

main thing needed is a change of heart, an understanding that in this field, too, one is supposed to work seriously.

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THE GREEK STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE, 1821–1833. By *Douglas Dakin*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973. viii, 344 pp. \$13.00.

Douglas Dakin, a distinguished British historian well known for his work in modern Greek history, offers English-language readers a narrative and interpretive account of the Greek revolt for independence during 1821–33. Drawing on an extensive but still incomplete literature, Dakin assembles many parts of a complicated story in an effort to produce a comprehensive history—an objective that has eluded generations of writers in and out of Greece.

The book, rich with information not readily available to Balkanists, could have served as a useful synthesis of current scholarship, but without footnotes its value diminishes even to specialists. The primitive state of the field, evidenced by inadequate bibliographic aids, makes source citation indispensable for anything but the most general introduction. Treated separately and in great detail, the diplomatic, military, political, and social dimensions of the revolt—in Greece and abroad—fail to coalesce into a coherent account. Pages of unconnected facts swamp and bewilder the reader; the outfitting of a Greek fleet and an ill-fated venture to secure steamships take up several pages, while the disposal of “national” property, an affair of great consequence, is buried in a long explanatory note. Still, Dakin relates several crucial episodes masterfully—for example, Byron and the philhellenes.

Many readers will be surprised by Dakin’s thoughts on Greek “character”: the Greek enlightenment spread rapidly because the “lowliest Greek is usually nimble-witted and curious, ready to believe anything that smacks of news and novelty”; resistance to central authority was intense, “because of the national character—the excessive subtlety of mind, the love of intrigue, the tendency to emotional extremes, the desire of everyone to lead and the reluctance to be led.” These are notions discredited and discarded by serious writers generations ago.

Dakin’s appreciation of the intricate play of international and native forces survives the narrative, and some of his interpretations square with the best recent work. He properly emphasizes the important struggle between modernizers seeking to impose a central authority, and local oligarchs intent on extending their traditional prerogatives. Furthermore, he never loses sight of the dominant role of Europe’s great powers, deeply enmeshed in checking each other’s ambitions in Southeastern Europe.

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THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE, THE GREAT POWERS, AND THE STRAITS QUESTION, 1870–1887. By *Barbara Jelavich*. Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1973. xi, 209 pp. \$6.95.

The continued control of the Turkish government over the maritime passage from the Aegean to the Black Sea has been periodically challenged by one or another

of the European powers, and the regulations governing the Straits have from time to time been revised according to the power or lack of power of the Ottoman government to resist demands, and according to the general diplomatic situation. In the critical period surveyed in the present study the Ottoman state sank further and further into impotence, but the hostility of Great Britain to Russia made impossible the Muscovite dream of controlling the Straits and even securing possession of Constantinople. On the one hand the Russians, fearful of attack on their southern front, aimed at opening the Bosphorus and Dardanelles to Russian warships, while the British advocated complete opening to all nations or at least closure with provision for the sultan to call up the forces of friendly powers if he felt threatened by Russia.

This knotty problem has frequently been studied in the context of European diplomatic history, but Professor Jelavich is the first scholar to be able to utilize the now-published records of various foreign offices and of late the recently opened archives of Istanbul, Vienna, and London. Though for Russian policy she has had to rely, like her predecessors, on the fragmentary and not always reliable account of S. M. Goriainov, the vast diplomatic correspondence now available throws adequate light on Russian aims and policies. In a lucid, compact, and fully documented study she traces the evolution of the Straits problem from the London Conference of 1871, through the eclipse of Ottoman power in 1878 and the acute Central Asian crisis of 1885, to the Balkan imbroglio of 1887. During this entire period the Ottoman government was at the mercy of Britain and Russia, without whose acute antagonism the empire would certainly have disintegrated.

The author handles this problem in masterly fashion, as befits an expert on Russian foreign policy and European diplomatic history in general. Her essay is a definitive treatment that leaves little if anything to be desired. However, one might question her purpose in writing a supplementary chapter on the Bosnian crisis of 1908, which, though important, provides little opportunity for any novel contributions. It would have been more useful if she had analyzed the acute international crisis of 1895–97, in which the Straits question was of crucial importance and on which there is much that is obscure. One can only hope that she will continue her studies of this explosive issue, carrying the analysis at least to 1914 and if possible to 1923.

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THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE
UNITED KINGDOM AND GREEK EXPERIENCE. By *B. S. Markesinis*.
Foreword by *C. J. Hamson*. Cambridge Studies in International and Comparative
Law, 9. New York and London: Cambridge University Press, 1972. xvi,
283 pp. \$19.50.

This doctoral dissertation by Basil Markesinis, whose father, Spyros Markesinis, was to serve as the first prime minister of the second Greek Republic for a few weeks during October and November 1973, deals with the subject of the dissolution of parliament in terms of legal theory as well as in British, Greek, and Belgian practice. It is excellent from the legal-theoretical viewpoint but less so as a study in comparative politics. From the author's intentions as indicated in his introduction,