

C. M. Woodhouse, *The Story of Modern Greece*. Faber & Faber, London, 1968. Pp. 318.

This thoughtful and well-written study by C.M. Woodhouse has as its main thesis that the history of the Greek nation is an unbroken continuity. Woodhouse is in complete agreement with the view that Greek history lacks the quality of a steady, coherent flow but insists that it has an underlying continuity which makes it impossible to say that the separate chapters of his story dealing with Byzantium, Turkokratia, and Greece since 1821 are anything but the history of a single nation. He demonstrates, effectively, that "one does not have to be a sentimental philhellene to recognize the continuity of Greek history through the recorded centuries and earlier. One only has to exercise a little common sense" (295-296). He accepts as objectively possible the views of Fallmerayer and others that the Greek lands were overrun by Slavs in the 6th century and that many other foreign tribes later poured in to compound the racial mixture but rightfully labels their implications as absurd. Indeed, no objective scholar can speak of the purity of any race or nation in modern times. What is important for Greek history is not the purity of the race but the fact that at the end of the process, as at the beginning, the Greek lands were occupied by people of whom the overwhelming majority, whatever their ancestry, spoke Greek, belonged to the Greek Orthodox Church, and called themselves *Romioi*, meaning Greeks. Moreover, their literary tradition also remained intact from classical times.

At first, it seems paradoxical that the modern Greek with his universal outlook has been constantly compelled to demonstrate the continuity of his history and traditions despite the overwhelming material and spiritual evidence at his command. Yet as late as a decade ago no one less than Anthony Eden, the British Prime Minister, flatly declared that the Greeks of Cyprus were not Greeks. And for over a century Turkey and Greece's northern neighbors have insisted, from time to time that the Greeks among them and in Greece were not Greeks. Thus the sensitivity of the Greek to the continuity of his ties with the Greek past can only be appreciated in the context of politics; in the struggle to maintain the independence of his nation-state against external pressures.

Throughout his book, Woodhouse also attempts to explain the disjointed and unstable character of Greek history. His basic point is that there are not and never have been any natural boundaries of Greece.

Few, if any, of the major factors that contribute to political stability — ethnic, linguistic, religious, historical, geographical, economic, and ideological — have ever coincided with the territorial limits of the Greek state. Thus, he argues, Greece has been constantly plagued with tensions and pressures, exacerbated further by the fact that since the Greeks had no natural frontier, their neighbors had none either, and that their unique geographical position has, time and again, exposed them to the greed and ambition of neighboring states and placed them in the midst of Great Power conflict. Woodhouse views the chronic instability of Greek political life as one of the constant factors in Greek history because “Greece lies at the focal point of the Mediterranean world, which is itself the area of overlap between Europe, Asia and Africa” and because “the world is not made easy for a country so situated, especially when its people’s talents and energy outrun the scope of its natural resources” (299). Tension and pressure have been part of the destiny of the Greeks for countless centuries. There is no reason to think it will ever be otherwise.

*The Story of Modern Greece* does not offer anything new to the specialists on Greek history but it is a most useful book for layman and general reader. It has, of course, the advantages and disadvantages usually found in a brief text encompassing an extensive and complicated period (324-1968) of history. There are a number of oversimplifications, points of confusion, and historical errors. Woodhouse is obviously not a specialist on Ottoman Turkish history. The Emirate of Osman or the Ottoman Turks did not capture Tripoli in Syria (1289), Acre and Jerusalem (1291). The Ottoman Turks were simply one of numerous Turkish groups who established themselves in Anatolia following the decline of the Seljukid Turks. They were not masters of Anatolia until the 15th century (84-85). The intervention of Timurlenk in Anatolia in 1402 was due to the pleas of the Turkish emirates in Anatolia that the Ottoman Turks were breaking Muslim law by trying to take over their territories by force. Bayizid refused to heed Timurlenk’s warning to leave the Turkish Anatolian emirates alone and was defeated in battle after his Turkish troops defected to Timurlenk’s lines. (88). In the early Ottoman period Christian Timariots did exist. (101). The Janissary force was established and expanded to strengthen the position of the early Sultans against the independent forces of the Turkish Uc, Beys or Gazzi Warriors. (101). The author is most knowledgeable in

dealing with the Greek War for Independence and with the period 1941 - 1952.

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Stephen G. Xydis, *Cyprus: Conflict and Conciliation, 1954-1958*. Columbus, Ohio State University Press, 1967. Pp. xviii + 704.

Relations between sovereign states often have such complexity that only when examined in the minutest detail can they be made fully comprehensible. Consequently, for the student of diplomacy there is no greater source of satisfaction than the opportunity to examine the confidential papers of decision makers for clues which give meaning and depth to officially released evidence. One can then analyze overt action with an eye to motivation and calculation, thus minimizing the risk that one's interpretation might require altering after subsequent disclosures.

In presenting this massive work, Professor Xydis has indeed greatly minimized such a risk. For in addition to tapping sources accessible to the diligent, he has achieved a veritable researcher's score by using the relevant papers of Evangelos Averoff-Tossitza, the Greek Foreign Minister during 1956-63. Although scholars may find it disconcerting that these papers are referred to without systematic documentation, one suspects that proper identification could not be offered at this time. Even with this limitation, Mr. Averoff has rendered scholarship a very great service by making available this material so soon after the events to which it pertains.

In addition to the Averoff papers, the author has relied very heavily on the official and verbatim records (which sometimes do not exactly tally!) of the United Nations General Assembly's sixth-thirteenth sessions, the published records of the debates in the Greek Parliament (1955-59), the Turkish Grand National Council (1956-57), and the British House of Commons (1951-58). He also refers to numerous other official and unofficial publications. There is an extensive bibliography, and almost one hundred pages of notes constitute a real mine of information. Various diplomatic exchanges connected with Greece's resort to the United Nations are included in the appendices.