

Dean Acheson, The Cold War Years, by Douglas Brinkley, Yale University Press, 1992.

As serious and concerted efforts are being made for the solution of the Cyprus problem it is useful to be reminded that a large part of its virtual intractability can be traced to its Cold War roots: to the mentality and fears, the suspicions, animosities and unscrupulousness that characterised that war, and by the mentality described by the term "political realism" or *Realpolitik*.

This perspective and a lot of the details behind it are described both implicitly and at times explicitly in a book written for a different purpose, a political biography of the American diplomat Dean Acheson who played a large role in Cyprus developments in the critical year 1964, and whose stamp on the Cyprus problem can be discerned in most subsequent developments.

Dean Acheson was under-secretary of state in Roosevelt's last and Truman's first administration. He became secretary of state under Truman's second administration in 1949-1953. He was one of the architects of both the Truman Doctrine that committed the United States to supporting anti-communist regimes everywhere in the world, starting with Greece and Turkey, and also of the policy of containment of the Soviet Union through the Atlantic Alliance or Nato.

In a chapter bearing the title *Repairing cracks in Nato, 1964-67*, this well-researched work devotes ten highly illuminating pages to the Cyprus question. It relates that after the bloody events of 1963-64 in Cyprus, under-secretary of state George Ball asked the then retired Dean Acheson to undertake quiet mediation, primarily with Athens and Ankara, over the Cyprus conflict. He realised that Acheson, more than most in Washington, understood the dangers to the Nato alliance from a Greco-Turkish war.

The author states that President Makarios ignited a crisis by proposing thirteen amendments to the Cyprus constitution in 1964, aimed at limiting Turkish Cypriot participation in government. Intercommunal violence ensued, followed by a cease-fire under a British peace-keeping force, but by the end of January 1964, despite President Johnson's warnings to Makarios, local skirmishes grew in intensity. The Western leaders wanted to send in an all-Nato force of 10,000 men but Makarios, fearing the participation of Turkey, insisted on a United Nations force.

The United States, suspicious of Makarios' flirtations with Moscow and fearing that it would soon have a "Mediterranean Cuba" on its hands, wanted to keep the Cyprus problem within the western alliance where both Greece and Turkey belonged, and it suggested a meeting of these two countries at Camp David early in 1964 for the resolution of the Cyprus problem in the absence of the Cypriots.

Makarios with the assistance of the UN secretary general U Thant managed, however, to steer the meeting to neutral Geneva in Switzerland under UN auspices with Dean Acheson as an important but unofficial mediator. President Makarios was very unhappy with Acheson's role. He correctly perceived, writes Douglas Brinkley, that the ultimate

goal of the United States was to dissolve the Republic of Cyprus.

The *Acheson Plan* for Cyprus tried to do just that. According to the author, it provided Greece with the long-desired *enosis* and created adequate guarantees for Turkish political rights and for the strategic concerns on the island as well. It also safeguarded US interests in the region. But to accomplish this feat, the *Acheson Plan* had to ignore the Cypriots.

Makarios managed to carry the Greek government with him in rejecting the Plan. Acheson's venom against Makarios could not be concealed. He regarded Makarios as a treacherous religious fanatic, probably an early version of Ayatollah Homeini, "a political priest with considerable fits of demagoguery and ruthlessness."

Disheartened and personally offended by the failure of his plan and his mediation, after the violent incidents at *Kokkina* and the Turkish bombing of that area in August 1964, Acheson felt that it was time to return to Washington, where he would do whatever he could to prevent Cyprus from becoming "a Russian Mediterranean satellite."

Acheson was happy to be home. He wrote to an old Yale classmate, "Alice [his wife] and I got back from Geneva where we spent two months in the worst rat race I have ever been in, trying to deny Greeks and Turks their historic recreation of killing one another."

It is difficult not to agree with the author's conclusion on the *Acheson Plan*. He describes it as a paradigm of great-power pressure in the arena of small-power diplomacy that would remain the basis for all negotiations over Cyprus for the next ten years. "Acheson's proposals, disregarding as they did a small, troublesome and deeply divided state and its leaders, were a classic example of *Realpolitik*, which has no place for the hopes and aspirations of a powerless and divided people."

What lessons can we derive about the present and the future from the encounter between Acheson and Cyprus? It is obvious that Acheson was operating in the material and mental framework of the Cold War with its brutal political realities and consequent realism. Turkey itself has put into practice the harsh imperatives of the Cold War mentality with exceptional ferocity and callousness or at the very least, with extreme lack of proportionality in its response. It carried out a brutal form of ethnic cleansing, some say, aided and abetted and definitely tolerated by the great powers.

One should be allowed to hope without being accused of moralising romanticism that in a post Cold War world where global inter-dependence erodes the "hard shell" of the state and where the national interest is redefined accordingly and where private and public morality cannot be so easily separated, the mistakes and excesses of the Cold War and their consequences can be addressed in a more humane way.

The Achesons and the Kissingers of this world should be relegated to the unpleasant past where they belong. Even in Douglas Brinkley's sympathetic political biography, one can discern that Dean Acheson, despite his great experience and abilities, was ill-suited to provide a fair solution to the Cyprus problem. Besides his Cold War mentality, he was a man of limited tolerance who gives one the impression that he would like the persistent opponents of his views not just refuted but even personally destroyed. His

political stances as he grew older were too illiberal for an erstwhile Democrat who worked with Roosevelt, as can be seen from his support of both Rhodesian white separatists and South African apartheid racists in the late sixties.

Unless the powers that be manage to transcend the Cold War ways of *Realpolitik*, the ways of Acheson and Kissinger, the world will continue to be cruel and amoral and, as far as Cyprus is concerned, its problem will continue to be patched up but not really resolved.

All of which does not mean that a realistic and mutually concessionary solution should not be actively pursued by both parties in Cyprus today. As ever, the first move for a civilised way out has to be made by Turkey. **Sofronis Sofroniou.**

Riding with the Lion: In Search of Mystical Christianity, by Kyriacos C. Markides (New York: Viking Penguin, 1994), 369pp.

That there is a book in English which attempts to describe and analyze the mystical orientation of the Eastern Orthodox faith, both historically and in its present manifestation, simultaneously comparing and contrasting it to other belief systems, is of itself a rare find. This is a book the student of philosophy or theology might find worth reading, although any person remotely interested in questions of truth or faith, would certainly find it appealing.

Markides begins the book with a visit into his Maine home on a picturesque winter day. He succinctly reviews his three previous works (*The Magus of Strovolos*, *Homage to the Sun*, and *Fire in the Heart*) which had centred on his encounters with the life of the "Daskalos" of Cyprus. He also mentions the work of *Erevna* (an nonprofit research foundation) which caused a parting of the ways for the protagonists mentioned in his previous works.

Markides next takes us to the New York Open Center, in Soho, where he led a workshop entitled, "Consciousness, Spirituality and Healing: A Western Path." This serves to further familiarize the reader with Markides' thoughts on esoteric teachings.

By the third chapter, the reader is engrossed in thoughts on elementals, discourse on spirit, soul and body, the authenticity of masters or gurus, and the powers to heal, to name a few. For those unfamiliar with his previous works, Markides requires the reader to put the book down for a spell, in order to digest these concepts.

One must appreciate Markides' talent for dropping names within his anecdotal style. He mentions his appreciation of Thoreau's love of the Maine woods, and puts just enough of the familiar Jungian and Freudian rhetoric in so as to please those wondering where to place psychoanalysis in the search for answers on spirituality. He suggests where we might look further in philosophy or theology (e.g., with David Ray Griffin and Huston Smith), all in the spirit of the good professor. Perhaps one of his strongest suggestions for further reading would be the works of the Russian sociologist, Pitirim Alexandrovich Sorokin, most probably best-known as the man invited to Harvard to begin the sociology

department there (via Minnesota), but who wrote a four-volume opus entitled, *Social and Cultural Dynamics*¹. Markides also mentions the prolific non-medical healing power of the Brazilian Arigo².

The crux of the book are the chapters devoted to his pilgrimage to Mt. Athos during Holy Week in 1991. His encounters with Father Maximos and Father Vasilios reveal the simplistic beauty of the faith through, among other things, the powerful effects of prayer and the practice of succumbing to the will of God. These chapters are a must-read for those who contemplate a visit to the Holy Mountain (for he outlines not only the logistics of getting there, but also what one might want to take with him), and a must-read for the half of the human population forbidden from ever visiting this world, women.

Markides' accounts of the dreams and 'visits' to Lesbos (in the town of Thermi) of Saint Irene, Saint Raphael, and Saint Nicholas, which occurred in the late 1950s, is one of the many marvelous contemporary phenomena explored in the book³. Greeks all over Greece had also reported being affected by the saints. Hundreds of Cypriots, likewise, have claimed that Saint Raphael has healed them⁴. An interesting radio recording Markides cites, about a taxi driver's encounter with the three saints on a late night drive toward Limassol, certainly piques one's interest. Needless to say, the experience transformed the taxi driver's life. A rather cynical brother-in-law of Markides, who lived most of his life in London, once remarked, "I don't know of a single Englishman who either saw Saint Raphael, or Saint Nicholas or all the other saints that the Greeks keep seeing . . . Do the Greeks, perhaps, have a monopoly on the saints?" (p. 331.) A question well put as representative of the many doubters Markides reckoned would exist among his readers.

Markides satisfactorily addresses skeptics and cynics, who one would have to guess outnumber those who follow his work in total belief. He stresses that as an academic, he aims merely to document the smorgasbord of extraordinary experiences which abound, and lets the reader know in no uncertain terms that while many a professor might dismiss any recognition of the mysteries of life as unscholarly, he is at peace in his work, knowing that many people have written to him and expressed their accounts of similar occurrences. It could even be argued that Markides' work may be placed in the Weberian tradition of the sociology of religion. Weber, like Markides, was fully aware of the existence of "religious virtuosi," i.e., people who are closer to God (or the Gods) and are more aware of supernatural experiences. Unlike Marx and other thinkers influenced by the Enlightenment, Weber had no intention of dismissing or ever ridiculing religious experience.

Another interesting phenomenon which Orthodox fathers have written about and Markides discusses is the *salos*, the "fool for Christ," who renounces all material possessions, wanders the land, and becomes a worker for the Holy Spirit. A *salos*, according to Markides' research, is capable of "prophecy, clairvoyance and even teleportation." (p. 323) One such *sa/os*, Charalambis Papyianne, of Kalamata, Greece, died in 1974.

In his final chapter, entitled, "Lifting the Veil," Markides beautifully sums up how modern civilization's rational and analytical thinking has undoubtedly cast aside the spiritual. It is unfortunate that mainstream religion has, for the most part, made people feel that the Church is concerned with primarily "ethical rules for social and political action." (p. 352.) But today, there are those experiences out there, unexplained by any rational means, yet very real to the individuals affected and thus a part of what is reality for some. For if a person experiences the miracle which saved his life, or the life of a loved one, who dares to rationalize in the wake of the consequence?

Markides concludes by stating that the diversity that modern civilization and education affords has its merits, in that it is through exposure to the many belief systems of the world that mankind becomes, as Demos states in the book, "more understanding and accepting of others who worship God in different, and from our point of view, strange ways." (p. 357.) It is, however, time for a more advanced process of thinking on the mysteries amidst, in that they, too, may be key to our search of truth through faith. The question remains: Must the study of human existence include the element of mystery, or must it be reduced to a "system" whose dynamics can be known with full certainty? **Valerie Michaels Mavratsas**

Notes:

1. Pitirim A. Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Dynamics*, 4 vols (New York: American Book Company, 1937-1941).
 2. John G. Fuller, *Arigo: Surgeon of the Rusty Knife* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1974).
 3. Fotios N. Kontoglou, *Semeion Mega: Ta Thaumata tes Thermes* [in Greek, *A Great Sign: The Miracles of Therme*] (Athens: Aster, 1964).
 4. Klitos Ioannides, *Thaumata tou Agiou Raphael se Kyprious* [in Greek, *Miracles by St. Raphael to Cypriots*] (Nicosia: Saint Marina Monastery, 1991).
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