

Die meisten deutschen Forschungsarbeiten, die sich auf die Ethnographie Mazedoniens beziehen, wurden während des Krieges im Gefolge der deutschen Truppen in Mazedonien verfaßt und dienten deswegen bestimmten Zielen.

Die Arbeit wäre besser geworden, wenn der Verfasser mehrere Primärquellen, besonders bulgarische Quellen, hätte heranziehen können. So hätte er die Möglichkeit gehabt, sein Thema mehr zu konkretisieren, zu vertiefen und hauptsächlich auf das politische Gebiet zu beschränken. Dafür ist er aber nicht allein verantwortlich, da der Zugang zu den bulgarischen Archiven sogar für bulgarische Historiker mit großen Schwierigkeiten verbunden ist. Es scheint so zu sein, daß die bulgarische Historiographie zwar nationale Fragen, an erster Stelle die Mazedonische Frage, zu behandeln versucht (besonders nach dem von Parteichef T. Živkov gegebenen Signal für eine nationale Rückbesinnung auf allen Ebenen im Herbst 1967), doch es herrscht in Bulgarien noch eine ungerechtfertigte Scheu vor dieser Frage.

Das Buch erschließt ein neues Gebiet in der Beleuchtung der Mazedonischen Frage aus deutscher Sicht und kann natürlich nicht als die endgültige Antwort gewertet werden.

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B. Kondis, *Anglo-American Policy and the Greek Problem: 1945-1949* (Thessaloniki: Paratiritis, 1984), 495 pages, in Greek.

Conflicts, especially civil wars, are first recorded by their victors. As time passes and passions begin to subside, the victors' version (the so-called orthodox view) begins to be questioned by revisionist historians. The latter have a tendency to reflect the neglected orientation of the vanquished. Both orthodox and revisionist interpretations tend to view conflicts in black and white terms. They divide the protagonists into "heroes" and "villains", "aggressors" and "defenders", "exploiters" and "exploited". After some decades elapse, with the opening of archives, the production of memoirs, monographs and other relevant evidence, a third wave of historians appears. We can call them eclectics, neo-revisionists or, more simply, detached historians. They maintain equal distance from victors and vanquished and view the conflict in shades of gray rather than in black and white.

The Greek civil war has been no exception to this rule. The first accounts which emerged in the 1950s and 1960s placed exclusive blame for the Greek civil war on the communist side. The root of the trouble could be found, according to the orthodox interpretation, in the KKE's carefully calculated grab for power which was backed by Moscow's relentless decision to bring about world communist domination. Then, mostly after 1974, we witnessed the explosion of the revisionist interpretation. Unlike its orthodox predecessor, the revisionist interpretation has tended to condemn the Greek nationalists and their Anglo-American protectors for the tragic conflict. Greece was seen as the helpless victim of forces seeking to secure a periphery capitalism status for the country and to emasculate genuine socialist revolutionary forces.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s we see emerging, especially outside Greece, a small but growing generation of neorevisionists. Led by scholars such as John O. Iatrides, they are treating the tragic Greek decade of the 1940s by employing a complex and comprehensive perspective. For them, reality is a product of a multiplicity of factors functioning at the local

regional and global levels which makes it especially hard to identify "devils" and "angels". Rather, the players are seen trapped by forces beyond their control as they pursue their interests on a vital geostrategic stage. The players, politicians, diplomats and soldiers, are scrutinized with special emphasis on what they *do* rather than what they *say*.

Vassilis Kondis' book is indeed a pioneer of the neorevisionist variety written in the Greek language. It is an excellent book, a major contribution to the scholarly analysis of the civil war period. Kondis' meticulous research is based primarily on archival material of the British Foreign Office and of the war office of the State Department. In addition, the author has consulted the papers of the Tsouderos archives, as well as documents contained in the historical archives of the Greek General Staff. Further, he has used the papers of Harry S. Truman and some of his close associates. Unfortunately, the archives of the Greek Foreign Ministry still remain closed due to the "50 year rule" employed by Greece. It will be interesting to see, when these archives are finally made available to scholars, in about ten years from now, whether new light will be shed fueling the engines of neorevisionist historians.

In eight chapters arranged in chronological sequence, Kondis succinctly analyzes British and American postwar policies toward Greece. This wide focus permits him also to review the policies and practices of the Athens government and its communist opponents against a backdrop of developments in Yugoslavia, elsewhere in the Balkans, and in the Soviet Union. The author presents the stated motives of each of the protagonists, free of ideological and emotional preoccupation, assuming in every case that they were acting to maximize their interests regardless of the brand of rhetoric and rationalization which they employed.

Great Britain is the dominant actor in the Greek setting in the 1945-46 period. She is portrayed as acting in a fashion designed to maximize British strategic interests in the Mediterranean region. Translated into specific policies, this called for the return of King George II to Greece, and the checkmating of the all-powerful communist movement that in 1944 enjoyed control of most of the Greek countryside. In return for securing an unencumbered hand in Greece, the British had to temper their responses to Soviet interference in Rumania, Bulgaria and other parts of Eastern Europe. Churchill wanted at all costs to avoid a confrontation with Stalin in which the latter would utter with indignation words such as "I did not interfere with your action in Greece [1944], why do you not give the same latitude in Rumania?"

The United States, the successor power to Britain in the Mediterranean, took the back seat in Greece and Turkey in the 1945-46 period. Deferring to British choices in every turn, it would occasionally and mildly rebuke, or distance itself from, British maneuvers as in the case of the handling of the battle of Athens in December 1944. This situation drastically changed following Britain's power decline and its precipitate decision to pull out of active regulation of the Greek-Turkish region.

The United States moved fast to fill the power vacuum early in 1947—the declaration of the Truman Doctrine—in order to prevent a victory of the communist side which would have turned Greece into a People's Republic, would have outflanked Turkey and would have opened up the floodgates of Soviet expansionism. The price of American interference in Greece, Kondis' book clearly demonstrates, was that Americans through the administration of massive military and economic aid programs virtually assumed control of day to day management of the Greek economy and polity.

Soviet policies, too, are portrayed as being interest-motivated despite the great ideo-

logical distances separating the Soviet Union from the Anglo-Americans. The book fully documents how the Soviets followed an "opportunistic" foreign policy in December 1944 during the battle of Athens. By not substantively supporting, not even verbally, the Greek communist bid for power, the Soviets stood to gain in either eventuality. If the Greek communists won, one more friendly regime would have appeared in the Balkans. If the British won, then the Soviets could point out to the British how scrupulously they had respected the October 1944 Moscow understanding regarding spheres and percentages of influence. Further, the Soviets could justify the use of active measures in Hungary, Rumania and Bulgaria by reminding the British of their own manipulations in Greece. For the Soviets, the outcome of the civil war had never been linked to an ironclad "commitment". On the contrary, by late 1948, given the Soviet fears of a scenario that could lead to the extension of American presence in Albania and following Marshal Tito's policies of regional aggrandizement in the Balkans, the Soviets advised the Greek communists to cut their losses and to suspend the struggle.

The book focuses also on a pragmatic evaluation of the two immediate protagonists of the Greek civil conflict, the Nationalists and the Communists. Kondis clearly adopts a neorevisionist stance by demolishing the twin myths (born of orthodox and revisionist parents respectively) which presented the Athens government, on one hand, as a pliable sub-imperialist puppet of the Anglo-Americans, and the Greek communists, on the other hand, as willing instruments of Moscow's aggression. Our author convincingly demonstrates that both sides to the tragic quarrel had plans and objectives which first and foremost involved the attainment and maintenance of internal political power.

The Athens government solicited British, and later American, support for it realized that without it the civil war would be lost. In order to secure British support, however, it had to downplay (postpone) Greek national claims in British-ruled Cyprus. It pressed vigorously, however, claims against Albania and Bulgaria and called for the cession of the Dodecanese islands from Italy to Greece.

On their part, the communists who badly needed to secure privileged sanctuaries in Balkan state territories so as to carry out their hit and run guerrilla operations, emphasized national claims against the British in Cyprus and against the Italians in the Dodecanese, while keeping a very low profile on claims against Bulgaria and Albania. Ultimately, Greece only succeeded in regaining the Dodecanese from war-defeated Italy, the one national claim in which both sides to the Greek civil war were solidly united in pressing.

The more one reads books of the Kondis variety, the more he or she realizes that the puzzle was indeed complicated, that opportunities for mixed signals and miscalculations were plentiful, and that we should not be too harsh in judging the behavior of our fathers and grandfathers. Books such as Kondis' will greatly contribute to depolarizing attitudes about the Greek civil war and help heal a major social and political wound.

In closing, we should keep in mind that "good history" should not necessarily conclude that both sides to every conflict should share the blame equally. Not all conflicts are products of mutual misperceptions, accidental forces and other such variables. Invariably there have been wars involving pure heroes and pure villains. But good history calls for the identification of wise leaders as well as fools who unfortunately abound on both sides. Ultimately good history calls for reaching one's conclusions *after* rather than *before* the collection of the relevant evidence. Kondis, in my view, has accomplished that task quite well.