

Abstracts

JACQUES THOBIE

FRANCE, GREECE AND THE BALKANS DURING THE THIRTIES

The geographical position of the modest Balkan States gave them an eminent importance as to the foreign relations of the Powers that led, or believed they led, the affairs of Europe. This paper tries, through the example of France, to answer this question: did Paris develop a coherent policy regarding the Balkans in the interwar period? Studied on the basis of the *Documents Diplomatiques Français*, the problem for France during the thirties was to face the increasing German influence in both the economic and commercial spheres, and to maintain its traditional alliances. In spite of critical observations, a certain coherence can be observed in the French attitudes: a looseness, without abandonment, towards its main alliances of the post-war period, such as Yugoslavia and Romania; a shy expectancy with Greece; a determined and dogged quest for Turkish friendship that brought about a too late recovery of what could have been a real Balkan policy. More, with the German-Soviet pact of August 1939, France suddenly saw the strategic basis of its main aims disappear. Finally, the area was to be reduced to a regional importance in the coming war.

CONSTANTIN SVOLOPOULOS

THE ATTITUDE OF GREECE FACING THE BRIAND PLAN FOR A FEDERAL UNION OF EUROPE

This article analyses the Greek attitude to Briand's plan for the unification of Europe and examines the individual stances of the chief political representatives and the reaction of Greek public opinion.

Particular attention is paid to the positive responses of the Greek Go-

vernment and its leaders: Eleftherios Venizelos, Andreas Michalakopoulos, and Nikolaos Politis.

The study is based on investigations carried out in the diplomatic archives of Greece, France, and Great Britain, and in the archives of the League of Nations and Eleftherios Venizelos.

D. J. DELIVANIS

FRENCH ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL POLICY IN THE THIRTIES

France tried in the thirties to apply an orthodox monetary, economic and fiscal policy, which reduced the purchasing power of its inhabitants. Thus, French imports diminished and so the possibility of foreign debtors paying their debts was substantially curtailed. The same policy was applied towards the Balkan States by the other Great Powers except Germany, which thus secured many advantages, at first in trade and afterwards also in politics.

DIMITRIS MICHALOPOULOS

THE FRENCH ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE 1934 BALKAN PACT

The conclusion of the 1934 Balkan Pact was one of the major preoccupations of French diplomacy when it was pursuing the consolidation of peace in that region of Europe. The Quai d'Orsay therefore aimed at persuading every "concerned country" to sign the Pact. Finally, Bulgaria and Albania did not do so. The first because it continued to view the Neuilly Treaty as provisional and the second for the reason that the Italian fascist government mistrusted the whole affair of the rapprochement between the Balkan countries and exercised its influence over Tirana to that effect. Nevertheless, the four signatories of the Pact (Yugoslavia, Rumania, Greece and Turkey) guaranteed mutually all their Balkan frontiers—even those with Albania and Bulgaria. This was an important success for the French Foreign Ministry, but unfortunately an ephemeral one, given that the enemies of peace were already numerous in Europe.

*GEORGES CASTELLAN*FRENCH POLICIES IN THE BALKANS IN THE FACE OF THE
REOCCUPATION OF THE RHINELAND (MARCH 7, 1936):
IN ACCORDANCE WITH FRENCH DIPLOMATIC DOCUMENTS

From the French diplomatic documents published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the author successively studies the first French reaction against Hitler's bold stroke of reoccupying the Rhineland and the response of the various capitals of Central and Balkanic Europe; all were apparently ready to support drastic action by France. The second part analyses the British reaction, in fact radically appeasing, so the French government, unable to change, adopted these views. The third part displays repercussions of the "French passiveness" in the capitals of the Little Entente and Balkan Pact: it was an indisputable loss of credit and glamour for France. To conclude, reoccupying the Rhineland was a caesura in the history of the inter-war period in Europe and heralded the future Europe of Hitler.

*ELISABETH DU REAU*FRANCE'S MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY AND THE BALKANS
(APRIL 1939 - MAY 1940)

This paper refers to France's policy in the Eastern Mediterranean and especially in the Balkans on the eve and during the first eight months of World War II. What was the importance of the Balkans in French strategy? What were the objectives of the High Command, particularly at a time of rapprochement between France and the Balkan States of Romania, Greece and Turkey? What possibilities existed for a combined Franco-British plan of military intervention in this area? These are some questions which this paper tries to answer.

JOHN KOLIOPOULOS

GREEK FOREIGN POLICY AND STRATEGY, 1939-1941

In the years 1939-1941, British support and protection, more than association with the Axis powers, was the basic premise of Greece's foreign

relations. In this respect, General Metaxas' policy was more "traditional" than either his apologists or his critics would be prepared to concede, in the sense that he tried to align Greek foreign policy with that of the Great Powers considered at the time to be predominant in the Mediterranean. This policy, however, did not move in line with Greek strategy, particularly after the Italian attack on Greece in October 1940, when Greek strategic requirements and Britain's inability to send adequate assistance to Greece strained relations between the two countries and sealed the fate of the campaign against the German invaders in April 1941.

YANNIS G. MOURELOS

FRENCH AND GREEKS DURING THE PHONEY WAR

The idea of creating a Balkan front preoccupied the Allies from the very beginning of the war. This paper relates the French-inspired plan of sending military forces to Salonika and its consequences both on inter-allied relations and on relations between the Allies and the Balkan states.

The futility of this plan is also highlighted by the diversity of points of view expressed by the main protagonists: Premiers Edouard Daladier and Paul Reynaud, the Foreign Ministry's secretary-general Alexis Léger, Generals Maurice Gamelin and Maxime Weygand on the French side; Premier John Metaxas and General Alexander Papagos on the Greek side.

ANNIE GUENARD

FRANCE'S CULTURAL POLICY IN THE BALKAN STATES DURING THE
INTERWAR YEARS

This is the first approach to a study of France's cultural policy in the Balkan States during the interwar years.

First, we present the essential features of France's cultural presence during this particular span of time. It was very strongly marked by the teaching of French language and civilisation which had been initiated at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. In this part of the world, France's cultural presence was organised through various primary and secondary educational institutions: religious orders, secondary schools, "Instituts

Français" belonging to the French Foreign Office ("Service des œuvres françaises à l'Etranger"), "Alliance Française", "Sociétés des Amis de la France" and institutions under the "Mission Laïque Française".

During this period, and particularly in the thirties, this cultural presence increasingly rooted itself in the reality of the rivalry opposing European Powers in Central Europe and the Balkans, and the growing importance of the fascist powers.

This rivalry can be seen in the development of cultural activities, and even of "propaganda", especially from Italy and Germany.

The study shows that from 1930 to 1935 France neglected to intensify the use of the cultural component in her foreign policy, and limited herself to the preservation of what already existed.

As from the autumn of 1936 there was a growing awareness of this fact, after which the situation was rectified. From then onwards it becomes possible to speak of a dynamic, aggressive, structured cultural policy with increased means conducted by the various governments until the War. This cultural policy then became a weapon with which to safeguard peace and at the same time a defence instrument of French power, more obviously than during the previous years.

In this study we show the means used to accomplish this recovery: massive donations of French books to universities and libraries; stronger presence in the universities and in scientific circles; search for influence in the provinces and in broader social layers; use of broadcasting and cinema.

The study mentions three examples of "nationalistic" resistance in countries trying to build their own national identity facing the French cultural presence. In Greece, in January 1931, the Act of Reform of Primary Education—the Papandreou Act; in Bulgaria the denunciation in the spring of 1939 of the French-Bulgarian School-Convention, and the same year in Yugoslavia growing difficulties. A quick appraisal shows, however, that on the eve of the War there was a considerable improvement of the French cultural presence in the Balkans. As a token of this desire for balance in inter-European relationships, we should mention particularly the signing of cultural agreements in December 1938 with Greece and March 1939 with Romania.

The conclusion stresses the twofold evolution of the French cultural presence in the Balkan States during these 20 years. This presence was not only literary and humanistic, it was also that of industrial France with her modern technology.

Within the context of European tensions, the French cultural presence became a full instrument of France's foreign policy: "information" and

"culture" pursued the same goal, i.e. to maintain French influence and to safeguard peace.

GEORGES FRERIS

THE PORTRAIT OF FRANCE THROUGH THE MODERN GREEK NOVEL OF
THE 30s

In this brief study the portrait of France is examined as it is seen and expressed through the novels of the 30s. An analysis is made of novels by Str. Myrivilis, G. Theotokas, St. Xefloudas, Th. Kastanakis, and M. Karagatsis, in which it is apparent that France still remains for the Greeks a liberal and democratic country, attracting the youth for its fashion and the free movement of ideas, a country where human rights are respected. A model country of bourgeois democracy, France no longer inspires Greek leftist thought.

Nevertheless, its various literary trends are still imitated by the Greek novelists who in their majority express the bourgeois mentality.

Finally, Paris is the city representing France (way of life, thinking etc.) and naturally through this analysis arises the myth of the French men and women with their main features being their care for their appearance, their wide education and their liberal ideas.

RENÉ GIRAULT

THE "FRENCH SCHOOL" OF HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The "French School" of History of International Relations was founded by Professor P. Renouvin, in Sorbonne, at the beginning of the Fifties. This well-known historian realized a synthesis between three main currents in French History: the old diplomatic History, the so-called "Histoire des Annales", and the French Marxist Economic History. Under the influence of J.-B. Duroselle, his successor at the Sorbonne, another field of research—the decision-making process—broadened the topics considered before by these historians. One might say today that this type of history is a global one, summarizing investigation made by many other historians.