

William P. Kaldis, *John Capodistrias and the Modern Greek State*. Madison: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1963, VII + 126 pp.

This book provides in English an outline account of the career of John Capodistrias, Russian foreign minister and later President of Greece. It does not, as the title would suggest, explain to what extent the governmental institutions of Modern Greece owe their existence to the work of Capodistrias. A study of these lines would have required a general survey of Greek institutions and a detailed examination of governmental arrangements at the time of Otho. In this book no clear picture emerges of the state to which, we are asked to believe, Capodistrias made a great contribution.

Capodistrias and all those he called upon for help had many plans, as did their predecessors; but it is not clear from this study to what extent exactly these blue-prints of government were carried into execution. The little evidence produced in this work suggests that in fact not much was done to lay the foundations of the modern Greek state. There were many good intentions (such as would have occurred to anyone who had travelled outside Greece or who had a little knowledge of the French Revolution and of the Empire). Capodistrias himself had the advantage of having moved in governmental and intellectual circles and, at the Congress of Vienna, of having taken part in the settlement of Switzerland. But though he may have got down on paper the outline of a paternal despotism, which was alien to the Greek democratic spirit, he certainly never succeeded in making it work. Most Greeks would have agreed with the broad outlines of some of the administrative measures he hoped to introduce. But few Greeks of importance (even those who supported him had frequently ulterior motives) would allow him the role of benevolent dictator ruling through friends and a version of the Code Napoléon—for the simple reason that they were Greeks, proud and independent, and out to get a place of honour as a reward for their services during the hard-fought war of liberation. Capodistrias, though a Hellenist, had little use for Hellenists in the flesh. He denounced the Primates as Turks, the *Capitani* as robbers, the Intellectuals as fools and the Fanariots as children of the devil. He ignored the democratic principles of the Greek revolution and his interference with military matters, about which he knew nothing, nearly lost for Greece the Western Provinces. So great was the opposition against him that he of all people was not likely to succeed in laying the foundations of an ordered state.

The story of the political opposition to Capodistrias is in this work sketchily told, as is also the history of his earlier diplomatic career and of the events in Greece prior to his arrival as President. This "background" material, which takes up nearly one half of this book, is somewhat haphazard and sometimes naïve and the frequent documentation is quite casual, there being no discriminating use of sources. Of much more value are the pages describing the local insti-

tutions of Greece under the Turcocracy. The sections on the attempted military reorganisation in Greece, on the central organs of government, and on Capodistrias's interest in education are also of value: They bring together useful specialist information, most of which is already to be found in Greek secondary sources. But in the presentation of this material little attempt is made to distinguish between intention and real achievement. Many will be surprised to read: "The reorganisation of the army was one of the most significant developments in this period. Capodistrias, with an effective army at his disposal, was able to bring pressure on the great powers, England, France, and Russia, in their discussions of the final frontier settlement." All one can say is that if Capodistrias had had such army at his disposal he might possibly have become a political architect of some consequence.

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John A. Alexander, *Potidaea. Its History and Remains*. Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1963. 146 pp., 23 plates.

Research on the Northern Greek region is seriously behind in practically all areas, especially in the areas of history and archaeology. For this reason any new effort in these two fields becomes both precious and welcome. Thus, it was with great joy that we saw appear John A. Alexander's monograph on Potidaea, bearing the sub-title "Its History and Remains." Dr. Alexander, of Greek origin, is at present Professor of History in Georgia State College, Atlanta. When he was still a student he had the opportunity to take part in the excavations his professor, D. M. Robinson, was then carrying out in Olynthus and was therefore able to visit the Potidaea area in 1938 and study it locally. From what he writes, he does not seem to have had a chance to visit the place recently or to look again at the finds, so that he might change or confirm his previous observations.

With his monograph Dr. Alexander aimed at collecting all information and archaeological finds related to Potidaea so as to compose an historical monograph on it. His intention was certainly laudable, but I am afraid he was immediately faced with a basic difficulty which has been proved insurmountable: lack of enough evidence to allow him a more or less perfect synthesis. At any rate, the author divides the material he has into 7 chapters. In the first one he examines the problem of where Potidaea was situated, its topography, the archaeological remains and the findings of the area. His second chapter "From the founding of Potidaea to the Persian War (ca. 600 - 490 B.C.);" he divides further into 6 smaller sections: a) Pre-corinthian occupation of the site b) The resources of the new city c) Government d) Religion e) The Potidaean Treasury at Delphi f) Dedicatory inscription of a Potidaean at Delphi.

In the following III - VII chapters he gives the historical events pertaining to the town from 490 to 316 B.C., and inserts as a chapter