

and that such a situation made them vulnerable to totalitarian aggression (i.e., Soviet Communism) as in the period following World War I, then America's perception became America's reality and thus brought about a foreign policy that was based on the best information of the time. If one disregards the impact of the civil war in Greece, it follows that the United States deserves condemnation for using military means to deal with what would have automatically become an economic problem. If one ignores the rightists in Greece and assumes that the various other political groups could have reached an accommodation, then Kofas might be correct in declaring that "A plausible solution to the sociopolitical and economic problems would have required the formation of a centerleft coalition committed to the strengthening of the state, the launching of fundamental social reforms, and the development of agriculture and industry" (p. 167).

Historians, however, cannot ignore the obvious. The Greek situation, though grounded in economic difficulties, had escalated into a military problem that needed resolution *before* economic assistance could have a chance to work. Kofas is correct in arguing that the United States exaggerated the Soviet threat in Greece and that the Truman Doctrine did not resolve the country's economic problems. But he is on extremely shaky ground in declaring that the "tragic Third Round could have been avoided if the United States had been predisposed to accept a political rather than a military solution" (pp. 97-98). The Truman Doctrine was not the catalyst" (p. 98) for the war; the Third Round was a natural followup to the First and Second Rounds that had been fought *before* the U.S. intervention. The American Mission for Aid to Greece, Kofas nonetheless insists, did little for the Greek economy "because it concentrated its efforts on the more exigent military problem" (p. 100). An accurate statement would be that AMAG did little for the Greek economy because it *had* to concentrate its efforts on the country's military problem.

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Yorgos A. Kourvetaris and Betty A. Dobratz, *A Profile of Modern Greece: In Search of Identity*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1987, ix + 226 p.

This is not a very good book and it is extraordinary that OUP should have published it. As a profile or outline of modern Greece it falls a long way behind McNeill's study, *The Metamorphosis of Greece since World War 2*, now more than a decade old. No overarching interpretation emerges from its pages, and what we are given instead is a loose bundle of assorted facts and other people's theories.

For all the methodological problems associated with the concept, the idea of trying to define the characteristics of a given nation's identity continues to attract us. Rightly, I believe: glancing at what has been done on this subject for, say, France and Germany, we await something of comparable quality for Greece, a country where this subject has a particular resonance. The comments of Kourvetaris and Dobratz, however, on the question of identity are rather disappointing: they quote without comment Ikaris' view that 'modern Greece was reborn after centuries of foreign oppression because the Greek consciousness learned from bitter experience to retain its cultural heritage when barbaric masters were about to snatch it away and destroy it utterly' (p. 178). On page 147 they refer to the 'cultural

and institutional continuity that has transmitted and maintained Greek identity throughout its long turbulent history'. This sort of vulgar nationalism should have no place today in any serious scholar's arsenal.

In general the authors give their own opinions second place to those of others. The book is really a survey—or better, compendium—of the existing literature on modern Greece. As such it is of doubtful value: summaries of other works are not always reliable and the authors are reluctant to pass judgement on them. Sometimes one text is cited to modify the interpretation of another, but without any indication being given of which the reader should accept (e.g. pp. 120-121). This makes it difficult to follow the authors' argument.

Nor can it be said that the text is a pleasure to read. One comes across sentences like: 'Greece's irregular and colourful landscape with its steep mountains, hills, valleys, basins, islands and coastline of 15,021 km, or 9,334 miles, never bores travellers' (p. 8). There are too many concatenations of abrupt, short sentences, each beginning faithfully with the subject of the verb (p. 71). After a while one begins to long for a little stylistic variation.

The book does have some good points. There is a lot of information on recent affairs, and students may appreciate having all this in one book. Yet a comparison with the last comprehensive survey of modern Greece, Campbell and Sherrard's *Modern Greece* (1968), does not work to the advantage of this work. Yes, it is more up-to-date, but without their predecessors' sure judgement this has made Kourvetaris and Dobratz hostages to fortune. I suspect they were aware of this themselves and became even more cautious in their judgements than might otherwise have been the case. Or is 'cautious' the right word? Referring to PASOK's claim in 1985 to have permanently reoriented the country, they comment: 'While it is too early to determine how 'permanent' the reorientation is, the road to change appears to be a Greek one with socialist elements' (p. 92). This looks suspiciously like a classic combination of truism and error. Unfortunately the book contains many other such remarks. The search for Greece's identity continues.

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Howard Jones, *"A New Kind of War", America's Global Strategy and the Truman Doctrine in Greece*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1989, 316 pp.

Flying once from Honolulu to Saigon at the height of the Vietnam war, I noticed McGeorge Bundy, still at that time National Security Advisor but soon to be replaced by Walt Whitman Rostow, reading a copy of George Kousoulas' book on the Greek Civil war, *Revolution and Defeat: the Story of the Greek Communist Party*. Why had Bundy chosen this volume, published the year before, as reading material on an official trip to Vietnam? Because, it appeared, he thought there might be something in the American experience in Greece that could be applied seventeen years later in Southeast Asia.

At the time it seemed to me that this was a futile exercise. There was no lesson to be learned unless it was that the United States and its Vietnamese allies needed another Tito to close the Lao and Cambodian borders. In later years I decided this was too cavalier a