

stantinople or Alexandria the influence of the bishop and the significance of his involvement in a particular controversy was escalated.

According to the author, public opinion in most controversies began by being relatively fluid and remained so until fixed by persuasion or violence. The importance of persuasion emphasized the role of oratorical skills, processions, songs and slogans. The success of a leader in a religious controversy rested on his ability to present an issue of the lowest common level of comprehension in order to gain the widest possible support. The most successful appeals were those made to faith, tradition and justice, but where persuasion was not sufficient, religious leaders did not hesitate to use force to neutralize the promoters of opposing opinions. At the early stages of a controversy, violence was important in the formation of public opinion: violence allowed only one point-of-view to be presented to the public. Yet all violence in religious controversies was not the result of calculated attempts to suppress opposing opinions. Spontaneous violence existed and demonstrated the passionate interest of many people in religious questions.

Urban life was dangerous in the fifth century since the state had abolished the urban cohorts and devoted most of its attention to frontier defense and the collection of taxes. The central government only intervened in urban unrest after the eruption of open violence, when the army was brought in. Why did the government not intervene earlier? Professor Gregory relates this question to the quasi-constitutional role of public demonstrations in the later Roman empire. The government did not encourage open opposition but it did tolerate limited criticism and recognized the importance of popular opinion in the safety and stability of the Empire. Because of excessive centralization, Christianization and residual republicanism, the Emperor realized his own dependence on the goodwill of his subjects and assumed that popular opinion represented the will of God, whether communicated by violent or peaceful demonstrations. Since the right answers to religious questions were important in the personal salvation of the individual and the divine protection of the empire, the eastern Roman empire experienced an intense concern for the successful resolution of religious controversies. In Professor Gregory's opinion, popular involvement in religious controversies was proof of the vitality of urban life in the late Roman empire in the East.

Professor Gregory has made an important contribution to our understanding of the late Roman empire. One would hope that he will expound his research and establish a broader base for his preliminary conclusions by considering a wider chronological and geographical context within the eastern Roman empire as well as by including popular political opinion and civil violence.

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Roy E. H. Mellor, *Eastern Europe: A Geography of the Comecon Countries*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1975, pp. x+358.

Eastern Europe ranks among the most ignored regions by geographers of the Western World. When the region is dealt with, the Soviet Union is usually included, and often dominates a volume. Similarly, when a text on Europe appears, Eastern Europe is overshadowed by the discussion of Western European nations. There are several reasons for this imbalance. Most notable are the difficulties encountered by Western scholars in obtaining reliable data

regarding Eastern Europe, as well as the limited access to resources, thus making a thorough study of the region rather difficult. The present volume compares favorably with the approximately half dozen books dealing with the geography of Eastern Europe and Mellor must be commended on his efforts. He benefited from access to sources obtained in Eastern European nations, evidenced by the valuable bibliography which lists obscure or difficult to obtain literature.

The author does not introduce any grand new themes in this volume. Preferring to follow the traditional descriptive approach in dealing with the geography of Eastern Europe, Mellor focuses mainly on the historical influence over this area, while contemporary conditions are often excluded.

The book is divided in three parts. The first part, consisting of three chapters, deals with the physical environment and political geography of Eastern Europe. Chapter One, entitled "The Physical Environment", concentrates heavily on landforms and geologic formations. This topic is dealt with in great detail, and is very well written. On the other hand, examination of weather, soils, vegetation, flora and fauna are superficial, and the imbalanced treatment of various regions within Eastern Europe is readily evident. Although space restrictions are cited by the author as reason for the limited treatment of the physical environment, he should have offered a more balanced approach. It would have been better if he had dealt in greater detail with the climatic differences within Eastern Europe, especially since various land-use patterns are discussed in some detail, later in the book.

The second chapter focuses on the "Historical Evolution from the Graeco-Roman Period to the Early Twentieth Century". This chapter is regional in its approach, and although some geographical concepts are included, it appears that this is purely an historical work rather than a chapter on historical geography.

"Historical Developments in the Twentieth Century", is the title of the third chapter, which is geographically oriented and deals with traditional topics such as boundary changes after World War I and World War II. Some nations such as Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia receive more attention than other Eastern European countries. A major asset of this chapter is the author's treatment of the continued interrelationships between Eastern Europe, the USSR and the West.

The second part of the book deals with the demographic and economic framework of the region, and is broken into four chapters. The "Population" chapter is divided by subtopics within the study of population geography. A major weakness here is the treatment of the subtopics which do not allow for comparisons. In the discussion of population distribution, natural physical regions are used as a basis for discussion. For example, Bohemia, Moravia, and the Bulgarian Tableland are examined. When population growth is treated, the discussion consists of individual countries. The approach can frustrate the learned and confuse the uninitiated. A map portraying population distribution might be considered a life-saver, because the country outlines are included.

The "Town and Village" chapter deals mostly with the larger urban concentrations. For the most part, an historical approach to the various stages of urbanization is used. Of interest are the various maps showing town and village morphologies, putting forth valuable examples of older urban areas. Modern settlements influenced by socialized economies are also included.

The next chapter, entitled "The Economic Landscape Before the Second World War", complements all previous chapters. It integrates several of the topics in the context of economic development with the physical, historical and human environments of the region.

The last chapter deals with transportation. Heavy emphasis on historical transport networks weakens this chapter, since it merely summarizes what has been dealt with in the better known history texts of the region. In addition, more is known about contemporary transportation networks. In general, Mellor's very brief discussion of ports, shipping, and airways leaves much to be desired.

Part three, Comecon and the National Economies, consists of three chapters. The first chapter describes the genesis of Comecon, and the Soviet influence on the region. This chapter is a fine mesh of previously dealt with topics, but with emphasis on events since World War II. Treated are the basic interrelationships between the political and economic geographies of the Eastern European countries, and the overpowering Soviet influence. This is the strongest and most valuable chapter in the volume, and is most relevant to contemporary students of the region.

The last two chapters of the book, the Eastern European Countries, discuss each country in the context of their economic geographies. The penultimate chapter examines the more developed countries, while the last chapter summarizes the conditions of the developing economies. Treatments of economic topics consist of strengths and weaknesses for each nation through status surveys of their industries, agricultural conditions, and transport networks.

Despite some serious deficiencies, this book can be recommended reading for Eastern European specialists. On the other hand, it should not be treated as an introductory level text. Previous exposure to systematic geography is necessary, because Mellor uses terms often unknown to the non-geographer, and to the introductory level student. Many maps suffer from poor design, and previous knowledge of the area is necessary for recognition. A valuable inclusion is a list of important place names with various spellings, aiding the reader to a great extent.

This volume is a reasonable addition to the personal library of the student of Eastern European Studies. It is a positive step towards an understanding of the very complex and varied, albeit understudied, region of the world and, at a cost of U.S. \$9.00 (paper), an affordable purchase.

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Δημήτρη Κιτσίκη, *Ἑλλάς καὶ Ξένοι, 1919-1967. Τὰ Ἀρχεῖα τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Ὑπουργείου Ἐξωτερικῶν*. Ἀθῆναι: Ἐστία, 1977, 217 σελ.

In his introduction to this slender volume the author, professor of international relations at the University of Ottawa, explains that the present publication represents a sequel to his study *Ἡ Ἑλλάς τῆς 4ης Ἀγοῦστος καὶ αἱ Μεγάλαι Δυνάμεις* (reviewed in *Balkan Studies* 17, 1, 1976), which dealt with the foreign policies of the Metaxas regime. The earlier study was the subject of considerable controversy in Greece less for its central theme (that the British-backed King George II, and not Metaxas, was the dominant figure in the dictatorship) than for the fact that Kitsikis had been given access to the "closed" files of the Greek Foreign Ministry and was quoting from heretofore classified documents. Although the present publication also carries the ambitious sub-title "The Archives of the Greek Foreign