

«historical» or «folkloric» on one or more ways. Also, most of Theotokas's pieces have «realistic» settings and characters, and do present serious or crucial problems, either social or personal. Nearly all Theotokas' characters—including the complicated and intriguing protagonist in *Alcibiades*—have been delineated with care; and their psychological motivations, drives, and complexes are brought to the surface with sophistication—though often by means of rather long speeches.

What Professor Doulis achieves with his separation of these plays into four groups should actually be considered a «reader's guide» of sorts, an orderly and detailed chart which helps the audience/readership follow the chronological evolution of Theotokas's theatre from one stage to the next. Certainly, other combinations of headings are possible. Thomas Doulis's categories, however, are both meaningful and descriptive.

The reader of *George Theotokas* will learn much about a turbulent era in Greece's recent social and intellectual history, and become familiar with «the life and opinions» of an honest and talented man who was admired by the American, English, and European intellectuals who knew him. Professor Doulis—himself a published creative writer—has written a most enjoyable and useful book, which is an important addition to the Twayne World Authors Series, and a substantial contribution to modern Greek literary scholarship in either Greek or English.

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Juliet Du Boulay, *Portrait of a Greek Mountain Village*, [Oxford Monographs on Social Anthropology], Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1974, pp. viii + 296.

One reviewer of this book has said that it should become an anthropological classic and another has said that it is one of the two best books written about Greece in this century. This is to place Dr du Boulay's book in a rare category of excellence. Yet when one reads it one can understand why it is acclaimed in this manner. First, there is the quality of the writing itself. Whether Dr du Boulay is describing the significance of a meal in a Greek village house or the attitude of the villagers to money, her language is always alive, lucid, clean, with its own rhythm and cadence. Then there is the sharp sensuous response to all those details and particulars—smells, colours, sounds, sights, images—that make up the actual texture of village life: a tangible yet subtle recreation of an atmosphere in which real people breed, suffer, hate, love, laugh, kill and die. One is not allowed to forget the personal humanity of these people; they are not exploited to serve simply as ciphers illustrating yet another thesis about social relationships, honour and shame and so on.

Thirdly, there is the remarkable grasp of the perspective within which these people live, of the interweaving within them of levels of reality that gives their life a richness and a drama which are eliminated when the sense of the real is reduced to the surface dimensions of ordinary space and ordinary time. Dr du Boulay's vil-

lagers are born out of a tradition so ancestral and so indisputable that it requires no explanation and is not in any sense a matter of opinion. They embrace or enshrine a mystery within which the divine and the human, Christian revelation and natural magic, co-exist with no incongruity. That is their measure and their span. Dr du Boulay has done them the honour of allowing them to reveal something of this mystery to her. That is the sign of a truly creative imagination, one not crippled by the hopelessly inadequate categories which most anthropologists try to impose on their subjects. Indeed, if one were to point to a weakness in this book one might say it lies precisely in the fact that Dr du Boulay has compromised something of her true vision of things by attempting to adapt it too much to the pattern of conventional anthropological studies, and that this has meant a certain failure to explore the full symbolic and mythological significance of the tradition in question. One may hope that, freeing herself totally from the conceptual framework of modern anthropology and sociology, she will make such an exploration in another book.

It goes without saying that Dr du Boulay's understanding of this tradition is that communicated to her above all by the women of the village. It is true that she was on certain occasions invited to that centre of male concourse, the *kapheneion*, but these occasions were rare and she did not have any real access to the world of village politics in the narrow sense. But although this means that the field covered by, for instance, Peter Loizos' recent study of politics in a Cypriot village, *The Greek Gift* (Oxford, 1957) is not surveyed by Dr du Boulay in anything like the same way, the fact that her initiation into the mystery of village life was dominantly through the women more than compensates for this, because it is above all the women who hold the keys to this mystery and who guard it and transmit it.

Although it is these qualities, among others, which give this book its particular quality, it must also be stressed that it is a most scholarly and thorough investigation of the social structure of a Greek village, the best that we have so far been given or are now likely to be given. It examines such crucial aspects of this structure as the house, the relationships between the individual and the community, marriage, the kinship patterns, work and worship, gossip and quarrels, the past and the present, the effects of migration, and so on. There are tables outlining the ecological year, details of land tenure, speculation on the correspondence between divine archetype and peasant custom.

Finally, giving the book a poignancy which is not in the least sentimental, there is the sense throughout that this handful of villagers are among the last survivors of a culture which will soon have vanished from the landscape as completely as its counterpart has vanished long since in places like England. It is our good fortune that something of the values which sustained this culture, and which provide the indispensable key to the understanding of so much Greek and Balkan history and tradition over the last centuries, has found so sensitive, patient and sympathetic a recorder.

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