

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

impact of the decade 1940-1950 upon the country can hardly be exaggerated and holds the key to the understanding of much that has occurred since. There is, of course, by now a sizeable body of literature concerning the Resistance organizations' composition, tactics and aspirations during and after the War. However, much of it is too polemical, conjectural, or both, to be historically valuable except as an advocacy of a particular point of view. Among the many questions that demand careful exploration perhaps none is more elusive than that of the group «profile», motives and objectives of the *kapetanioi*, and their relationship to the Communist Party's (KKE) bosses. *The Kapetanios. Partisans and Civil War in Greece, 1943-1949* appears to be an attempt to furnish the answer.

According to the English edition's jacket (the book first appeared in French in 1970) Eudes is a journalist with experience in film scenarios. He has based his account on conversations with one-time *kapetanioi* now living in France, Greece and in communist countries. Quite understandably, his informants are not identified by name. What is less understandable, and a serious affront to the scholarly proclivities of some readers, is the fact that Eudes offers no clues whatsoever as to the number of persons consulted, their approximate position in the guerrilla hierarchy, whether they actually had served as *kapetanioi* rather than as military commanders, or the geographic regions in which they had been active. Since (according to Sarafis) ELAS at one point had well over one thousand *kapetanioi* in addition to several thousand military officers, it matters greatly whether the author talked to five or to fifty, and whether they were in a position to know first-hand what they were willing to relate. After all, even an author of Solzhenitsyn's stature and integrity found it necessary to explain that in addition to his own direct and very considerable experience in his subject, *The Gulag Archipelago* was based on material provided by 227 «witnesses» But if Eudes' sampling and documentation techniques leave much to be desired, there is no doubt that his account carries the true ring of authenticity: there is much in this small volume that only guerrillas (although not necessarily *kapetanioi*) could know or care to remember.

Simply stated, Eudes' thesis is that during the enemy occupation, there developed in the Greek country side a basically spontaneous and peasant-backed armed movement (the «Mountain») whose twin objectives were resistance to the foreign conqueror and political revolution. Its principal organizer was *Kapetan* Aris (Athanasios Klaras) who, while a communist, continued to stray from the Communist Party's ideological preoccupation with the city masses and, like Mao, placed his hopes for revolution in the agrarian proletariat. The KKE remained deeply suspicious of Aris, disapproved of his program and tactics, and ultimately brought about his violent death. Moreover, for a variety of reasons, the KKE succeeded in harnessing the «Mountain» to its narrowly doctrinaire and essentially passive cause, betraying the popular revolution and decimating the ranks of the peoples' army, the ELAS. Thus the villain of the piece is the KKE leadership which blundered and temporised, trying to remain within the political framework of legality and anxious not to frighten the bourgeoisie or antagonize the Allies. The heroes are clearly the *kapetanioi* who, under Aris' visionary but unappreciated leadership, personified the spirit of a popular revolution, only to be sacrificed by their Stalinist masters.

On the basis of what is now known about KKE's indecision, lack of direction and bad judgment during the War, as well as about Aris' role as the Party's *bête noire*, Eudes' thesis is not without considerable appeal. It echoes a venerable and highly romanticized native tradition of a peasant revolution, purer and healthier than the bookish and stilted dogmas of city intellectuals. However, what prevents Eudes' views from becoming anything more than an interesting hypothesis is his failure to spell out the practical political program and the feasibility of the «Mountain» and how they are to be distinguished from those of the KKE. In-

deed, the author does not even offer a glimpse of the *kapetanios*' promised land. Moreover, it is generally accepted that the post of *kapetanios* was always reserved for a trusted communist, who was hardly likely to take issue with Party policy. The fact that ELAS remained to the end the tool of the KKE suggests that the Party's control over the *kapetanioi* was generally effective. Aris was the very rare exception, and his failure and ultimate destruction serve to confirm the rule. Accordingly, one is tempted to conclude that the split between the KKE and the *kapetanioi*, if it really existed as Eudes describes it, was basically a matter of tactics, a natural conflict in perception between men in the field viewing only their immediate environment and those at the political center struggling to fashion a broad and long range strategy. The suggestion that the countryside could ever prevail politically over Athens-dominated Greece is simply not credible. And even if the split between the *kapetanioi* and the KKE were both real and fundamental, the communist aims of both sides remained anathema to the vast majority of politically conscious Greeks who, however divided and quarrelsome, had no wish to live in a «people's democracy». Therefore it is not simply the fault of the KKE that a communist revolution, without substantial outside assistance, was destined to fail.

If Eudes' broader theme is not particularly convincing, his book is both interesting and useful for the insight it provides into his informants' knowledge and perception of important events. Thus it is shown that Party boss Siantos wished the KKE to develop not into a revolutionary conspiracy but into a more traditional and broadly based political party so as to eventually secure key ministerial posts through legal means. To the dismay of Aris and other *kapetanioi*, the Party leaders remained cool to Tempo's urging for a common headquarters for the Greek and Yugoslav resistance movements and for joint efforts to block British influence in the Balkans. Analyzing the causes of the «First Round» in late 1943, Eudes writes that the decision to attack EDES had been taken at the highest level, and Siantos is quoted ordering Tzimas to «Let Aris Loose on Zervas». The communist leadership had decided that, following the collapse of the Myers mission to Cairo, and in view of Zervas' increasingly pro-monarchy stand, ELAS would eliminate all rivals in the Resistance. (Here, as elsewhere, Eudes acknowledges Costa de Loverdo's *Les Maquis rouges dans les Balkans* rather than his informants as his principal source).

In connection with the intriguing subject of the Soviet military mission to ELAS headquarters, Lt. Colonel Chernichev is quoted as telling Bakirdjis that the communists' refusal to ratify the Lebanon accord was «illogical». When Bakirdjis urged Popov's aide to convey this view to Siantos himself, Chernichev is recorded saying: «General, I don't represent any party. My business is making war. You too are a soldier. But if you're interested you can mention this to your Party... I have no advice for you really. I'm simply telling you that the British are due to land at Piraeus 'tomorrow', and that it would be absurd on your part not to welcome them as heroes...» (p. 147). When the Ioannides faction wanted to seize Athens as the Germans withdrew, Siantos would not allow it without approval from the Kremlin, which never came. As a result, no military plan of action for taking Athens was ever formulated and eventually the KKE leadership merely decided to break with Papandreou's Government and «go into opposition» (p. 188). Finally ELAS tried to seize Athens, but only after the dramatic events of December 3-4. Even then the conflict was viewed as local and reconcilable and the ELAS command in the north was ordered not to enter Salonica. When Markos disobeyed and moved his troops into the city, he received a reprimand from KKE in Athens. As for the Yugoslavs, Tito had made a vague offer of assistance in the event of a clash with the British in Greece but Tzimas, who had been acting as liaison with the Partisans and understood well their narrow objectives, thought the offer worthless. In 1946, Zahariades plunged the country into the «Third Round» in total disregard for Soviet advice to keep the KKE within the legal

system, trying instead to impress his masters in the Kremlin by proving that revolution could succeed in Greece. His stony dogmatism and the abandonment of guerrilla tactics in favor of positional warfare destroyed the remnants of the «Democratic Army» and condemned the *kapetanioi* to self-exile.

Eudes has not given us a substantiated and persuasive analysis of the place of the *kape-tanioi* in the communist movement. Indeed, such an analysis may not be possible under prevailing circumstances. However, his book contains much that is useful and is a valuable contribution to the study of wartime and postwar Greece.

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William O. Oldson, *The Historical and Nationalistic thought of Nicolae Iorga*, Boulder, East European Quarterly (Distributed by Columbia University Press), 1973, pp. 135.

Many readers of this journal were introduced to general Balkan studies by Iorga's *Histoire des États Balcaniques* (1925). Many in the area of Balkan studies were enlightened by Iorga's journal *Revue Historique de Sud-Est Européen*. And a few survive who benefitted from his founding of the Institutul de studii sudest europene in 1913 (whose successor now flourishes in Bucharest under Mihai Berza, once Iorga's student). Now those indebted to Iorga (1871-1940) are similarly grateful to this young American scholar who conducted research in Rumania into hitherto inaccessible material (Iorga was *persona non grata* in Rumanian historiography from 1944 to about 1964). The result is a compact analysis of Iorga's *métier*, emphasizing the didactic nature of his writings and his politicization of history for national purposes. Oldson was obviously physically incapable of wading through the incredible output Iorga spewed forth during his equally incredible life—he is reputedly the author of 1,200 books and pamphlets, 13,000 articles, a daily newspaper, and the chronicler of massive volumes of documents. The author selected pertinent items from Iorga's writings to reveal the latter's ideas about the nature of history, history as art, history and culture, nationalism, etc. Non-Rumanians will wince at this reiteration of Iorga's somewhat xenophobic nationalism and his erratic views on minorities. Those familiar with recent Rumanian historiography will discern herein the nationalistic substructure on which it presently rests, for many of the presently functioning *doyens* of Rumanian scholarship are themselves products of the era so thoroughly indoctrinated by Nicolae Iorga.

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Terence Elsberry, *Queen Marie of Romania: The intimate life of a twentieth century Queen*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1972, pp. 298.

When an author's bibliography includes among his «Primary Sources» John Gunther's *Inside Europe* (1938), but relegates *Once a Grand Duke* by Grand Duke Alexander of Russia to his «Secondary Sources», then a critic realizes he is in for a crude attempt at biography. This tendentious effort to glamorize one of Queen Victoria's innumerable descendants results in a feeble pastiche of vignettes about the consort of King Ferdinand (1865-1927), the mother of King Carol II (1893-1953), and the peripatetic mistress of numerous, but also influential paramours. Admittedly it is impossible for the author, editor of *Apartment News* (a journal out of Des Moines), to penetrate whatever may repose in the former royal archives in Bu-