
Wandering Greeks is for a broad readership, and bowls plenty of modern comparisons and parallels into its study of the ancient Greek diaspora (between about 700 and 325 BC), further echoed in most of the chapter titles and many of the headings within them: the eleven chapters include ‘The Settler’, ‘The Deportee’, ‘The Evacuee’, ‘The Asylum-Seeker’, ‘The Fugitive’, ‘The Economic Migrant’, ‘The Itinerant’ and ‘Repatriation’. The author is an ancient historian, British, long-domiciled in the United States, and of a certain age, with some of the preoccupations of all of these aspects of his own experience carried lightly through the text: J.E. Powell appears not for his edition of Herodotus but as Enoch the British politician (in the context of his ‘Rivers of Blood’ speech of 1968 on migration) in a discussion of ancient and modern responses to migration within the first chapter. Chapter 1 includes brief résumés of the causes of population displacement as too of the ‘silence’ of the available sources. Next, a discussion of the centrality of wandering to the ‘experience’ of being Greek (reflected in Homer, poetry, tragedy, oratory, and myth and legend).

As the chapter titles suggest, there were many and varied reasons for the ancient Greeks to go forth, some simple, others complex and overlapping. Even within the commonly deployed category of colonization, it has long been accepted that there were various ‘push’ and various ‘pull’ factors, and isolating them in particular instances is fraught with uncertainty, disagreement and the silence of sources. Chapter 3, ‘The Settler’, eschews the term colonization in favor of ‘settlement abroad’ – I have myself written on the terminological problems and confusions (G.R. Tsetskhladze, ‘Revisiting Ancient Greek Colonisation’, in G.R. Tsetskhladze (ed.), Greek Colonisation. An Account of Greek Colonies and other Settlements Overseas, vol. 1, Leiden, (2006) xxiii–lxxiii; G.R. Tsetskhladze and J.F. Hargrave, ‘Colonisation from Antiquity to Modern Times: Comparisons and Contrasts’, Ancient West and East 10 (2011) 161–82), as have many others, but I believe that colonization is still a useful shorthand (indeed better than any other available), whereas Garland seems too enthralled by Robin Osborne’s disdain for it. Nevertheless, he examines the why, the where and the who: the role of Apollo, the size and composition of a settlement (apoikia, emporion?), the oikist, identifying a site, the pioneers (an unconscious reference to Rhodesia?), departure, nostalgia, setbacks and failures (Jamestown, VA offered as a parallel), and Athenian and Alexandrian postscripts, but also relations between colonists and locals (‘settlers and indigenous populations’).

‘The Portable Polis’ focuses on relocation, actual, planned or threatened: in early Greek history, of the Phocaeans, of the Ionians in the West, of the Athenians, in the Peloponnese, by Dionysius I of Syracuse (paired with Timoleon’s revival of Syracuse); and also synoecism (Olynthus, Halicarnassus).
To give a flavor: ‘The Deportee’ covers stasis, surviving as a deportee, deportations by Sicilian tyrants, by the Thirty Tyrants, multiply during the Peloponnesian War (Epidamnus, Aegina, Plataea, Megara, etc.), treatment of prisoners of war, and so forth; ‘The Evacuee’ considers logistics and the evacuations of Attica before Salamis and on the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War, and of cities in Sicily during the Punic Wars; and ‘The Fugitive’ examines literature, ostracism, ‘high-profile’ figures and runaway slaves. ‘The Asylum Seeker’ (obligation, qualification, supplication, politics, treatment, xenia and proxenia), ‘The Economic Migrant’ (why, Metic status, and numbers in Athens, migrant workers, prejudice) and ‘The Itinerant’ (Archaic, Classical, trader, pirate, mercenary, etc.) are light on modern comparison, as is ‘Repatriation’, where more might actually have been made, especially in respect of ‘mass enforced repatriation’. Athens is recognized as the exception that tests many a rule.

The footnotes are sparse and explanatory, text references are predominantly to ancient sources. The text itself, a bare (but rich) 200 pages, is followed by two dozen questions that Garland feels are the most compelling, yet which are unanswered/unanswerable for lack of evidence. The remainder of the book contains ‘Further Reading’, treated section by section within chapters; five appendices, extremely useful to students and general readers alike – catalogues of Athenian cleruchies and colonies, of deportees, of exiles, and of the enslaved, but also a lively short essay on ‘The Terminology of Diaspora’, where ‘The contemporary debate about migration is bedeviled by semantic imprecision… the difficulties that beset the study of migration in antiquity are even greater [for similar reasons]’ (p. 239), which extends to some observations on colonization and the terminological confusions and conflations between ancient and modern, an interest of mine (see above re Chapter 3); plus chronology, glossary, bibliography (very few of those abbreviations that both mystify and exclude the lay reader), and four indexes.

I hope that I have been unlucky but, checking references to my own works in the bibliography, Tsetskhadze 2006 (mentioned above) is bundled into my edited volume of the same year rather than cited for itself (unlike, for example, Domínguez 2006 in the same volume), Tsetskhadze 1998 (cited and quoted on pp. 49 and 214) does not appear at all, Tsetskhadze and De Angelis 1994 has the wrong publisher in the wrong country, and ‘colonisation’ in two of the titles has become ‘colonization’. A bit disappointing from a major academic publisher (Princeton), but these are minor blemishes to an interesting and worthwhile work that overcomes some of my own disinclination to make explicit comparisons between antiquity and the modern world and which deftly handles this broad topic.

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