This book will be of interest to students of the Cold War because it examines the antecedents of the many population movements not only during the interwar period but also after World War II. The Turco-Greek population exchange was not the first exchange in the Balkans (a Greek-Bulgarian voluntary population exchange was signed in 1919, as discussed by Theodora Dragostinova in *Between Two Motherlands: Nationality and Emigration among the Greeks of Bulgaria, 1900-1949*, published by Cornell University Press in 2011), but because of the large scale of the Greek-Turkish exchange—resulting in more than a million refugees in Greece and half a million in Turkey—its obligatory character, and its relatively organized nature, it has become a reference point for the “transfer of large ethno-religious groups by means of which Turkey—its obligatory character, and its relatively organized nature, it has become a reference point for the “transfer of large ethno-religious groups by means of which minority were forcibly uprooted under the aegis of international law to contribute, in turn, to the reconstitution of ethnically ‘pure’ homogeneous states” (p. 10). Many of the examples that are discussed, however, are hardly comparable to the Turco-Greek population exchange and instead constitute instances of disorderly exoduses or unilateral ethnic cleansing.

Onur Yıldırım’s motivation for writing *Diplomacy and Displacement* appears to be his dissatisfaction with most of the interwar, post–World War II, and contemporary literature on the subject, which he believes has either idealized the 1920s Turco-Greek population exchange at the international level or narrated it in a way that serves nationalistic purposes at home. The only literature that puts some of Yıldırım’s concerns in relief comes from anthropologists, such as Renée Hirschon’s *Heirs of the Greek Catastrophe: The Social Life of Asia Minor Refugees in Piraeus* (New York: Berghahn, 1988), and from refugee studies scholars who problematize population exchange and request the input of the subjects involved in the actual process rather than just a state’s diplomatic/political elites. However, although the “voice of refugees” (p. 20) is an important lens from a human perspective, it is not necessarily the only lens through which to evaluate population exchanges. For example, in a paper presented at a conference in Istanbul in November 2013 marking the 90th anniversary of the population exchange, George Th. Mavrogordatos argued that in the absence of this exchange the result would most likely have been the “unilateral expulsion of Greek populations.” Not surprisingly, the lens through which we approach a historical event determines the conclusions we draw.

Yıldırım rightly concludes that both countries pursued an obligatory population exchange to address national security threats and achieve ethnic homogenization. To understand this choice, however, we need to place the event into the larger context of the spread of nationalist ideology, the delegitimization of alien rule of nationalized peoples, and the homogenization imperative that captured the imagination of most rulers of existing nation-states and aspiring stateless nationalist movements. In the
context of the fluid borders and international competition in the Balkans at the time, nationalist agitation by neighboring and external powers in an attempt to weaken enemies was common, and the response to this process was nation-building aiming at inoculating the population, as I discuss in The Politics of Nation-Building: Making Co-Nationals, Refugees, and Minorities (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012). Within such a context, the exchange of populations was one of many steps individual leaders could rely on to render the borders of the state congruent with those of the nation, the most critical element of nationalist ideology. The population exchange enabled Greece and Turkey to turn what they perceived as enemy-backed, non-core groups into refugees.

Yıldırım is also dissatisfied with the imbalance in favor of the Greek case in the historiography, and he sees his study as a necessary corrective. For a variety of reasons, including nationalist ideology, the Turkish literature either neglects the Muslim refugees or suggests that their integration was without problems. This imbalance in the literature may, however, be partly because refugees formed a much smaller percentage of the total population in Turkey than in Greece—5 percent versus 25 percent.

The book comprises an introduction, which provides a theoretical framework and discusses the contribution of yet another history of the population exchange, and two main parts, titled “Diplomacy” and “Displacement.” Within each part, Yıldırım gives equal emphasis to the Greek and the Turkish sides of the story. He takes the reader from the diplomatic negotiations that produced the Exchange Convention at Lausanne to the conclusion of its implementation in 1933. The book is well written, although accents are absent in the Greek titles and there are several problems in the Greek quotations and terms as well as in the bibliography. Yıldırım refers to the Karamanlides as “non-Hellenic Greeks” (p. 69) when he probably means “non-Hellenic Orthodox Christians” or maybe “Turkish-speaking Orthodox Christians.”

Building on the works of Stephen P. Ladas, The Exchange of Minorities: Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey (New York: MacMillan, 1932), and Dimitri Pentzopoulos, The Balkan Exchange of Minorities and Its Impact on Greece (Paris: Mouton, 1962), both of whom used primarily European sources instead of Greek or Turkish, Yıldırım’s narrative is based on both Greek and Turkish primary sources. For the Greek side, he relies on documents from the Historical Archives of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For the Turkish side, he relies on documents from the Turkish Republican Archives as well as the minutes of the Turkish Grand National Assembly.

The main contribution of the book is the new information it provides on the Turkish side of the story. Despite Yıldırım’s efforts, we are still missing on the Turkish side a book equivalent to Mavrogordatos’s Stillborn Republic: Social Coalitions and Party Strategies in Greece, 1922–1936 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983) —one that would focus on the sociopolitical and economic consequences of the population exchange within Turkish society. Alongside other recent works on the topic, including Konstantinos Tsitselikis, ed., ΕΛΗΝΟΤΟΥΡΚΙΚΗ ΣΥΓΚΡΟΝΙΑΣΗ [The Greek-Turkish exchange of Populations: Aspects of a National Conflict] (Athens: Kritiki, 2009);
Bruce Clark, *Twice a Stranger: How Mass Expulsion Forged Modern Greece and Turkey* (London: Granta, 2007); and Elisabeth Kontogiorgi, *Population Exchange in Greek Macedonia: The Rural Settlement of Refugees 1922–1930* (Oxford, UK: The Clarendon Press, 2006), Yıldırım’s *Diplomacy and Displacement* is an important work. His attempt to challenge the perception of this population exchange as a success, based on the human suffering that it caused, is given prominence throughout the text. But such a question cannot get resolved in a historical volume like this one.