

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.

In fact, the negotiations leading to the Treaty of Sèvres involved not merely the drafting of the terms of peace with the Ottoman Empire, but the division of vast territorial and other spoils of war and well illustrated the very basic divisions among the Great Powers in the Middle East.

The special topic of this study, which grew out of the author's doctoral dissertation at Harvard University, is the negotiation of the Treaty of Sèvres, signed on August 10, 1920. While the reader is told that the book was constructed «as a study of World War I peace conference diplomacy», and «not intended to be an examination of Near Eastern history as such», unavoidably the author probes deeply into the substance of the problems which confronted the statesmen and governments of the day. He also makes his assessments and judgments of men, events, and the problems of the day.

In the course of his work, Professor Helmreich discusses the aims and attitudes of the Great Powers as their representatives assembled at Paris in the winter of 1919. He outlines their wartime agreements and commitments. He discusses the claims of the Near Eastern Delegations and the often conflicting commitments which had been made to Greeks, Arabs, Armenians, Kurds and Jews, especially during 1915-1918. As the author amply demonstrates, the claims themselves were often basically conflicting, and, as Arthur James Balfour remarked on August 11, 1919, the Allied «commitments» did not represent a policy and, as to Palestine, the Powers made no statement of fact which was «not admittedly wrong», and no statement of policy which they had «not always intended to violate». The author devotes much space to analysis of the Greek claims in Izmir, Thrace, the Aegean Islands, and Istanbul and the Straits and to the differences among the British, French and Italian Delegations concerning the Greek claims. Somewhat more brief attention is given to discussions of the Armenian, Kurdish and Palestinian problems. A somewhat more extensive account is given of the work of the King-Crane Commission, which President Wilson sent to the Middle East to inquire into the conditions of peace in that area (Chs. II and VI). But, in view of the «false hopes» aroused in the area and of the «passions» which he feels the Commission stimulated in Great Britain and France, which «effectively hindered any possible Franco-Arab reconciliation», he accepts the biased judgment of Lady Gertrude Bell, the British orientalist and official, «that the sending of the Commission was a criminal deception». It is quite impossible for this writer, at any rate, to accept this pronouncement. The author provides much new detail as to the later negotiations, from the fall of 1919 to the ultimate signature of the Treaty of Sèvres.

In the end, despite the hard and lengthy bargaining, and the fact that the Constantinople Government felt compelled to sign the Treaty of Sèvres, the Treaty proved abortive. The Turkish Nationalists revolted, literally tore up the Treaty of Sèvres, fought for three and one half years, and ultimately negotiated the Treaty of Lausanne (July 24, 1923).

There will be differences of view with the author concerning the leading statesmen at Paris — Wilson, Lloyd George, Venizelos, Clemenceau, Orlando and Sonnino, among others. Few today, however, would question his overall view that «traditional imperial ambitions and prejudices on the part of the negotiators, dominated the negotiations between the leaders of the various Western powers as they proceeded, both gleefully and acrimoniously, to partition the Ottoman Empire along nineteenth-century imperialist lines». The Treaty of Sèvres was at once the high and the low watermark of Allied imperialism in the Middle East during this period. As the author well points out, the statesmen of the period showed little or no understanding or awareness of the force of nationalism in the Near East, and especially of Turkish nationalism under the guiding genius of Mustapha Kemal Atatürk. This, how-

ever, is not at all surprising. Many in the area did not either — and many western statesmen, including American officials, have not appeared to understand it even in the 1970's.

Dr. Helmreich's work is based on a wealth of archival and pertinent published materials, as his extensive bibliography and his copious notes well testify. It is very well written and deserves a very wide reading, not only for what he has to say about the processes of peacemaking in the period of 1919-1920 but about the substantive issues involved.

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Barbara Jelavich, *The Ottoman Empire, The Great Powers and the Straits Question, 1870-1887*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1973, pp. 209.

As Professor Jelavich remarks at the very outset of her study, each succeeding conflict over the so-called Eastern Question during the Nineteenth Century found the Ottoman Empire as the clearcut loser. The Ottoman Empire, now decrepit, had to defend itself against the rising tide of Balkan nationalism, while later it fought a losing battle, in different circumstances, against Arab and even Turkish nationalism. At the intercontinental crossroads of Eurasia and Africa, it was attacked by European states with designs against the territorial integrity and political independence of the Empire.

Mrs. Jelavich deals primarily with the relationships of the Ottoman Empire with the European Powers — France, Great Britain, Austria-Hungary, Germany and Russia. The problem of the Straits is examined in connection with the London Black Sea Conference of January-March 1871, which, on Russian demand, essentially reaffirmed the principles governing passage of the Straits, enshrined in the Treaty of Paris (March 30, 1856), but lifted the restrictions on Russian warships in the Black Sea, under a program of pseudo-neutralization.

The second part of the volume covers the fate of the settlement in London and the varied interpretations given to it in the period prior to 1887. It discusses the principal episodes in the years following 1871, including the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-1878, the Treaty of San Stefano (1878), the Congress of Berlin (1878) and the Salisbury declaration, and comes down to the Mediterranean Agreements of 1887. As the author well notes the question of the Straits — a very important problem during the period covered — remained a major factor in international relations, and the London agreement was only superseded by the settlement at Lausanne of July 24, 1923. The London agreement provided the best settlement for the Sublime Porte — closure of the Straits to foreign warships, with the exception that in a period of emergency the Sultan could summon the help of «friendly and allied powers». This was the kind of settlement which the Sublime Porte sought to maintain. The volume closes with a postscript on the Bosnian crisis of 1908-1909.

This is a well-written, well-balanced and objective account which adds much to the picture of the problem of the Turkish Straits which should command the attention of all students of this fascinating question. It should also serve as a setting for later developments and it is most especially useful in putting Russian policy in appropriate perspective, granted the myths and legends which have been built up in that connection.

Mrs. Jelavich's volume should be on all reference shelves dealing with the problem of the Straits. It may well be read in association with late Philip E. Mosely's *Russian Diplomacy and the Opening of the Eastern Question, 1838-1839* (1934), the more recent documentary volume of M. S. Anderson, *The Great Powers and the Near East, 1774-1871* (1923), and the recently republished volume of James T. Shotwell and Francis Deak, *Turkey at the Straits:*