

Walter Ansel, *Hitler and the Middle Sea*, Durham, N.C., Duke University Press, 1972, Illustrated, Maps, Charts, pp. 514.

Readers of Admiral's Ansel's *Hitler Confronts England* (Durham, 1962) will find this recent companion volume of comparable value. Based on German wartime documents and interviews with former German officers, the book charts the development of German military strategy from the end of the battle of Britain to the invasion of Russia. Admiral Ansel holds that Hitler made a decisive error by refusing to follow the advice of his military professionals who advocated a Mediterranean strategy rather than an attack on the Soviet Union as the preferred means of ending the war in 1940-1941. This view is not new, but the author provides the most complete account in English of how Jodl, Halder (to whom the book is dedicated), Brauchitsch, and Raeder tried but failed to persuade Hitler to adopt a Mediterranean strategy in the summer and fall of 1940. Following this account of grand strategy, the author shifts his focus to the events following Mussolini's debacle in Greece and devotes the largest portion of the study, fourteen of twenty-six chapters, to a detailed history of the battle for Crete.

Admiral Ansel gives a good account of the inability of the Germans and Italians to coordinate their plans for the Balkans and Mediterranean. The author notes that Hitler knew in advance of Mussolini's plan to invade Greece but did not consider the issue crucial to Nazi goals. Only after Mussolini's failure and the emergence of a British threat to return to the continent did he become alarmed and intervene on the side of Italians. According to Ansel, the Italian invasion in 1940 dashed the hopes of the professionals for a German commitment to a Mediterranean strategy as Hitler resolved to merely secure his southern flank in Balkans before making his major effort in attacking Russia in the spring of 1941. By viewing these events from a German perspective, Ansel makes no contribution toward resolving the controversy surrounding the Greek capitulation in April 1941.

Although Crete is the major focus of the study, the chapters on grand strategy are the more interesting and significant; however, they do not replace Andreas Hillgruber's military and political study, *Hitlers Strategie* (Frankfurt am Main, 1965). In regard to the detailing of the battle for Crete, the book complements but does not surpass Ian MacDonald Stewart's *The Struggle for Crete* (London, 1966). Neither the Hillgruber nor the Stewart book is cited in Ansel's bibliography.

The style is clear and the narrative is complemented by a large number of photographs, maps, charts, but Ansel overuses the exclamation mark as a means of conveying drama. The study is well documented, and, though there is little to disagree with the author's overall conclusions, one must resist his statement that the German Army «had been brainwashed into accepting Barbarossa's preventive virtues».

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Paul C. Helmreich, *From Paris to Sèvres: The Partition of the Ottoman Empire at the Peace Conference of 1919-1920*, Columbus, Ohio, The Ohio State University Press, 1974, pp. 376.

As the author tells us at the outset of his impressive study, of the five treaties negotiated in and around Paris during 1910-1920 at the end of the so-called First World War, the one which took the longest time was that with the Ottoman Empire — and it proved abortive.