

**Twice a stranger: the mass expulsions that forged modern Greece and Turkey**, by Bruce Clark, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2009 [2006], xvii + 274 pp. + 3 maps, 14 illustrations (paperback), ISBN 13: 978-0-674-03222-4, ISBN 10: 0-674-03222-5

In *Twice a Stranger* Bruce Clark sets out on a journey through Europe and Asia to explore the effects of the Lausanne Treaty (1923) and the compulsory Greek–Turkish population exchange it mandated. Clark’s study is linked primarily to contemporary debates on partition as a solution to conflict (see Kaufmann; Kumar; Sambanis; Laitin; Kuperman; Downes; Habyarimana et al.). The author’s rationale appears to be that if one can demonstrate that the Lausanne project of ethnic engineering – often cited as a successful precedent in both theory and practice – was not a success, then the claims for revival of similar solutions in contemporary problems (Iraq, Ireland, Cyprus) would be delegitimized.

But Clark also has another goal in mind. Studying the 1923 population exchange becomes a window for our understanding of contemporary Turkish–Greek relations as well, in particular, the love–hate relationship that exists between the two countries. Such a study can help us account for the hostility we find in political speeches and school textbooks and the “profound yearning in their songs, novels and movies, to reconnect” (xvi). This is not just a book about the population exchange between Greece and Turkey so much as a history of Greece and Turkey narrated from the prism of the First World War and its consequences.

Clark is well suited to narrate this extraordinary population exchange and evaluate its implications. He is originally from Northern Ireland and reported on the Balkans for Reuters's before he took up his current post as the international security editor of *The Economist*. This background provides him with an intuitive understanding of the important role of religion in the formation of national identity. The latter understanding escapes many students of nationalism that associate nationality primarily with language or race.

The book comprises a preface, which provides a theoretical framework and justifies the selection of the case, an introduction, and 10 chapters. Clark organized the book in such a way that each chapter of diplomatic history is followed by a chapter drawing on memories of the exchanged and their descendants. This structure allows the reader to get a feel for the particular before embarking on another thick historical description.

The introduction is a historical narrative that provides the necessary background for the general reader. Despite the fact that some common misperceptions are reproduced (e.g. the characterization of the 1804 Serbian rebellion as a nationalist anti-Ottoman one instead of a rather loyalist – at least initially – rebellion against local Janissaries – known as the Dahis – that were defying the authority of the Sultan), Clark does a superb job of highlighting the counterfactuals and the possibilities of Greco-Turkish co-existence that certainly existed at the time.

Clark interviewed several survivors and their descendants in order to write the chapters focusing on the view from the ground. He also consulted primary and secondary sources such as memoirs, newspaper archives, and diplomatic records for the top-bottom chapters. A common and perhaps insurmountable problem with popular books such as this one is that their authors do not provide citations for their assertions. We are told, for example, that “There was a widespread Greek belief that a large and ‘docile’ population of Muslim peasants could serve as a helpful buffer against Bulgarian expansionism” (7) but the author does not back this up with evidence. To be sure, Clark's assertions are correct more often than not. Nevertheless, some citations would have made his case stronger. The work does distinguish itself from many mainstream accounts, however, by including a bibliography and an appendix on sources and methodology. There are also three maps and 14 pictures that add to the texture of the narrative.

Clark's argument avers closely to a constructivist understanding of nationalism. Modernity in South-East Europe has led to ethnic separation, not integration or multiculturalism. Clark describes how multinational empires gave way not to multinational democracies but ethnically homogeneous nation-states. According to Clark, this was the outcome of the flow of subversive liberal ideas, such as universal education, printed books available to all, a modern conception of liberty and democracy (6) and external influence which came from the rise of capitalism and the role of the Greeks and Jews in this process. But the reader is left with a few questions: was this an unavoidable outcome? What were the conditions that precipitated the collapse of the Ottoman Empire? Why didn't the same thing happen with the British or the French Empire at the time? These questions go unanswered.

Returning to the main motivation for this book, Clark emphasizes the pain of separation from ancestral homes, the silences in both countries with respect to their multi-ethnic, multicultural past, and the disrespect directed toward the mosques, churches and other edifices as evidence for the failure of the population exchange and the logic guiding the Lausanne Treaty. Clark also correctly distinguishes between the viewpoint of decision makers and those who were exchanged. What is missing, however, is the counterfactual argument. What would have happened if there had been no exchange? What would have been the alternative policies pursued by Greece and Turkey toward these

populations? As the author himself puts it: “To people who are fleeing persecution, a new country, however unfamiliar, is not simply an alien or hostile place, it is also a life-saving refuge” (4). It should be clear to the reader of *Twice a Stranger* that there are many different dimensions along which we can evaluate the population exchange: legal, humanitarian, ethical, and personal, to name just a few. Depending on which one(s) we choose to focus on, and whether we follow a state-centric or a people-centric analysis, we will reach different conclusions.

This is an important book. Its main contribution to the literature on the Greek–Turkish population exchange is the elegant way it weaves together traditional diplomatic history with the more unstable history of memory. Students of nationalism, ethnic conflict, and post-conflict reconstruction should read it. It can also serve as a useful text for those of us teaching classes on the Balkans.

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