

The Atlas introduces Transylvania with two physical maps on facing pages, one with current Romanian place names, the other with the historical Hungarian place names (14–15). This is followed by 14 maps which summarize the fate of Transylvania within the context of the fluid first thousand years of tracable history. From this point on the Atlas focuses on the settlement of the region and its demographic profile (Maps 16, 19, 20–23, 27, 30, 34, 61, 79, 93, 95, 106–107), its main economic features, and the religious and cultural evolution of its inhabitants as part of the Hungarian domains until 1920, and as part of Romania since then. I was particularly interested in those maps that dealt with the educational and cultural evolution (Maps 37–38, 62, 64, 71–72, 88) of the region and particularly maps 93–95 which dealt with the region's 20th century ethnic profile and the treatment of the Hungarian community in the interwar period.

This compilation of maps and documentation is supported by a place name and personal name index (240–250) and a fine collection of 149 sources (234–239) and an essay that effectively presents the objectives and methods of the Atlas. However, it could have used a general presentation of the symbols used as a preface to the maps, thus supplementing the specific symbols used for the individual maps. One other criticism I have is that the term “Romanian” is used throughout even for periods before the 19th century for a people that were referred to as “Vlachs” or “Wallachians” prior to that century. Two other minor points, one factual, one stylistic, that need correction are the statement that “Unitarianism” became an “accepted religion” in 1571 rather than in 1568 when Europe's first Edict of Toleration was issued by the Diet of Torda (108, map 48). The second is the error that Ottoman troops “depraved” rather than “deprived” Prince Rákóczi I of his Wallachian and Moldavian vassals (124).

Both atlases are masterpieces of the printing and publishing trade. The quality of the paper is a heavy 170 gram, matt velure, on which the print is attractive, clear, and a refined read. (Only the Index print would have deserved some enlargement!) Both volumes are a pleasure to hold and peruse. Méry Ratio deserves credit for producing books that are physically attractive. I highly recommend both these volumes for all quality libraries, but particularly to those university libraries which have institutes or departments that focus on the fate of minorities or have a regional focus that includes Europe or the former Soviet Empire and the former Ottoman Empire. They are a magnificent achievement and these words are not used lightly.

Andrew Ludanyi 

Emeritus Professor of Political Studies and History

Ohio Northern University

a-ludanyi@onu.edu

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Armenia and Azerbaijan: Anatomy of a Rivalry, by Laurence Broers, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2021, pp., xv + 400pp. £95.00 (hardcover), ISBN 9781474450522, £24.99 (paperback), ISBN 9781474450539.

This book seeks to explain how the ethnic conflict which erupted in the late 1980s became the basis for an enduring rivalry between Armenia and Azerbaijan. By utilizing the concepts of geopolitical culture, Broers constructs a sophisticated political, military, and cultural ecosystem to contextualize the persistent rivalry between the two neighbors. In the introduction, the author differentiates the Karabakh situation from other post-Soviet conflicts. After identifying six distinctive features of the conflict, Broers presents it as an “enduring rivalry” of Armenia and Azerbaijan. By geopolitical culture, Broers means the way that officials, societal actors, and media portray “their state's place, origin, ideals, and allegiance in a world of states” (9). This is not only about a contest over territories but also how two nations define their sense of home as well as their political identity.

The nine-chapter study covers almost all domestic and international factors that contribute to this ecosystem that perpetuates the conflict. The first three chapters explore the historical evolution of the conflict by examining the 1988 decision of the Karabakh Autonomous Region, which was inhabited mostly by Armenians, to separate from Azerbaijan and join neighboring Armenia, during the final years of the Soviet system. This secession triggered the conflict between the two nations, and communal violence quickly transformed into an inter-state war just after the collapse of the Soviet Union. In the second chapter, Broers explains how the conflict helped both sides to redefine the meaning of borders and the way in which each community defined the other in order to constitute their own national identity. The third chapter explores the attempt on both sides to historicize the conflict by returning to the eleventh century in a discussion about imagined identities and the differences sharpened as a result of the contemporary conflict. Although Broers seeks to balance the view by offering parallels regarding both sides, this ends up mixing the implications of the victim and victimizer. Thus, he ignores the lasting effects of the defeat, humiliation, and massacres associated with Azerbaijanis as they influenced constructing a culture of victimization.

The second part of the book makes an important theoretical contribution by focusing on the refugees (Chapter 4) and the way the issue has kept the conflict fresh in the memories of the general public and how it reminds the government continuously about what was lost as a result of the conflict. Even though Broers stops short in fully exploring the impact of the expulsion of 800,000 Azerbaijanis, the memories of the refugees served to embolden sentiments of victim-based Azerbaijani nationalism. In Chapter 5, Broers examines the institutionalization of post-conflict governments in Azerbaijan and Armenia. The conflict led to the stable authoritarian regime in Azerbaijan and political instability and political factionalism in Armenia. He aptly sums up the situation by arguing that the political elite “use the discourse of security and external threat to marginalise and silent dissent” (175) in each society. Moreover, both sides used the conflict to prevent democratization and the institutionalization of a civil society. Yet, the author ignores explaining the deep wounds the conflict has inflicted on the Azerbaijani national identity. The remaining chapters examine geopolitical asymmetry and Russia’s role. Broers offers a nuanced analysis of the Russian role. The conflict has provided a golden opportunity for Russia to maintain its regional power position in the Caucasus. Instead of attempting to resolve the conflict, Russia used the conflict for the extended purpose of first negotiating a security treaty with Armenia and then as the rationale for deploying its troops in areas along the borders shared with Armenia’s Turkish neighbors. Yet, Russia has been the main military supplier to Azerbaijan, which has fed Armenian fears of the Turks. It is this strategy that has allowed Russia to remain a hegemon of the Caucasus, as it perceives its role.

In Chapter 8, he examines the nature and functions of the unrecognized self-declared Armenian state of Karabakh. The Armenian side tried to defend the occupation of the Karabakh on the basis of the principle of self-determination (that is, each ethnic group has the right to determine its future in terms of becoming an independent state or deciding to unify with its co-ethnic nation-state). This argument was advanced after the ethnic cleansing of more than 800,000 Azerbaijanis from and around Karabakh. Azerbaijan insisted on the principle of territorial integrity and recognition of the cultural and political rights of the Armenians as an autonomous unit within the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. The last chapter examines the failed diplomatic negotiations and the author predicts the conflict will continue with little hope of lasting change in outcome.

The main problem of the book is the author’s attempt to establish parallelism and balance by constantly comparing shortcomings of both sides. He claims that the public denies the suffering of the other side and they are locked into “mutual denialism” (119). For instance, Broers claim that the two sides have the same framework of denying the claims of the other side and “entrapping Armenians and Azerbaijanis in mirror images of each other.” He sums up the rigid perspectives of Armenians and Azerbaijanis in terms of two competing and conflicting narratives as “augmented Armenia” and “wide Azerbaijanism” (114). By “augmented Armenia,” he means how Armenians regard the Karabakh, along with the occupied regions, as an indivisible part of Armenia. This

conquest helped to redefine a more belligerent form of Armenian nationalism, which incorporated entire territories as the new home of Armenians. Rather than questioning this transformation in Armenian nationalism and its sense of home which extends to the occupied Azerbaijani territories, Broers fails to problematize the Armenian identity, political discourses, and claims of new frontiers. It was this mentality that prevented negotiations from being productive.

In order to establish parallelism, Broers claims that the Azerbaijani side, in opposition to Armenian expansionism, developed “wide Azerbaijanism.” Although under the humiliating conditions of the defeat and subsequent expulsion, some Azerbaijani leaders used the rhetoric signifying greater Azerbaijan, but this view never became popular and Azerbaijan never used force to realize this dream, as did Armenia. Again, the book’s one area of weakness is its constant attempt to position parallelism as an objective analysis. This attempt at creating two bad-fellows fails to differentiate the conqueror from the conquered, victim from victimizer, and thus fails to understand the collective trauma the Azerbaijani society has experienced. Despite this shortcoming, Broers’ book is one of the best discussing the political evolution of the Karabakh conflict and it should be read by anyone who is interested in conflicts that become dormant or frozen.

Hakan Yavuz
The University of Utah, USA
hakan.yavuz@poli-sci.utah.edu
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