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THE GREEK STRUGGLE IN MACEDONIA, 1897-1913

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Published by Institute of Balkan Studies, Thessaloniki, 1966, pp. 538, $10.00.

(Reviewed by CHRIST ANASTASOFF)

In the logic of historiography, the title of Professor Dakin's book should have been "The Greek-Turkish Alliance Against the Movement of the Macedonian Bulgarians in their Struggle to Liberate the Country from the Tyrannu of Sultan Abdul Hamid's Maladministration." This title in itself would have given one a general idea of the contents of the book. An imposing volume, filled with explanatory footnotes consisting of either juggled half-truths or biased Hellenistic opinions, it would appear to the uninformed reader on the Balkan situation as a truly scholarly work.

Although the book contains an extensive bibliography, it omits the works of a number of internationally known British authorities on Macedonia. Had Professor Dakin's book been an impartial scholarly study of the "Greek Struggle in Macedonia," he could have readily found a publisher in Great Britain. Many other British have not only written about Macedonia, but they have actually traveled throughout the country, which was under Turkish rule until 1912. All of their observations and written works were published in England.

One could mention only a few of the many British scholars on the Macedonian question. We shall refer to such distinguished members of the Balkan Committee which was made up of members of Parliament and the House of Lords, such as Sir Edward Boyle; Noel and Charles R. Buxton, brothers; Lord Gladstone; James D. Bourchier, the distinguished Balkan correspondent of the London Times; Dr. H. N. Braisford, a philhellen who volunteered to fight in defense of Greece in the war with Turkey in 1897. As a member of the British Relief Committee, Braisford visited Macedonia to distribute food and clothing to the people of the country after the Bulgarian insurrection of 1903.

We can even include such archaeologists and travelers in the country as Sir Arthur Evans, Mackenzie and Irby, and others. Had Professor Dakin considered the works of these people, he could not have been caught by the bait of the Greek propaganda factory at Salonik. Or had he consulted the historical documents of the Ambassaderial Constantinople Conference of 1876 (before there was a Bulgarian state), he could have determined the nature and ethnic character of the Macedonian Slavs instead of accepting the Greek thesis that these Slavs are "Greeks" by virtue of religion, i.e., Eastern Orthodoxy.

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Greek Struggle in Macedonia, 1897-1913

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The decision of the Constantinople Conference in projecting the future Bulgarian state was based on the works of such ethnographic authorities as Professor Kiepert;s ethnographic map of 1876; the Czech Shafaric (1842); the Serb Davidovica (1848); the Frenchman Ami Bue (1847) and Lejian's of 1861; the Serbian Professor Jovejordins (1853); the Austrian Hahn of 1861; the Russian ethnographical map exhibited at the Slav Congress of 1867; the map of Mackenzie and Irby; and others.

All recent, authoritative, ethnographic maps are in accord with the above historically established documents. At this point, referral should also be made of G. Campbell (1877), showing the distribution of the Christian races in European Turkey; the English ethnographic map of Ed. Stanford (1877); the monumental Geographical Work and Atlas of Prof. Edward Freeman (1881); the Ethnographic map published by the Augustini Geographical Institute of Italy (1916-1918); the Ethnographical map published by the London Graphic (January, 1918) the map of Leon Dominian, published by the American Geographic Society (1917); those of the German Professors Kettler (1917), and Schafer (1918), and the map edited by G. Gabyr, Secretary of the General Union of Nationalities, Lausanne (1918).

Moreover, we should also refer Professor Dakin to Winston S. Churchill's book, The World Crisis (Charles Scribners and Sons, New York, 1949), in which he writes: "The imminent peril in which Serbia stood and the restricted conditions under which the Allies could afford her protection, made it indispensible that she should cede; if necessary, be made to surrender the uncontested zone in Macedonia to the Bulgarians, to whom it belonged by race, by history, by treaty, and—until it was taken from them in the second Balkan War—by conquest. Serbia, even when at the last gasp during the first Austrian attack upon her in 1941, had found it necessary to keep large numbers of troops in the Bulgarian districts of Macedonia to hold down the native population." (Page 517). While David Lloy dGeorge in his Memoirs of the Peace Conference whites: "By many authorities the most tragic instance of minority oppression in violation of the 1919 Treaty is held to be that of the 600,000 Macedonians now resident within the borders of Yugoslavia. Of this community, an overwhelming majority are of Bulgarian stock and language, in other words, Bulgaro-Macedonians." (See Vol. II, pages 899 and 901-2.)

The heroes in Professor Dakin;s book are Germanos Karavangelis, the Bishop of Kastoria (Kostoma); Pavlos Mikas, a wealthy Greek officer; and the Greek consuls of Monastir (Bitolya) and Salonik. These were the people that carried on the "Greek Struggle in Macedonia" by dispatching cut throat bands from Crete to terrorize the local Bulgarian inhabitants. With all

the cooperation given to them by the Turkish authorities, they were not able to penetrate anywhere in the interior of Macedonia.. They made sporadic successes only here and there in cities and towns near the Greek-Turkish borders.

"A Greek bishop in European Turkey," writes Professor Dakin "whatever other qualification he needs must be politician . . . The office itself was political for the simple reason that in the Turkish Empire the Greek Church was at once a semi-autonomous theocracy, and a part of the Turkish administration . . . That is why Karavangelis was such an exceptional choice for the See of Kastoria. Others too (Metropolitan Pheropoulos of Monastir, and Chrysostomos of Drama) rivaled him in this respect, but Karavangelis stands out as one of the greatest of the ecclesiastical leaders in the Greek Macedonian Struggle." (page 125).

After the Bulgarian Ilinden uprising of 1903, "It was Karavangelis who," writes Professor Dakin, "escorted by 600 Turkish soldiers, visited the villages, celebrating mass, speaking to the villagers and calling upon them to surrender arms." (page 135). And here is how another British authority on Macedonia, Dr. H. N. Brailsford, characterizes Karavangelis: "We met once again and this time in the Konak of the Turkish Kaimakam, and once more a photograph caught my eye. It showed the Turkish authorities standing in full dress round a Turkish cannon, and in their midst, handsome and conspicious with an air of mastery and command, was the Archbishop himself. And then I remembered another tale which told how his Grace had sent his bravos to guide the Turkish troops in their work of massare, and blessed th ecannon that was to batter the Bulgarian villages to dust." (H. N. Brailsford, Macedonia: Its Races and Their Future, London 1906, p. 193).

And again describing his visit to the Archbishop's residence, Dr. Brailsford writes: "In five minutes he had professed himself a philosopher. In ten minutes he had avowed himself as a free thinker . . . but there, above my head, on the wall in a conspicuous place, hung the photograph of a ghastly head to the neck, with a bullet through the jaw, dripping blood. And then I remembered the tale. That head belonged to a Bulgarian chief. A band of bravadoes in the Archbishop's party had murdered him as he lay wounded in hiding. And then the tale went on to tell how the murderers carried the bleeding trophy to the palace, and how the Archbishop had it photographed and paid its price of 50 pieces of gold. Somehow, we stopped talking moral philosophy." (Ibid. p. 194.)

And yet, when the Greek army occupied southern Macedonia during the Balkan War of 1912, there were 378 Bulgarian

churches with 300 priests, as well as 340 primary and secondary schools with 740 teachers and 19,000 students. All of these institutions were ordered closed by the Greek authorities. But after the first World War, a treaty was concluded, between Greece and Bulgaria for the protection of the Bulgarian minority in Greece. This was the so-called Kalfov - Politis Treaty, signed on September 29, 1924. It was acclaimed by the then League of Nations a triumphant agreement, but the Greek Parliament failed to ratify this treaty. Why does Professor Dakin not make any reference to these historic facts?

In reading the book, one would readily detect that the language contained in **The Greek Struggle in Macedonia, 1897-1913,** and the detailed description of events taking place there since 1904 is not, for the most part, necessarily that of Professor Douglas Dakin. The spelling of Bulgarian personal names, and names of Macedonian cities is typical of Greek writers. Professor Dakin could have glanced at the map of Macedonia, under Yugoslav rule, or that part under Bulgarian rule and noticed that the city of Prilep is not spelled "Perlepe," nor is the city of Nevrokop "Nevrokopion." The personal Bulgarian names are spelled as Chernopeeff and Chaouleff and not "Tcernopeff" and "Tsauleff." This in itself betrays the authorship of the book. In his "acknowledgment," Professor Dakin credits for the help rendered in the preparation of the manuscript the arch apostles of Greek expansionism at the Salonik Institute of Balkan Studies. One would venture to guess that the manuscript was prepared in Salonik and to make the book more prestigious, it was sent to Professor Dakin in London to attach his name and academic degrees, and then sent back to Salonik for its publication.

This work is a typical phil-hellenistic propaganda of distorting the truth about Macedonia. It contains 10 per cent of juggled historical facts and 90 per cent of self-esteemed Greek imperialistic megalomania.