

pastoral idyll, the down-to-earth ‘lick of salt’ for the goats and the narrator’s ‘I was ravished’ are juxtaposed without dissonance or irony. Similarly, in rendering demotic and dialect the translators give a sense of the rhythms and patterns of Greek by way of some internally consistent form of English that sounds well formed to a native speaker and is not too closely associated with any one region or community. Phonetic imitations of vernacular English risk sounding outlandish or patronizing: ‘An’ ee called me an’ all’ (‘Homesick’, translated by Leo Marshall).

Before the first volume of *The Boundless Garden* was published only twenty or so of Papadiamandis’ stories had been translated into English: twelve by Elizabeth Constantinides, three by Peter Constantine and the rest in ones and twos in periodicals and anthologies. Since then Denise Harvey’s Romiosyne Series has published translations of *The Murderess* and ‘Around the Lagoon’, but much of Papadiamandis’ work remains inaccessible to English readers. It would be good to have some of the other novels and novellas; the editor’s note to the first volume suggests that *The Rose-tinted Shores* and *The Watchman at the Quarantine Colony* (the latter often recommended in the Greek press during the early days of the Covid-19 epidemic) might one day appear.

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Alexander Kitroeff, *The Greeks and the Making of Modern Egypt*. Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2019. Pp 249
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The historiography of the tens of thousands of Greeks who settled in Egypt during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and who played such a significant role in the economic and social life of the country, has only attracted serious scholarly attention since the 1990s. Those seeking information on the subject, especially in English, will find it rather thinly represented in the recent bibliography on Middle Eastern history. For this reason, the American University in Cairo Press is to be commended for publishing this book.

Over the course of seven chapters and approximately two hundred pages, K convincingly demonstrates that Greeks contributed decisively to Egypt’s remarkable transformation from Late Ottoman backwater to the richest state in Africa. In so doing he corrects the dated assertion that the Greeks were a parasitic *comprador* bourgeoisie without deep roots in the country. K describes how Greeks were involved in numerous enduring innovations which transformed the Egyptian economy, particularly in the cotton and tobacco industries, but also in other sectors. He also provides details of the support which Greeks offered to Egyptians at several key

junctures in their struggle for independence. The evidence would seem to suggest that for the majority of Greeks who settled there, Egypt was a land of security and opportunity, and their relationship with the country was relatively untainted by colonial attitudes. This overriding impression remains, despite K's detailed examination of how certain sections of the Greek population exploited and sought to preserve the privileges to which they were entitled as citizens of a capitulatory country. The issue of privileges – and their abuse – is understandably contentious, but it should not be allowed to dominate the history of the Greek presence in Egypt, until two important questions have been answered in a satisfactory manner.

Firstly, who were the privileged Greeks? K touches upon this vexed question, but does not drive home the point that, after bilateral agreements concluded in 1890 and 1903, this group was composed only of those who held Greek citizenship, or that of another capitulatory power, and who could prove it with official documentation approved by the Egyptian authorities. The privileges did not apply to the many thousands of Greeks who were Ottoman subjects, stateless, or of disputed nationality. Secondly, how many Greeks were there in Egypt? K quotes figures from the Egyptian census of 1882 and those which followed at ten-year intervals starting in 1897. However, he does not always emphasise the distinction between privileged and non-privileged Greeks. He also reveals the uncertainty which surrounds these statistics when he mentions (p. 123) that there were 'around one hundred thousand' Greeks in Egypt on the eve of the Second World War. Likewise, the 2012 Al Jazeera documentary which K describes on pp. 212–3 estimates the number at 'about two hundred thousand' at the start of the twentieth century. Both figures exceed those in the censuses. It seems likely that from the late nineteenth century until the 1940s, the numbers fluctuated considerably due to transient migration from Greece, the Ottoman Empire, British-run Cyprus and the Italian-occupied Dodecanese. These shifting populations were difficult to capture and thus not accurately reflected in the decennial Egyptian censuses of 1897 to 1947.

K devotes two chapters to Greek cultural and social life in Egypt and its interplay with the cosmopolitan and Egyptian worlds which some believe existed in parallel. It is easy to assume that the Greeks moved in an exclusively Hellenocentric environment demarcated by their schools, churches, associations and sports clubs. However, only the wealthier classes maintained regular ties with Greece and Europe, and the poetry of Cavafy and the literary magazines of Alexandria had a limited audience even in their milieu. The vast majority of Greek Egyptians belonged to the middle, lower middle and working classes, and their interests and concerns diverged considerably from the *haute bourgeoisie* which controlled the communities. Most lived in districts where their neighbours included other Europeans, but also Arabs, Copts and Jews, and where close interaction and social osmosis were inevitable. The volumes of Stratis Tsirkas' trilogy *Drifting Cities* which are set in Alexandria and Cairo provide a vivid picture of this reality. They also reinforce the fact that everyday interaction between

Greeks and Egyptians, despite the occasional aberration, was on the whole positive and mutually beneficial, particularly as the twentieth century wore on.

K's discussion of the Greek response to the gradual decolonization of the Egyptian legal system and commercial world is illuminating. However, in grappling with the multifarious reasons for the Greek exodus from Egypt which started as a trickle in the 1930s and became a flood by the early 1960s, he has a hard act to follow in the form of Angelos Dalachanis' magisterial 2017 work on the subject. The reference to a 'forced departure' on the inside dust jacket of K's book is misleading. The Greeks of Egypt were never forced to depart, unlike British and French nationals and Egyptians of the Jewish faith.

It was somewhat surprising to discover that K's narrative breaks off rather abruptly after the exodus of the 1960s. The number of Greeks in Egypt remained above five figures well into the following decade, although it has dropped precipitately since then. One expected at least a few words about the Greeks who remained behind, their demographic and cultural characteristics, their economic activity, and their ongoing stewardship of the communal institutions founded by their predecessors. Some suggestions as to why their number continues to dwindle, despite almost complete social and linguistic integration, would have rounded out the story. That said, the history of the Greeks of Egypt has not previously been recounted so thoroughly in English, and in such an accessible form. This book has filled a significant gap in the secondary literature on the subject of ethnic minorities in the modern Middle East and will remain an important resource for the foreseeable future. One hopes it will also inspire closer study of the demography, social history and legacy of the Greek Egyptians.

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Gonda van Steen, *Adoption, Memory and the Cold War: Kid pro quo?* Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2019. Pp. 330, xx.
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How many pieces of research, works of art, inventions and discoveries, come about by chance? 'Oh, I've got some old family papers in a box in the attic' – 'That's an intriguing tune' – 'What an unusual juxtaposition of colours'... In the case of the material in this book, as the author recounts in the Introduction, the topic 'found her', starting with an email in August 2013 from 'Mike'. His mother was one of the daughters (at that time seven years old) of a man executed in Greece in 1952 for supposedly being a spy. She had been adopted in the USA in 1955. Mike had sent the email to Gonda Van Steen, then President of the Modern Greek Studies Association, hoping that she could help fill in details of this past, which, thanks to the internet, and contacts in Greece, she was able to do.