The Greek Review of Social Research

Vol 15 (1973)

15-16

George G. Arnakis: The near east in modern times. Volume I: The ottoman empire and the balkan states to 1900

Dimitri Kitsikis

doi: 10.12681/grsr.414

Copyright © 1973, Dimitri Kitsikis

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0.

To cite this article:

The absence of Russia is a great mistake in a book like this which has the ambition to help understand the unity of the Intermediate Region, because of the great importance this people played in the last millennium of the «intermediate» history of this area of civilization. To present, as the author does, the Russian State as an external factor to the Eastern Question, on the same level as England for instance, is a very common mistake among historians which prevents us once again from understanding the significance of the internal struggle of the area, which has always been the will of each one of the peoples of the Intermediate Region to hold the sceptre of its Oecumenical Empire in Istanbul. Thus we fail to understand the process by which an external power, England, intervenes in the «civil war» going on in the area for the succession of the Istanbul throne and helps the Turks maintain the throne by repelling both the internal contender from the South (the Arabs of Mohammed Ali) and the Rumanians, Albanians, Greeks, Turks, Jews, Arabs, Persians, that is from Belgrad in the West to the Indus River in the East and from Arkhangelsk in the North to Ethiopia in the South.

No textbook has ever been written on the history of this Intermediate Region. The first important effort in this direction was made however by L.S. Stavrianos when, in 1958, Rinehart of New York published his remarkable The Balkans since 1453. This book encompasses only one part of the Intermediate Region, the western quarter of it, describing five centuries of its history. At the same time a parallel effort was made in French by a Lebanese historian Jawad Boulos, published in five volumes by Mouton of The Hague, under the title Les peuples et les civilisations du Proche-Orient et de la Méditerranée. The book by Arnakis, the third volume of which is still to be published, also studies the whole area with the exception again of Russia, but only covers the 19th and 20th centuries.

The absence of Russia is a great mistake in a book like this which has the ambition to help understand the unity of the Intermediate Region, because of the great importance this people played in the last millennium of the «intermediate» history of this area of civilization. To present, as the author does, the Russian State as an external factor to the Eastern Question, on the same level as England for instance, is a very common mistake among historians which prevents us once again from understanding the significance of the internal struggle of the area, which has always been the will of each one of the peoples of the Intermediate Region to hold the sceptre of its Oecumenical Empire in Istanbul. Thus we fail to understand the process by which an external power, England, intervenes in the «civil war» going on in the area for the succession of the Istanbul throne and helps the Turks maintain the throne by repelling both the internal contender from the South (the Arabs of Mohammed Ali) and the internal contender from the North (the Russians of Nicholas Ist.). It equally fails to understand why so many prominent Greeks continued their close


As curious as it may sound, the civilization of one third of Eurasia still awaits definition. Traditionally cut between the classical distinction of West and East, the «cradle» of world civilization which lies in a circle around Eastern Mediterranean, and more precisely around a fabulous city, Istanbul (otherwise called Byzantium, Constantinople, Polis, Tsarigrad) has never been presented by historians in its unity. This «intermediate region» between West and East, encompasses the Orthodox Christian Slavs (including the Russians) the Rumanians, Albanians, Greeks, Turks, Jews, Arabs, Persians, that is from Belgrad in the West to the Indus River in the East and from Arkhangelsk in the North to Ethiopia in the South.
collaboration in Istanbul with the Ottoman Emperor, even after the making of a
break of the Second World War. It is highly desirable that in the near future
a synthetic history of the Intermediary Region in modern times, including
Eurasia, it situates the Balkans in the side» and not from the Western angle.

The bibliography of both volumes is not satisfactory. The once more repeated,
which argument is wrong, argument that «for practical reasons» it was necessary
in order to limit it to what was available in English, does not save it from criticism as
useful books in English are not mentioned while others of highly doubtful
importance are brought in.

DIMMITI KITISIKIS, Ph. D.
Professeur agrégé d’Histoire à l’Université d’Ottawa.

Αι περί ιδιοκτησίας απόψεων εν τῇ ἐκ
cλησι κατά τοὺς τρεῖς πρῶτους αἰῶ

'Εκδόσεις Πιστωτικοχριστιανού Ιδρύματος Πα
tερκινίων Μελετέων, 'Αναλεκτα Βλατάδων
13, Θεσσαλονίκη 1972, σ. 201, ἀπὸ 'Αρχιμανδρίτου Νεκταρίου Χατζημιχάλη.

Εἰς καλλιτεχνικὴ καὶ λίγα ἐπιμε
mελήμενην ἐκδόσιν ἐκκλησιοφόρησε τῇ
λειτουργίᾳ ἡ διδακτικὴ διατριβὴ τοῦ
Πανοσιολογιωτάτου συγγραμμάτου τοῦ
Π.Ν. Χατζημιχάλη, διδάκτου τοῦ Καθολικοῦ
Πανεπιστημίου τοῦ Στρατού Λευκαδίου, ἑπί τῶν ἀρχαίων
statements: Αἱ περὶ ιδιοκτησίας απόψεων εν τῇ Ἑκκλησίᾳ κατὰ τοὺς τρεῖς πρῶτους αἰῶνας: Η διατριβὴ αὕτη ἐκαθιορίζεται εἰς τὴν θεολογικὴν Σχολὴν τοῦ Πανεπιστημίου τῆς Θεσσαλονίκης καὶ ένεκῆ ἀποθήκης.