

into the subject, and the plain language of the book appeals to a wider audience interested in international relations.

Endnotes

1. Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, (Read-

ing: Addison-Wesley, 1979), p. 72.

2. David A. Lake, Lisa L. Martin, and Thomas Risse, "Challenges to the Liberal Order: Reflections on International Organization," *International Organization*, Vol. 75, No. 2 (2021), pp. 225-257.

3. Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1987).

The Political and Economic History of North Cyprus: A Discordant Polity

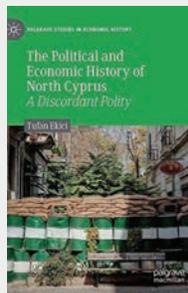
By Tufan Ekici

Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019, 283 pages, £99.99, ISBN: 9783030134785

Reviewed by İsmail Yazıcı, Bilkent University

In *The Political and Economic History of North Cyprus: A Discordant Polity*, Tufan Ekici elaborately examines the historical evolution and economic development of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Although it is a daunting task to write the first book-length economic history of Northern Cyprus due to pervasive scholarly disinterest in an internationally unrecognized state and the lack of related data, the author skillfully provides a comprehensive account of Turkish Cypriot governance and political economy in the TRNC since 1974. Throughout the book, Ekici uses official economic data released by the departments and offices of the TRNC, paying particular attention to the reliability and quality of the data. The use of parliamentary proceedings enriches the quality of the analysis.

This book is made up of nine chapters, including an introduction and conclusion. Chapter 2 presents several theoretical approaches and conceptual vocabulary terms, including *de jure* and *de facto* states, clientelism, and rent-



ierism, to make readers familiar with the political and institutional frameworks in place in the TRNC. Chapter 3 introduces the economic and institutional foundations of Turkish Cypriot governance. Ekici gives a detailed account of the history of the key political parties in the country while demonstrating

that the electoral system in Northern Cyprus was established on “shaky foundations” (p. 63). He argues that the Law for Housing, Allocation, and Property of Equal Value was the sign of the beginning of rentierism and clientelism in Northern Cyprus, which allowed both right-wing and left-wing parties to take advantage of this situation to gain political power. In Chapter 4, Ekici continues with a comparison of the economic developments between the north and south, and Turkey’s relationship with the TRNC. He argues that while Southern Cyprus quickly took appropriate measures to recover its unstable post-division economy, the politicians in Northern Cyprus hindered healthy economic development due to the “distributive rentier politics of clientelism” (p. 102). The spoils of war and

Turkey's financial aid were largely used for rentierism and political clientelism, which resulted in an unsustainable and aid-dependent economy.

Chapters 5 and 6 delve into the labor market and social security system in the TRNC. According to the author, public employment has evolved into a heavy financial burden on the government as a consequence of the clientelist policies of the post-1974 era. Past governments failed to create an efficient working system for public services, and the private sector did not develop significantly until the 2000s; thus, its impact on overall employment has been limited. Furthermore, the inefficient and unsustainable foundations of the social security and retirement laws coupled with the long history of poor governance aggravated the financial condition of the country. Ekici points out that past governments used the money that had accumulated in the Social Insurance Fund and Provident Fund for clientelist purposes, including giving credit to semi-controlled state enterprises, while the state failed to pay its required contributions to the social security system.

The seventh chapter deals with the historical development of the state economic enterprises (SEE) and the performance of the governments in the management of these enterprises. Ekici offers a detailed history of some of the biggest SEEs in the TRNC by using empirical data to quantify their economic performance. He concludes that politicians saw these enterprises as employment providers for their prospective voters and overlooked the business development of the SEEs. The mismanagement of these enterprises and the constant intervention of the governments into the decision-making process paved the way for severe economic failures.

The eighth chapter examines the development of key private sectors, agriculture, education, and tourism in northern Cyprus. Private sector business was primarily composed of small and medium-sized enterprises that remained un-institutionalized, unprofessional, and, to a significant extent, informal. In the financial sector, the Central Bank lacks institutional independence due to direct appointments from Turkey, while the Development Bank, which was supposed to foster the growth of the private sector, fell into the hands of clientelistic and rent-seeking politicians.

Each chapter of the book deals with a specific aspect of the economic development of the TRNC. In the final chapter, Ekici persuasively concludes that it is the lack of development of institutions that led to the different growth trajectories between the northern and southern parts of the island "separated by a border with a similar culture, traditions, natural resources, human/physical capital, and financial aid" (p. 257). The responsibility for these discordant policies falls upon the corrupt political parties, Turkey's disinterest in the development of the North Cyprus economy, and the Cypriots who contributed to strengthening the status-quo by acting in their own interest without considering the long term.

The major success of the book comes from its masterful interpretation of limited empirical data through a meticulous analysis of the political economy of northern Cyprus. The author's careful study of parliamentary proceedings discloses new significant data regarding the North Cyprus economy. The author, throughout the book, deliberately adopts a Cypriot-centric stance. In many respects, Ekici's insider understanding of Cypriot culture allows readers to untangle the roots of north Cyprus's chronic political-

economic problems. His personal experiences enrich the narrative of the book. Nevertheless, the absence of other perspectives sometimes limits his analysis. For instance, the debate regarding colonialism and neo-colonialism remains ambiguous in the context of the status of the TRNC. The book does not address the broader literature and Ekici fails to identify the difference between lack of self-governance and colonial rule. Although the author considers the arrest of a Turkish celebrity in North Cyprus upon the request of Turkish officials as a sign of colonialism, it is quite difficult to make such a deduction with-

out consulting the relevant literature about colonialism.

The Political and Economic History of North Cyprus: A Discordant Polity provides the reader with a comprehensive analysis of the “discordant” economic development of northern Cyprus. It is an invaluable contribution to Cyprus studies and an essential book for an introduction to the political economy of the TRNC. It could be a handbook for those studying the politics of Cyprus as well as those interested in the economic relations between Turkey and North Cyprus.

The Liberal International Theory Tradition in Europe

Edited by Knud Erik Jørgensen

Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Pivot, 2021, 155 pages, \$44.96, ISBN: 9783030526429

Reviewed by Fadi Zatari, Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University

International Relations (IR) Theory as a discipline is characterized by substantial liberal structures and features. *The Liberal International Theory Tradition in Europe* covers one hundred years of liberal IR theorizing debates. Despite frequent criticism against the liberal theory tradition, the authors believe this tradition has rarely received sufficient consideration. Thus, the book attempts to demonstrate that liberal international theory has a rich theoretical tradition that often goes unrecognized. The edited volume aims to contest conventional wisdom about the classical liberal tradition; it contains nine scholarly chapters that scrutinize how the liberal IR tradition developed in Europe.

In the first chapter, titled “Introduction: The



Liberal International Theory Tradition in Context,” Knud Erik Jørgensen locates the liberal tradition in the discipline of IR and political thought, aspiring to construct associations between disciplinary, theoretical, and intercultural history. He argues that to study the liberal international theory tradition in Europe, the times, spaces, and political-institutional culture in which it developed and flourished are substance to IR theorists; thus, scrutinizing this topic necessitates a systematic and critical examination of its significant terms and a clear identification of its time and place. Jørgensen outlines the research agenda of the book and proposes three correlating axes: liberalism, internationalism, and theory. For him, the agenda of this volume is to use a historical perspective to connect what ap-

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