

Book Reviews

C. A. Vacalopoulos, *L'économiste français Arthémond de Regny et son rôle dans l'histoire financière de la Grèce (1831-41)*, Thessaloniki, Institute for Balkan Studies no. 178, 1977, pp. 266.

L'histoire de la monarchie absolue en Grèce qui a duré depuis l'arrivée du roi Othon jusqu'à la révolution de 1843 n'a pas été suffisamment étudiée et très peu de livres dignes de mention ont été publiés à son sujet. Je dirais que le meilleur a été celui de M.P. Pipinelli qui d'ailleurs était persuadé que dans cette période beaucoup de bien a été réalisé. C'est aussi l'opinion du soussigné qui certes est conscient du fait qu'il y a eu aussi des erreurs et des omissions. En général l'opinion opposée prévaut. Monsieur Constantin A. Vacalopoulos partage cette dernière. Il se base sur ce que lui a appris l'étude et l'analyse des rapports de A. de Regny. Cet économiste français qui dépendait pour ainsi dire du banquier Genévois Eynard a essayé de faire tout ce qui était possible pour la Grèce sans néanmoins oublier qu'il était Français et qu'il devait contribuer dans la mesure du possible à faire avancer les intérêts de la France même si cela devait être au désavantage de la Grèce. Il en était de même avec Eynard malgré le fait qu'il est considéré avoir été un grand philhellène toujours dans le cadre de notre manie à diviser les étrangers en Philhellènes et en ceux qui ne le sont pas. En effet les grecs ne pensent jamais qu'il est possible qu'un étranger ne soit pas ni leur ami ni leur ennemi.

L'auteur a très bien travaillé dans les archives où il a découvert pas mal de rapports inédits. A. de Regny n'a pas été un grand succès dans sa vie et il en a été de même avec ses missions en Grèce où d'ailleurs il est mort. Il a essayé d'amener le roi Othon à équilibrer le budget selon la théorie orthodoxe tout en oubliant que la Grèce à cette époque avait commencé de zéro et que normalement l'équilibre de son budget n'était possible que si le développement de son économie et la création de son infrastructure étaient délaissés outre mesure, moins que les emprunts soient contractés à l'étranger et qu'ils soient rationnellement utilisés. La faillite de 1827 et celle de 1843 ont malheureusement empêché cette évolution. Il n'y a pas à oublier, et l'auteur le relève avec justesse, que la stagnation en Grèce était ce qui convenait le plus aux trois Grandes puissances européennes qui s'étaient arrogées le titre, les prérogatives et les droits de «puissances protectrices» du Royaume de Grèce. Les frontières septentrionales de ce dernier se trouvaient alors dans la région de Domokos et tout était fait de la part des «puissances protectrices» pour en empêcher l'expansion vers le Nord. Elles y ont réussi pendant un demi siècle.

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J. Vartsos, *Δυτική πολιτική τῶν Ἀθηνῶν κατὰ τὸν πέμπτον π.Χ. αἰῶνα* [The Western Policy of Athens in Vth Century B.C.], Jannina, 1978, pp. 88 [Society for Epirote Studies, Institute for Ionian and Adriatic Studies, no. 4].

In the fifth century it was the areas to the east of Athens which supplied her with her needs in terms of imports and of lands for the planting of her surplus population. Her power at sea enabled her to exercise a strict control over the movement of corn from the Black Sea, of timber from Thrace and Macedonia, and of various goods from the islands and the eastern shore of the Aegean basin, and even to a limited extent from the Levant

and Egypt. And after the conclusion of the Peace of Callias with Persia and the Thirty Years Treaty with the Peloponnesians Athens' position of supremacy in the eastern seas was internationally recognised and accepted. This being so, the interventions of Athens in the western area which lay outside her immediate sphere of activity were particularly indicative of the scope of her ambitions at different times and of the varying temperatures of that fever which is called imperialism. Thus the book of Dr Vartsos is not only a study of each individual act of Athens in the West during the fifth century but also a much needed essay on the acquisitive nature of Athenian foreign policy.

Dr Vartsos is particularly well qualified for the task because he has already published a number of articles and papers on important episodes in Athens' foreign policy with special reference to the system of cleruchies in the eastern sphere. Themistocles' interest in the West, although limited to diplomacy unless we give him the credit for bringing "that great corn-carrier from Syracuse to the Peiraeus", was symptomatic of Athens' constant thirst for adventure in the West. Her first steps in that direction were decisive for the future: the alliance with Megara which secured the port of Pegae (soon to be fortified with "Long Walls", which are still visible) and access to the head of the Corinthian Gulf, and the placing of the Messenian refugees at Naupactus, which threatened the narrow bottleneck of the Gulf and was to be the base of Athenian naval power in western waters. Dr Vartsos dates these events to 462/1 and 461/0 respectively; for the accepts the emendation from δεκάτω to τετάρτω as proposed by Krüger in Thucydides 1.103.1 in preference to the date 456/5 in Diodorus 11.84.7 and supports it with Meritt's dating of the fragmentary inscription IG I² 37. From then onwards Athens was able to threaten and disrupt the trade which passed up the Corinthian Gulf and was of supreme importance to Megara, Corinth, Sicyon and the Peloponnese generally. These actions, as Dr Vartsos remarks, proclaimed Athens' readiness to challenge the commercial interests of Corinth and the political interests of Sparta as Hegemon of the Peloponnesian League.

The dating of the various alliances which Athens made with Segesta, Rhegium, Leontini and Halicystae is a highly controversial topic on which Dr Vartsos wrote already in 1970. Upholding his proposed date 458/7 for the alliance with Segesta, he maintains that the original treaties with Rhegium and Leontini were offensive and defensive in nature and that they were first concluded within the decade 450-440 (so too Meiggs and Lewis); and his arguments for these datings are thorough and persuasive. He relates Athens' diplomatic relations then to her foundation of Thurii in 444/3, which he regards as analogous in the West to the foundation of Amphipolis in the East, a base for expanding the Athenian Empire. In this he supports the view of V. Ehrenberg. At the same time some weight should be given to that aspect of Pericles' foreign policy which was expressed in the so-called "Congress Decree" of Plutarch, *Pericles* 17; for the composition of the settlers and the subsequent history of Thurii are hardly in accord with a narrowly imperialistic policy. But to return to the dating of the western alliances and of their renewals: it is in this part of his book that Dr Vartsos enters most fully into controversy and deploys very thorough and systematic arguments, supported by an admirable documentation, which form an important and original contribution to the topic.

In the period which preceded the outbreak of the Second Peloponnesian War Dr Vartsos considers the campaign of Phormio (which he dates between 437 and 432 or perhaps more narrowly between 435 and 433), the alliance with Corcyra which led to the battle of Sybota in 433, the expedition of Diotimus to Neapolis in Italy (which he dates to just after the battle of Sybota), and very tentatively an expedition of Lampon to Catana in Sicily which Wentker though might imply an alliance between Athens and Catana in 439. His thorough

investigation of these affairs leads him to the general conclusion that Athens was deliberately expanding her influence in this sensitive area for imperialistic purposes, and that Thucydides was correct in his analysis of the fundamental cause of the outbreak of war in 431, namely that Athens' growing power and Sparta's fear acted as an explosive force which burst into a disastrous war.

All in all, this is an important contribution to a very central topic in the history of the fifth century. It has that most desirable combination of qualities: a most thorough, detailed and competent study of each piece of evidence, and a well-balanced judgement of the general policy of Athens and its impact on the world of Greek city-states. Moreover, it is eminently readable; for Dr Vartsos writes concisely and emphatically, and he has provided very full references to current literature, a select bibliography and two Indexes. He is to be congratulated.

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Henri van Effenterre, *La seconde fin du monde: mycène et la mort d'une civilisation. Collection archéologie, horizons neufs*, Toulouse, Editions des Hespérides, 1974, pp. 240 + 32 plates.

Few communities today can ignore, let alone deny, profound debts to the Greek cultures which became predominant in the eastern Mediterranean during the final millennium prior to the birth of Jesus of Nazareth. Beginning with the discoveries of Heinrich von Schliemann and Arthur Evans, cognizant peoples have sought the answer to the riddle of whether the cultures uncovered throughout the Aegean world within the last century represent early Greek settlements in the Mediterranean world, or civilizations completely alien to any Indo-European successors, snuffed out by the Hellenic newcomers in a development analogous to the Hispanic treatment of high level pre-Columbian traditions flourishing in Mexico and Peru.

Von Schliemann's well-publicized triumphs directed, most happily, considerable efforts towards recovering remains of many eastern Mediterranean cultures which flourished during the second millennium before the Common Era. Specialist and general readers face a tidal wave of information which overwhelms even the knowledgeable seeking a simple refinement to a vague lecture note. If ever a field of human inquiry needed even a tentative attempt at synthesizing the staggering, conflicting wealth of primal data, then the history of the northeastern Mediterranean basin from 2,000 to 1,000 B.C.E. deserves such attention.

Few scholars alive in 1974 could offer the demanding credentials which Professor Henri van Effenterre of the University of Paris and Director of the Gustave Glotz Center of Researches into the Histories of Antiquity possesses. Professor van Effenterre implies (wisely) in his sub-title that he shall address his efforts towards examining the possible causes of the sudden collapse of "Mycenaean Civilization" near the end of the millennium. If van Effenterre had maintained reasonable control over his narrative, his reasonings and his prose, I could recommend this book to anyone... professor, student or literate lay person... desirous of knowing whether Spartan Helena ever strolled the walls of Troy VII^b or whether cheery wall paintings in Knossos indicated an antique culture exempt from contemporary humanity's doleful triad of *Angst*, *anomie* and alienation.

Unfortunately, Professor van Effenterre gives his reader a pottage, a meandering from various archaeological sites on Crete, Cyprus, the Aegean archipelagoes, the Hellenic penin-