classic failed state to a relatively thriving social, political, and economic beacon in the Caucasus. There are many factors that scholars and stakeholders attribute to this significant development – however, I will focus my research² on a number of key reforms and issue areas.

The main focus will be on the efforts aimed at eradicating petty corruption and promoting transparent administrative procedure, with some additional discussion on corruption in the higher education system, taxation reform, and procurement and competition reform. A significant amount of attention will be given to analyzing the societal reforms and government initiatives that have furthered the anti-corruption endeavour. The overarching sentiment, in both primary and secondary research, has been that the most important legacy of the Rose Revolution was the strengthening of civil society – particularly in light of the contestation around the effectiveness of the anti-corruption reforms. While the post-revolutionary government and Western observers

¹ Miller 2004 p.19

² This research is based on significant primary research conducted in the Republic of Georgia in February 2014, primarily in the form of interview data with such stakeholders as Transparency International, the Eurasian Partnership Foundation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum, and the European Union Special Representative to Georgia. Additional secondary research has also been undertaken in order to ground this paper in the current literature on post-Soviet transition and European enlargement.

were quick to hail the triumph of the anti-corruption agenda, the actual results are more nuanced than one might think. In addition, more attention and resources have been allocated to combating corruption than promoting transparency. The civil society emphasis is important when one considers why the sentiment and values of the Rose Revolution integrated so well into Georgian society.

To better analyze these factors, an overview of the post-Soviet legacy and a suggestion around how to define the region will begin the discussion.

Spatial and Temporal Context

Georgia and two of its neighbours, Armenia and Azerbaijan, are often grouped together into a region called the South Caucasus. This identity is argued to be a convenient label constructed by the West to refer to a region that, although all former members of the Soviet Union, does not see itself as homogeneous. However, Thomas de Waal's argument, which I will also adopt, is that although the region has a multitude of identities between and within each of its constituent states, there is some merit to refer to the South Caucasus as a region – and perhaps to simultaneously encourage regional integration in this way. Although the component states of the South Caucasus are quick to point out their dissimilarities from each other, all three were members of the Soviet Union. The Soviet legacy has left an imprint on each of these societies more significant than simply a *lingua franca*.

Within the Soviet system, Georgia had the highest rate of corruption and crime^{3,4}. As the Soviet system collapsed, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Eduard Shevardnadze, became the president of independent Georgia in 1992, after its brief civil war under Zviad Gamsakhurdia. Shevardnadze's tenure was marked initially with significant economic and political transformation, but his administration soon turned to "corruption, cronyism, and a lack

³ Azfar et al. 2001

⁴ Meyer 2001

of reform... Shevardnadze became increasingly unpopular as the years went by”^{5,6}. The corruption in the period immediately after post-Soviet transition became so engrained in the governance of the state and in society that it has been characterized as institutionalized⁷. Shevardnadze’s greatest challenge was to meet international expectations for the parliamentary elections, but the October 2003 elections were marked with massive breaches of electoral integrity: “international and domestic observers witnessed intimidation, ballot box stuffing, changing of tally sheets, and other serious violations”⁸. The experiences of Georgia under first Gamsakhurdia, then Shevardnadze, were major motivating factors for the Georgian contribution (Rose) to the series of colour revolutions in Ukraine (Orange) and Kyrgyzstan (Tulip)⁹.

The Rose Revolution was a peaceful transition of power from Shevardnadze to the opposition, led by Mikheil Saakashvili. His campaign centered on the fight against endemic corruption and on integrating Georgia more with the West. Holding power until 2013, Saakashvili was supported by the United States in particular, and pursued NATO membership as well as integration with European institutions. However, Saakashvili was criticized for having an “authoritarian streak”, and left “some degree of doubt about [his] commitment to Georgian democracy”¹⁰.

This analysis will center on the major achievement of Saakashvili’s anti-corruption pursuit: eradication of petty corruption and promotion of transparent practices. Some attention will also be given to the elimination of corruption in the higher education sector, taxation reform, and procurement and competition reform, although the latter initiative cannot yet be said to have completely eradicated bureaucratic advantage. Then, a significant amount of attention will be

⁵ Miller 2004 p.12

⁶ Azfar et al. 2001

⁷ Rostiashvili 2011

⁸ Miller 2004 p.15

⁹ Tatum 2009 p.163

¹⁰ Tatum 2009 p.164

given to the societal reforms and government initiatives that have furthered the anti-corruption endeavour.

Fight Against Corruption

Saakashvili's successful presidential campaign (95% of the vote in January 2004)¹¹ was primarily due to his insistence on addressing and eradicating corruption. Thus far in this article, a distinction has been made between petty and elite corruption. This is because while Saakashvili mandated the end of corruption, this did not include the elite corruption that was widespread throughout his tenure – the government's definition of corruption was what others would identify as petty corruption^{12,13}. That is to say, the Saakashvili administration was able to claim the elimination of corruption because their definition of corruption was limited to the bribes and other petty acts carried out by front-line officials. They did not acknowledge the elite corruption of state budgets and spending, nor the widespread nepotism, that individuals and civil society organizations criticize the government for preserving behind-the-scenes¹⁴. This nuance is important to keep in mind.

Petty corruption was rampant in Georgia before the Rose Revolution. Saakashvili enjoyed a concentration of presidential power which allowed for the imposition of order and the ability to take unilateral radical actions, but it also increased authoritarianism and inhibited democracy. However, the successes are blatant: the “tradition of bribery on the roads of Georgia was completely eradicated, which enhanced the country's role in the system of international transportation corridors”¹⁵. The registration of public services was facilitated, allowing greater ease for citizens to obtain official documents.

¹¹ Miller 2004

¹² Papava 2013

¹³ Interview with Transparency International; Tbilisi, February 2014

¹⁴ Interview with the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum; Tbilisi, February 2014

¹⁵ Papava 2013, p.55

In an interview with Transparency International, the distinction between petty and elite corruption is perhaps the most clear. The daily, incessant corruption that the average Georgian citizen faced as part of their everyday activities was eliminated. This was a massive success for the government policy, but also for the peoples' quality of life. It increased public trust, social cohesion, and contributed to widespread support for the government. However, political leaders never addressed the issue of elite corruption. Nepotism remains pervasive, and the privatization mission was nontransparent. It was stated that "there continues to be less transparency the higher up in the government you go"¹⁶.

In the higher education realm, corruption had penetrated all areas of institutions, including admissions, grading, financing, and hiring/firing practices¹⁷. The situation had been two-fold: academic- and services-oriented corruption between students and faculty, staff, or administrators; and administrative corruption, in the hiring process and in the misuse of public funds granted to the institution¹⁸. Georgia's success in eliminating corruption in the higher education system was one of the areas with the fight against corruption was a direct result of efforts to Europeanize¹⁹. Georgia was attempting to comply with the Bologna Process²⁰, meaning the widespread corruption in the sphere of education had to be addressed in order to be harmonized with European education standards.

The fiscal state formation and transformation of the taxation system was a third major success in the fight against corruption. "Years of budgetary crisis and infrastructural decay – the

¹⁶ Interview with Transparency International; Tbilisi, February 2014

¹⁷ Rostiashvili 2011

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ A deeper analysis of Georgia's Europeanization efforts is provided towards the end of this paper

²⁰ The Bologna Process aims to create a European Higher Education Area. The Bologna Process does not aim to harmonize national educational systems, but rather to provide tools to connect them. The intention is to allow the diversity of national systems and universities to be maintained while the European Higher Education Area improves transparency between higher education systems, as well as implements tools to facilitate recognition of degrees and academic qualifications, mobility, and exchanges between institutions.

<http://www.eua.be/eua-work-and-policy-area/building-the-european-higher-education-area/bologna-basics.aspx>

result of post-Soviet economic collapse, and persistent state incapacity to collect tax revenues much in excess of seven percent of GDP²¹ took its toll on the budgetary limitations on the government. The reforms simplified the types of tax, and lowered the burden²². From 2004-7, central government tax revenue more than tripled to 23% of GDP; it is worth noting that tax rates did not increase, this rise in tax revenue was purely the result of enforcing tax compliance²³. By eliminating bribery in tax collection, revenue increased – simply through better management²⁴.

With regards to public procurement and competition, the system became totally transparent; however, the government arguably left itself certain loopholes because 30-40% of procurement deals occur outside of the public system²⁵. The government has not yet completely eradicated bureaucratic advantage, so this is one area in which more work needs to be done for corruption to be totally eliminated. Laws on competition were revised and promoted a liberal free market approach – according to the rankings of conditions for doing business published by the World Bank, Georgia moved from 112th place to 37th in 2006, and to 12th place in 2010²⁶. This is an incredible leap forward for a country that was a failed state 23 years ago.

Societal Reforms and Government Initiatives

A major undercurrent in a number of interviews²⁷ was that the move towards e-Government and revitalized public sector management has been one of the most significant successes of providing Georgian citizens with more agency and ability to educate themselves on their rights. Rostiashvili contends that “strengthening civil society is identified with ensuring fair and robust political competition, decentralization, transparency, and accountability, as well as

²¹ Schueth 2012 p.133

²² Papava 2013

²³ Schueth 2012

²⁴ Interview with Transparency International; Tbilisi, February 2014

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ Papava 2013, p.56

²⁷ In particular, those with the Public Service Hall, with the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum, Transparency International, and the Open Society Georgia Foundation

freedom of information and the wide use of information and communication technologies²⁸.

The Georgian government joined the Open Government Partnership in April 2012²⁹, access-to-information laws have improved drastically, and public administration is revitalizing^{30,31}.

The Saakashvili government mandated public officials to undergo serious testing – those who failed the test, were fired. In addition, the salaries of those who passed the test (and retained their jobs) were increased, in order to offset the attraction of bribery³².

The Public Service Halls initiative is one of these projects undertaken by the Georgian government to ease the access of public services for its citizens. It is one of five institutions created by the Ministry of Justice in 2011³³. According to the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum, it removes bureaucratic obstacles: it follows an “everything in one space” model, whereby all civic documents can be requested and processed during the individual’s visit. In fact, it goes further to provide these documents in a ‘drive-thru’ format reminiscent of American fast-food restaurants (JustDrive), or in a café format in the main reception area (JustCafé). The patent for this initiative has reportedly been pursued by the Ukrainian³⁴ and Turkish³⁵ governments.

The importance of 21st century infrastructure-building was a major achievement, according to the Deputy Chief of Internal Audit Service at the Public Service Hall in Tbilisi. Information technology (IT) and data-sharing capabilities have allowed for government services to be streamlined, convenient, and efficient³⁶. The Public Service Halls and other initiatives (public or private sector) that promote transparency have adopted best-practices models from

²⁸ Rostiashvili 2011, p.28

²⁹ <http://www.opengovpartnership.org/countries>

³⁰ Rostiashvili 2011

³¹ Interview with the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum; Tbilisi, February 2014

³² Interview with Public Service Hall; Tbilisi, February 2014

³³ The five institutions are the notary bureau, the civil registry, the public registry, the archives, and the enforcement services

³⁴ Interfax

³⁵ Valencia International

³⁶ Interview with Public Service Halls; Tbilisi, February 2014

European corporations in their treatment of employees. The importance of a legal infrastructure, optimized for ease of use, in order for individuals to understand the law and their rights within it, was also highlighted as an important factor³⁷.

A representative from Transparency International Georgia, when asked about the Public Service Halls initiative, joined the refrain about the merits of the program. However, he pointed out that it has not assisted in the fight against corruption, given that it was initiated in 2011. Instead, it has assisted in embedding the practice of transparency in how citizens go about accessing public services³⁸. Although he characterized it as a publicity stunt by the government, he acknowledged that it contributes a genuine good to the Georgian people, and preserves progress through institutionalization.

Role of Civil Society

Many of the stakeholders interviewed referred to the important role that the media and civil society organizations played during the Rose Revolution and in 2013 at the end of Saakashvili's tenure. Saakashvili's administration was made up of many leaders in Georgian civil society, and thus while he was in power, civil society organizations were somewhat weaker than during his rise and decline³⁹.

The general public came to understand the extent of corruption when the Rector of the Tbilisi State University was dismissed, accused of facilitating corruption and siphoning off resources intended for the university. The citizens of Georgia:

“...came to further understand that the country's scarce resources could be allocated to better purposes than on bribery and its resulting contribution to the “second income” of corrupt individuals... the media widely highlighted the case. [The Rector]'s dismissal became a turning point in the fight against corruption, more succinctly delivering the message that times had changed and that under the ongoing reforms, no one would be immune from prosecution for illegal action, corruption, or abuse of power”⁴⁰

³⁷ Ibid

³⁸ Interview with Transparency International; Tbilisi, February 2014

³⁹ Interview with the Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development; Tbilisi, February 2014

⁴⁰ Orkodashvili 2010, p.368

This was a powerful sentiment, and constituted one of the major landmarks of the paradigm shift that we see in Georgian society. The civil society emphasis is important when considering why the sentiment and values of the Rose Revolution integrated so well into Georgian society. Jesse Tatum draws attention to the three-layer process of democratization that Georgia experienced⁴¹:

- 1) The phase of “transition”, whereby a new regime replaces the old and seems to build authority and legitimacy
- 2) The “consolidation” phase, where the values and procedures of democracy become socio-politically embedded and replace the norms of the former regime
- 3) The “transformation” stage, which is the point when the regime is considered to be an established, fully-functioning democracy

Georgia appears to currently be situated somewhere between the second and third stages of this conceptualization.

Actors

The reforms that have taken place since 2003 in Georgia have been outlined in detail – but it has not yet been addressed *why* these reforms took place. There was indeed domestic frustration with Shevardnadze’s endemic corruption and cronyism, but there was also a growing inclination to integrate with the West, a more stable social, political, and economic partner than Georgia’s neighbours in the South Caucasus. Different stakeholders identified different actors as being the most important, but virtually every single one acknowledged the importance of the European integration effort as an underlying factor.

Although it eventually became problematic itself, the Saakashvili administration is credited for initiating the anti-corruption campaign, and for demonstrating genuine will to address this social, political, and economic issue. The media and civil society then embedded these values, as well as that of public’s right to know its government’s agenda. The role of the

⁴¹ Tatum 2009, p.161

International Monetary Fund and the World Bank was raised in the literature, given that they provided a significant amount of capital to civil society organizations⁴².

The Europeanization project, however, is the most important factor. Virtually every interview and many of the scholarly works consulted cite the European and Euro-Atlantic project of Georgia as one of the main motivating factors for this fight against corruption and embedding the value of transparency and accountability⁴³. The Georgian government became affiliated with the EU when it joined the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2004, but it became a serious delegate in 2012 when it began negotiations for a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement⁴⁴.

This is not to say that the reforms only took place due to this ‘carrot’ of European integration, since widespread corruption did exhibit itself as a considerable ‘stick’; however, the European project arguably provided the immediate motivation to tackle the issue⁴⁵. The anti-corruption reforms in general facilitated the political integration of Georgia within the European framework, but the higher education reforms in particular allowed Georgian society more freedom to interact with wider European society, given the recognition of Georgian institutions through the Bologna Process^{46,47}.

Challenges Remaining

The main issues that remain are the elite corruption and nepotism in the government, increasingly saturated the ‘higher’ up one looks⁴⁸ – Georgia still suffers from a relatively weak Parliament (the concentration of power is in the executive branch), a weak judiciary, and a timid internal auditing office. Civil servants and others at the front-line who interact with the public

⁴² Papava 2009

⁴³ Interview with Eurasian Partnership Foundation; Tbilisi, February 2014

⁴⁴ European External Action Service

⁴⁵ Interview with the Eurasian Partnership Foundation; Tbilisi, February 2014

⁴⁶ Orkodashvili 2010

⁴⁷ Rostiashvili 2011

⁴⁸ Interview with Transparency International; Tbilisi, February 2014

maintain integrity in their services; however, it is the public officials and those higher in the government who sidestep the law.

Perhaps the greatest challenge that remains for Georgia is addressing and ceasing the practice of creating a legal infrastructure while embedding certain loopholes into it, that can later be used to circumvent the law. The example of public procurements has already been mentioned. Most strikingly, there are laws forbidding corruption in any public office, particularly conflict of interest laws and those regulating the behaviour of public officials in the private sector. However, there is no agency mandated with monitoring or enforcing these laws, so there is no mechanism once the laws have been breached⁴⁹.

The public grew to realize that Saakashvili had reverted to some pre-revolutionary practices. This has been argued to be due to four main reasons: the concentration of power in the executive branch, the practice of nepotism rather than merit-based accumulation of power, a weak and fragmented party system that creates competition so intense that vote-rigging may be tempting, and a lack of respect for constitutional and electoral law⁵⁰. The fragmented party system is not, however, an ideological split. The government and the opposition agree that having a western orientation (away from Russian influence) is a beneficial course of action to pursue. The friction lay on Saakashvili's methods, and his excessive concentration of power. This resulted in a "hegemonic party system of the Soviet past"⁵¹.

Although the failures of the Rose Revolution are significant, the paradigm shift that occurred in the civil society is entrenched – the successes arguably outweigh the failures.

⁴⁹ Interview with Transparency International; Tbilisi, February 2014

⁵⁰ Tatum 2009

⁵¹ Tatum 2009, p.166

Georgia raised its Transparency International ranking to 55th, from 124th in 2003 (a spot it shared with its neighbour, Azerbaijan). Thus, the future trajectories should be speculated.

Future Prospects and Trajectory

The top-down crackdown on corruption at the lower, petty level was incredibly successful and effective. The change in government in 2013 was peaceful, and the election was uncontested. However, the system-level issues remain, particularly elite corruption and the weak judiciary. If the Parliament is able to exercise oversight of the government, and if the judiciary is strengthened, many stakeholders are optimistic of the further development that Georgia could be able to undergo⁵². A recurring theme in the field research conducted was that although the government's emphasis has been on combating corruption, the best way to ensure that the reforms are upheld are to promote transparency – and importantly, accountability.

Some suggest that Georgia is a beacon in the Caucasus⁵³. When Saakashvili became president, there was an “initial honeymoon period... filled with great change and hopes for the future of a country that could, perhaps, prove to be an example for its immediate Caucasian neighbours and for other former Communist republics in Eurasia”⁵⁴. Georgia is looking westward in the hopes of achieving what the Baltic states were able to accomplish: economic, political, and social integration with the West. Civil society in Georgia is Westernizing: Georgia has initialed an Association Agreement with the EU (to be signed in late 2014), integrating it even further with Europe – a step which its other European Neighbourhood Policy counterparts failed to take. In terms of Georgia's civil society development, there genuinely seem to be solid reforms in not only state institutions, but also a changing understanding of society for the Georgian people – they have more agency, are more knowledgeable of their rights, and have a

⁵² Interview with Transparency International, Tbilisi, Georgia, February 2014

⁵³ Interview with Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, Tbilisi, Georgia, February 2014

⁵⁴ Tatum 2009 p.170

rich environment for civil society organizations that aim to further the development of the state through bottom-up processes.

Although much of the visible corruption has been eradicated, there remains room for improvement in eliminating the hidden corruption. However, with the solid foundation that was entrenched during the Rose Revolution, and the increase in public trust, Georgia has indeed become a beacon in the South Caucasus and will continue to experience success as the integration with Europe reaches fruition.

Bibliography

- Azfar, Omar, Young Lee, and Anand Swamy. "The Causes and Consequences of Corruption." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 573.1 (2001): 42-56.
- De Waal, Thomas. "A Broken Region: The Persistent Failure of Integration Projects in the South Caucasus." *Europe-Asia Studies* 64.9 (2012): 1709-1723.
- "European External Action Service." *European Union*. Web. 28 Feb. 2014. <http://eeas.europa.eu/enp/about-us/index_en.htm>.
- "Georgia to Sell E-Government Innovation in 2014." *Valencia International*. <<http://valencia-international.com/georgia-sell-egovernment-innovation-2014/>>.
- Georgia wants to present house of justice project in Ukraine, says ambassador. (2013, Oct 09). *Interfax: Ukraine General Newswire*. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/1440609112?accountid=14771>
- Interview with Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development, Tbilisi, Georgia, February 2014.
- Interview with Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum, Tbilisi, Georgia, February 2014.
- Interview with Eurasian Partnership Foundation, Tbilisi, Georgia, February 2014.
- Interview with European Union Special Representative to Georgia, Tbilisi, Georgia, February 2014.
- Interview with Open Society Georgia Foundation, Tbilisi, Georgia, February 2014.
- Interview with Public Service Hall, Tbilisi, Georgia, February 2014.

Interview with Transparency International, Tbilisi, Georgia, February 2014.

Meyer, Karl E. "Icebergs in the Caucasus." *World Policy Journal* 18.2 (2001): 89-92.

Miller, Eric A. "Smelling the Roses: Eduard Shevardnadze's End and Georgia's Future." *Problems of Post-Communism* 51.2 (2004): 12-21.

"Open Government Partnership - Georgia." *Open Government Partnership*. Web. 26 Feb. 2014. <<http://www.opengovpartnership.org/country/georgia>>.

Orkodashvili, Mariam. "Higher Education Reforms in the Fight Against Corruption in Georgia." *Demokratizatsiya* 18.4 (2010): 357-74.

Papava, Vladimer. "Georgia's Macroeconomic Situation Before and After the Rose Revolution." *Problems of Economic Transition* 48.4 (2005): 8-17.

Papava, Vladimer. "The "Rosy" Mistakes of the IMF and World Bank in Georgia." *Problems of Economic Transition* 52.7 (2009): 44-55.

Papava, Vladimer. "Economic Achievements of Postrevolutionary Georgia." *Problems of Economic Transition* 56.2 (2013): 51-65.

Rostiashvili, Ketevan. "Higher Education in Transition." *European Education* 43.4 (2011): 26-44.

Schueth, Samuel. "Apparatus of Capture: Fiscal State Formation in the Republic of Georgia." *Political Geography* 31.3 (2012): 133-43.

Tatum, Jesse David. "Democratic Transition in Georgia: Post-Rose Revolution Internal Pressures on Leadership." *Caucasian Review of International Affairs* 3.2 (2009): 156-71.

"Work and Policy Areas." *The Bologna Process*. Web. 28 Feb. 2014. <<http://www.eua.be/eua-work-and-policy-area/building-the-european-higher-education-area/bologna-basics.aspx>>.

Book review: *Politics of Eugenics: Productionism, Population, and National Welfare*, by Alberto Spektorowski and Liza Ireni-Saban¹

By John Glad

In more ways than one their book is a remarkable, bellwether text to have come to us from Israeli scholars. (Spektorowski is a Senior Lecturer in Political Science at Tel Aviv University, and Saban is an Assistant Professor in the Lauder School of Government, Diplomacy and Strategy in Herzliya.) It is devoted largely to the biological interface of political science and economics. Although eugenics has been much discussed by political scientists, it has been largely avoided for over three decades by mainstream economists (except occasionally under the code phrase ‘human capital’), who studiously pretend not to notice the enormous, undeniable role played in economic processes by genetic diversity, or, for that matter, to speculate as to their past and/or future consequences for economic development.

If the Nineteenth Century posed the nurture-or-nature question, the Twentieth Century attempted to simultaneously preach the gospel of the former (Marx, Freud, Skinner) and that of the latter (Darwin, Spencer, Galton). The result has been an inherently self-contradictory social narrative. Plato, Thomas Hobbes, and Jacques Ellul, among others, were right: the human mind seems infinitely capable of simultaneously clinging to beliefs that are mutually exclusive, i.e. impossible to reconcile. Modern day Karl Roves have overthrown Rousseau.

While such so-called ‘hard sciences’ as mathematics and physics are free to follow where the evidence leads and encourage broad conceptualizations, this freedom has been lost in the social sciences – particularly when the topic is inter-group variance among humans. Thus, when

¹ 2013, Routledge, London and New York, 228 pages, ISBN: 978-0-415-81431—7 (hbk); ISBN: 978-0-203-74023-1 (ebk)

the entomologist Edward O. Wilson of Harvard University began writing about ants, it did not take his colleagues long to realize that the implications of his 'Social Biology' were in direct confrontation with that age's stress on egalitarian ideology. Having witnessed up close the route of the eugenics movement in the last quarter of the twentieth century, the Twenty-First Century has learned its lesson, making specific, narrowly technical studies the order of the day, and leaving questions of underlying generalization to lurk in the background.

Not last on the list of ideology-forming events was the distorted mirror held up to the eugenics movement by the Holocaust memorial movement. Totally disregarding the prominent role played by Jews in the eugenics movement long after the end of World War II, the media pounced upon biological determinism as an 'anti-Semitic' ideology of genocide.

Spektorowski and Saban see a 'historical continuity' between the 'old eugenics' and current reproductive and family planning subsidies and immigration policies, implying (actually, more than simply implying) that the distinction between 'mainline' and 'reformist' eugenics is specious. In other words, eugenics not only has not died away, it has now come out of concealment under the guise of family planning subsidies and selective immigration policies. They distinguish three basic types of 'welfare regimes': Liberal (America), Conservative (Germany, France, Israel, the Netherlands), and Social Democratic (Finland). America comes off as 'liberal' and Germany-France-Netherlands as 'conservative' in that America expects no eugenic *quid pro quo* in exchange for the welfare dole and has only recently introduced eugenic immigration policies hardly compatible with Emma Lazarus's words on the Statue of Liberty: "Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched

refuse of your teeming shore.” By contrast, ‘conservative’ states have become far more hard-nosed regarding immigrants and refugees.

If America became an integrationist, ‘inclusionary’ state after the overthrow, in the mid-1960s, of the eugenic legislation originally passed in the 1920s, Europeans and Israelis still cling to ethno-exclusionary visions and perceive themselves as ‘nations’ reluctant to participate in the global melting pot, even as they are compelled by below-replacement birth rates to import foreign labor.

On the political level Spektorowski and Saban maintain that the very idea of protecting a national culture, let alone a national stock, is problematic in democratic societies. And they go on to quote the ex-Zionist Tony Judt, who maintained that nationalism is passé in times of growing migrations.

Spektorowski and Saban point out two quite different motivations for the broad base of support still quietly enjoyed by eugenics: ‘productivism’ and national identity. Modern states tend to give precedence to the former, while Hitler stressed the latter. Social Democrats in Sweden and Denmark, and Laborists in Israel and Finland believed that a welfare society was sustainable only by increasing the number of productive individuals while reducing the number of people with limited work capacity. On the whole, the concepts of race and ‘productivism’ are presented in this book as working partly in opposition to each other, and partly in tandem. The authors derive the theoretical basis of their view of biopolitics from the French social theorist Michel Foucault’s concept of biopolitics. *Politics of Eugenics* presents an underlying eugenic strategy reemerging in ‘liberal,’ ‘democratic’ states seeking to preserve their ethnic identities while remaining competitive in the globalized economy: “What began as racial eugenics and

shifted into productive eugenics akin to national welfare societies, reappears nowadays guised under genetic progress, the base of biopolitics which slams bioethical discourse.”

The two authors touch briefly on the disagreements between the Mendelians and the biometricians during the early twentieth century – a tempest in a teapot from our point of view nowadays – but the discussion led this reader to muse as to whether the late Stephen Jay Gould’s insistence on ‘punctuated equilibrium’ was not simply rehashed Mendelianism.

The turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was marked by a fear of ‘degeneration’ and ‘decline.’ This was the recurrent theme of such disparate writers as Oswald Spengler, Thomas Mann, and Hermann Hesse. Spektorowski and Saban are entirely correct in pointing out that this concern was not a parochial conceit of early eugenicists, but that the topic retains its centrality in the Twenty-First Century. When all is said and done, the ultimate goal of modern medicine is to eliminate the mechanism that has created all life forms and ensures their continuing viability – natural selection.

Politics of Eugenics is an important, sophisticated, reality-based book that leaves behind popular mythology and deals with the nexus of science and ideology, of economics and politics. A sophisticated study, it can be highly recommended to a professional audience.