

as well, (*La Guerra Dell'Ombra*, 1972). The translation into English by Richard Barry is excellent, and the book deserves to achieve a wide circulation.

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Kenneth Matthews, *Memories of a Mountain War: Greece 1944-1949*, London, Longman, 1972, pp. 276.

Among the many foreign correspondents assigned to «cover» the Greek civil war of 1946-49, two were destined to become the subjects of dramatic news stories themselves: George Polk, correspondent for the Columbia Broadcasting System, and BBC's Kenneth Matthews. Their totally different fates, one horrible and the other dangerous but with a happy ending, together make up one of the most cruel ironies of that period.

Aggressive, restless and critical of the Greek Government's tactics, Polk became impatient with press briefings about the conduct of the war and set out to realize the dream of every foreign journalist in Athens: an interview with the communist leadership in the mountains of northern Greece. On May 16, 1948, his body was found floating off the Salonica waterfront, a bullet in the head. Only a few months later Matthews, whose reporting had been generally favorable to the authorities and who appeared to be quite content with the comforts and distractions of the capital, was taken prisoner by a band of rebels while he was showing ancient Mycenae to a young lady from Austria. After an exhausting trek across the mountains of Peloponnesos, during which he observed the rebels at close range, interviewed their leaders and rank-and-file, shared their food and thoughts, and even received friendly radiograms from communist headquarters in the north, he was set free at Patras, completing the last leg of his odyssey in the relative comfort of a rickety public bus. To make the irony complete, Matthews' report on his kidnapping and life with the rebels was rejected by the BBC (which held the copyright on the story) because it was not «wholly unfavorable» to his captors and might thus «encourage the kidnapping of correspondents in other guerrilla wars...» His story remained untold for almost twenty-five years, until the publication of *Memories of a Mountain War: Greece 1944-1949*.

As the subtitle indicates, the book covers much more than the author's own adventure. Matthews accompanied the liberating forces and Papandreou Government to Athens and was an eye-witness to the December 1944 revolt that ensued. He observed the gradual breakdown of the Varkiza accord and the start of the communist «Third Round». He covered the work of the United Nations' Inquiry Commission on the Balkans, visited the rebel camp at Bulkes and went along on the Commission's unsuccessful attempt to interview Markos. In the fall of 1948, while the Greek army was taking the initiative against the rebels in the north, he had his unwelcome encounter with communist units in the Peloponnesos. He thus had prolonged and serious exposure to the postwar Greek scene. Matthews' writing style is powerful and lively, with an endearing touch of humor. In short, the book is a pleasure to read.

For all its literary appeal, as a piece of political reporting *Memories of a Mountain War* offers little that is new or different. One would have expected more precise information and penetrating commentary from the BBC's man in a war-ravaged country ablaze with revolutionary intrigue and violence, at a time when the British authorities were directly or indirectly involved in every aspect of the situation. Yet much of this slender book is devoted to the author's cultural pleasures in the company of romantic young ladies. If Matthews' regular reports to London were everything the circumstances called for, too little of their substance found its way into this volume.

On the controversial question of Britain's role in Greek affairs, Matthews' account echoes Churchill's well-known protestations: Britain was simply interested in liberating a faithful ally and lending a helping hand without ulterior motives of her own. This led to a thankless and much misunderstood involvement in political problems and in the suppression of various attempts by a few communist fanatics to seize power by force of arms. Thus in his political analysis, Matthews largely ignores the fact that during the «Cairo period» the Greek government-in-exile and its successor at the time of liberation were under the complete control of Britain. Similarly, British attempts to influence the balance of power among resistance factions (clearly documented in the Churchill, Eden, Macmillan memoirs, in Woodward's *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War* and in countless Greek publications) are not important in his thesis and in his analysis of the roots of the civil war he describes. The author manages to discuss the first two communist «Rounds» with hardly a mention of the country's recent political ills, of the Metaxas oppression and the unpopular monarchy, of the discrediting of the nation's traditional political forces and their leaders. In connection with the March 1946 elections King George II is referred to merely as «absent and blameless» and as having been «the target of communist attacks for years...»

Concerning the murder of his American colleague, Matthews disputes the trial's findings and speculates that it was most probably the work of a right-wing «secret society» determined to silence Polk «as a consorter with Communists and as a warning to others likeminded». As for his own captors, Matthews reveals considerable sympathy for many of them as individuals engaged in social protest but generally regards them as naive or fanatical, or both. On the other hand, his Epilogue contains one of the better statements ever written about the turbulent 1940's:

When I reviewed the course of modern Greek history in longer perspective, it seemed to me that Greece had been in a state of open or incipient revolution since the beginning of the century, that the root cause was the effort of a teeming talented people to subsist in a volcanic archipelago hardly fitted to support half their number. Sometimes the valve had been screwed down tight; sometimes the steam escaped. But the world war had released the whole destructive force. Famine, the decay of authority, universal slaughter, guns strewn over the mountains where every village hero or hooligan could pick them up, the Communist mirage to lure some, the kleptonic tradition to justify others—nothing was lacking to provoke the cataclysm. The wonder was not that the revolution was attempted but that, in the end, by one means or another, the old social fabric sustained the shock.

Whatever the reader's—and reviewer's—expectations and criticisms, it is the author's privilege to insert in his «Memories» only those events and comments that he deems worthy of recollection in print. This slender volume is unquestionably a valuable contribution to the growing literature on wartime and postwar Greece.

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Dominique Eudes, *The Kapetanios, Partisans and Civil War in Greece: 1943-1949*, New York, Monthly Review Press, 1972, pp. 374. Translated from the French by John Howe.

The political aims of the leftist Greek Resistance during World War II and in the subsequent civil war remain to this day among the topics most difficult to study in contemporary Greek history. In addition to the passionate controversy that still surrounds them, important primary sources do not exist or are not available for scrutiny. On the other hand, the