

George Hoffman, "Thessaloniki: The Impact of a Changing Hinterland," *East European Quarterly*, March 1968, Volume 2, Number 1, Pp. 1-27.

Modern countries in the business of building their economies can rely on natural resources available or create conditions where potential industries might develop. Greece has such industrial potentials. An understanding of this potential is made clear to the reader of George Hoffman's article on "Thessaloniki: The Impact of a Changing Hinterland," who attempts to analyze the historical relationship between the port of Thessaloniki and its hinterland. An interesting point one can draw from such an excellent study in economic geography is that "the total trade turnover and the size of the port, its efficiency of operation, including the service of one or more free zones," depends on the understanding of the importance of the port to its hinterland. "The larger and closer the relationship between a port and its hinterland permitting the flow of trade, the more important is the position of the port."

It is indeed this fact that has been so far neglected. A port such as Thessaloniki is and can be an excellent resource and asset to the country if two conditions are realized. First, one has to realize that Thessaloniki historically, as Dr. Hoffman pointed out in his article, has been an important port that brought prosperity to the city itself and to the hinterland that it served during the Greek, Roman, Byzantine, and later to the Ottoman Empires, making it one of the great centers of those nations. Second, every time the hinterland was disrupted by political disputes and various boundaries were set up, the effectiveness and trade of the port weakened.

Presently the port of Thessaloniki plays a rather insignificant role within Greece's foreign imports. According to Dr. Hoffman, it handles only 12 per cent of all foreign imports (page 25). As far as any commercial needs are concerned Thessaloniki simply serves Northern Greece alone. Its effectiveness as a port has been minimized due to the political disputes with neighboring countries which necessitated in cutting off Thessaloniki's hinterland. With the present industrialization of Northern Greece, however, Thessaloniki's trade also is on the increase; but this is minimal and it will never reach any exceptional growth unless the Boston millionaire, Thomas Pappas, together with Standard Oil Company of New Jersey (Esso), the city merchants, the

Greek government, and finally the neighboring governments who have a direct interest with the growth of the port realize that Thessaloniki's position has to be seen in reference and in relationship with a larger hinterland than it serves now. A hinterland that can cover all Balkan nations making it a crossroad between the Adriatic and the Black Sea, and serving all places from the Danube down to the Aegean Sea. Thessaloniki seems to be the natural entry of all cargos to those places. Especially all the oil cargos that come from the Middle East.

In addition, all concerned have to realize and have to be convinced of the economic advantages that such an arrangement can offer utilizing the port to its full potential. Only then one can see the positive resources that the port can bring. Rotterdam in Northern Europe offers an excellent example of such understanding and arrangement permitting the free flow of trade between a port and its politically diverse hinterland. Why not Thessaloniki?

Dr. Hoffman in his article made it abundantly clear that Thessaloniki has been and can fulfill many functions. It can be a transportation center for a larger hinterland, an important administrative center, a great manufacturing city, and an excellent display center. It has available resources to start developing its potential. It already has a free zone which can be expanded to serve neighboring countries; it already has an annual industrial and agricultural display — the International Fair — which can attract foreign capital; it already has an industrial nucleus of oil refinery, steel mill, cotton industries, and many other small industrial developments. In addition, it has a fairly well developed road connection with a number of major Balkan cities. All these new developments can bring a major change and growth to the city and to the country if the hinterland is enlarged. There is no reason why such a potential cannot be developed effectively.

This is what Professor Hoffman has shown implicitly in his article. Basically his analysis aimed at the historical relationship of the "strategically located port to its hinterland." Obviously such an analysis could not be undertaken successfully without an examination of the long history of the port of Thessaloniki, "its temporary interruptions, and the rapid recuperative power in view of the many political-geographical changes in the hinterland. Only in this way could conclusions about the viability of Thessaloniki at various periods throughout history be assessed." To this Dr. Hoffman has applied his excellent

scholarly abilities stating extremely well all the pertinent historical facts of the port and of the city.

In addition, this article offers the reader an excellent historical review of the city and its port. A historian will find it accurate, an economist very interesting, a government official worth investigating the possibilities that it offers, and a citizen can very well find in it an excellent account of the history and neglected potential of his own hometown.

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Hilary Pym, *Songs of Greece*, Collected and Translated. Illustrated by Rosemary Grimble. The Sunday Times, London, 1968. Pp. 96.

This little handbook for the pocket, some eight cubic inches in volume, is offered as a companion for travellers, obviously English-speaking, who on their Greek tours may want a local song in their mind and heart. It is in fact a selection of traditional poetry in a topographical order. The tourist is to take it with him as a kind of lyrical gazeteer for the purpose of giving himself a literary interest in the map of Greece printed before the introduction, "not by adding to the information he already has about the classical sites but by giving human interest to the place-names of now." The principle followed by the translator is that a particular song gains by association with a particular spot, either by the title, or by a mention in the text, or by having been collected from that place. The aim is "to keep the spirit and simplicity of the originals." On the whole, this aim is well fulfilled.

Classification of Greek folk poetry is not altogether easy. Passow divides it into eight categories, which to some may seem somewhat over-elaborate. Abbott's arrangement involves a main distinction of the Heroic (subdivided into historic and choral) from the Romantic (subdivided into idylls and love songs, dancing songs, miscellaneous and distichs). A. S. Georgiou following yet another scheme puts the Klephtika in between the Heroic and Historical sections and the poems which he classifies as Erotika, Lyrika and Bacchika. Pym's topographical treatment of the material, little as there is of it in this booklet, is novel and certainly attractive but creates problems which other anthologists in the same field had to face. Recognition is shown (p. 10) that in