

also find of much interest Mr. Erkin's story of the subsequent Soviet-German pressures relative to the general Turkish position in the war, and the problem of the Straits. Of equal interest is the account, from the Turkish viewpoint, of the pressures to bring Turkey into the war on the part of the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union, a matter concerning which there will be differences of view, in which the United States was not much interested, in view of its concentration on Operation OVERLORD. Similarly, Mr. Erkin's account of the crisis in Soviet-Turkish relations, when the Soviet Union demanded the cession of the Kars-Ardahan area of Eastern Anatolia and control of the Turkish Straits, is of compelling interest.

Mr. Erkin has added to our knowledge in all the matters with which he deals, and he adds the personal touch to his knowledge. He holds that the Montreux Convention, to this day, perhaps with technical changes to meet the needs of changing time and circumstance, provides the basic solutions to the old problems of freedom of the Straits and Turkish security, and he insists on the highly strategic character of the area, vital to the security of the Turkish Republic. He has no illusions as to the enduring character of Imperial Russian and Soviet ambitions, but hopes for a better world in which peaceful adjustments may be made. He is also firmly committed to Turkish ties with NATO and the United States and attachment to the West. His book, which should take its place among the outstanding works on the subject, should be widely read and pondered by all students of the problem of the Turkish Straits and of the relations between Turkey and the Soviet Union.

The American University
Washington D.C.

HARRY N. HOWARD

I. Deter, *Das neugriechische Volkslied*, Munich, Ernst Heimeran Verlag, 1968. Pp. 100.

This a book written by a non-specialist with non-specialist readers in mind, and displaying great affection for its subject, the Greek folk-song. In a brief introduction the author first sets out the framework of her study. Two parallel but quite independent streams, she points out, run through the long history of the Greek language from the period of

late antiquity up to the present day : the one, archaic in its tendencies and therefore artificial, served the highbrow and erudite circles; the other, more natural and realistic, became the spoken language of the people and of the literature they were to produce. The finest product of this popular literature is undoubtedly the folksong, and it is unfortunate that this centuries-old tradition of popular literature is gradually, but unmistakable, dying out under the pressure of the ever-expanding mass media of communication and entertainment of today. It still survives precariously in the country districts and especially in the islands of Greece, but in the cities it has been largely replaced by the contemporary so-called λαϊκά τραγούδια.

The main portion of her book is divided into six chapters : The first treats the general characteristics of the Greek folksong (language, metrical forms, technique). Here the author, in her endeavour to explain various rare and obsolete words (γλωτταί) speaks about "einen mündlich überlieferten Text ohne die geringste Änderung" (p. 12). But this view, however, true in this particular case, may give a misleading picture of the wide confusion in the oral transmission of the folksong that is the result of weak memory and deliberate changes or adaptations.

In the subsequent chapters (chapters II-VI) five important groups of folksongs are outlined and discussed : the acritic songs (pp. 22-34), the narrative songs or "paralogs" (pp. 35-47), the klephtic songs (pp. 48-60), the songs about life abroad (pp. 61-68), and the songs of death and the underworld (pp. 69-76). The exclusion from the book of some other important groups of folksongs, such as the historical songs, the dirges or "moirologia," the love-songs, the lullabies, etc., is somewhat mystifying and their omission undoubtedly constitutes one of the book's main weak-points. Both the acritic and the klephtic songs are, of course, mainly of a historical character, yet there are numerous other historical songs which cannot be classified either as acritic or klephtic, and which are of great significance, not so much because they inform us about certain historical events, but because they depict how the people's soul saw them and felt about them. As for the "moirologia," it is true that the author makes occasional references to them in speaking about the other groups of songs (the klephtic songs, the songs about life abroad, and especially the songs of death and the underworld), since none of these groups is strictly confined to its own particular sphere and there are many songs that are of a mixed character.

In the chapter about the acritic songs, she gives a brief account

of their historical background and makes some reference to the still unsettled question of the relationship between the acritic songs and the epic of Digenes Acritas. Finally, she presents some of the finest songs of this group (eg. "The Son of Armouris," "The Son of Andronicos," "The Castle of the beautiful maiden," etc.). Regarding the possible identification of some acritic songs with certain historical personages of the IXth to XIth centuries, she shows — quite rightly — some reservation, although she is familiar with Gregoire's endeavours in that field: "Man vermutet hinter den Namen historische Persönlichkeiten; doch lässt sich die Identität mit ihnen nicht ohne weiteres nachweisen" (p. 25). But she is not correct in claiming that songs of the acritic cycle are not to be found in the Peloponnese.

The origine of the "paraloges" are explained in accordance with the well-known views of St. Kyriakides, who linked them with the pantomime performances of late antiquity. Five narrative songs — indeed, the best of their kind — are further presented with interesting comments: "Homecoming," "The Murderess Mother," "The Bridge of Arta," "Lio-genniti," and "The Return of the Dead Brother."

A short and precise historical account also introduces the chapter about the klephtic songs, where the origin and nature of the klephts and armatoli are discussed. The period of their activities, however, is incorrectly stated as being the 18th and 19th centuries, instead of the 17th and 18th centuries. The War of Independence that began in 1821 marks the end of this period. Fauriel's romantic views about the blind singers are, rather surprisingly, reiterated when the writer discusses the composers of the klephtic songs. It is clear now that there was a broader participation in the composition of the klephtic songs. First came the klephts themselves, and then the professional singers (not necessarily blind), the women mourners, etc. (see: M. Vitti, "Stile e Autori dei Canti Cleftici" in *Lares* 24, 1958, 1 f.).

In the final chapter, dealing with the songs of death and of the underworld, where the dominant figure is Charos, a personification of death itself, there is an interesting illustration of how pagan popular Greek conceptions of death have survived, largely unmodified, down to the present time.

J. Deter had been successful in writing a useful book which, I have no doubt, will be much appreciated by readers acquainted with the German language.