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Modern Greece: What Everyone Needs To Know®



Synopsis

When Greece's economic troubles began to threaten the stability of the European Union in 2010, the nation found itself in the center of a whirlwind of international finger-pointing. In the years prior, Greece appeared to be politically secure and economically healthy. Upon its emergence in the center of the European economic maelstrom, however, observers and critics cited a century of economic hurdles, dictatorships, revolutions, and more reasons as to why their current crisis was understandable, if not predictable. The ancient birthplace of democracy and countless artistic, literary, philosophical, and scientific developments had struggled to catch-up to its economically-thriving neighbors in Western Europe for years and quickly became the most seriously economically-troubled European country following a fiscal nosedive beginning in 2008. When the deficit and unemployment skyrocketed, the resulting austerity measures triggered widespread social unrest. The entire world turned its focus toward the troubled nation, waiting for the possibility of a Greek exit from the European Monetary Union and its potential to unravel the entire Union, with other weaker members heading for the exit as well. The effects of Greece's crisis are also tied up in the global arguments about austerity, with many viewing it as necessary medicine, and still others seeing austerity as an intellectually bankrupt approach to fiscal policy that only further damages weak economies.

In *Modern Greece: What Everyone Needs to Know®*, Stathis Kalyvas, an eminent scholar of conflict, Europe, and Greece combines the most up-to-date economic and political-science findings on the current Greek crisis with a discussion of Greece's history. Tracing the nation's development from the early nineteenth century to the present, the informative question-and answer format covers key episodes including the independence movement of the early nineteenth century, the massive ethnic cleansing in Turkey and Greece following World War I, the German occupation in World War II, the following brutal civil war, the conflict with Turkey over Cyprus, the military coup of 1967, democracy at long last, and the country's entry into the European Union. Written by one of the most brilliant political scientists in the academy, *Modern Greece* is the go-to resource for understanding both the current crisis and the historical events that brought the country to where it is today.

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Customer Reviews

If you want to understand the deep origins of the Greek crisis, this is a book you must read. It explains vividly the achievements and failings of Greece since its inception as a modern state - a series of great leap forwards towards a modern Western future, followed by wrenching setbacks as the country overreached itself. It also explains the love-hate relationship between Greece and Western Europe, with its combination of romanticism and hard geopolitics. Although the book was published in May 2015, because of the Dickensian slowness of the publishing cycle, its story ends in mid-2014. The reader is left with the misplaced hope that the worst of this most recent cycle of overreach and setback must be over, and that Greece was once again on the road to recovery. The election of Syriza and the country's consequent return to the abyss is not covered, but is made more poignant by all that you have read before. I hope that the author will write another book explaining what has happened since 2014. You cannot hope for a better guide.

This book brings to mind Roger and Hammerstein's hit song from The Sound of Music, "How do you solve a problem like Maria?" Substitute Greece for Maria and you'll have some answers once you've read this book. The Kalyvas approach is enlivening, deliberate, and a surprisingly easy read on a complicated topic. He lays out the dots and asks the readers to connect them. Politically neutral and exhaustive, the book doesn't force a world view, but informs the reader's understanding.

A must read book for anyone who wants to understand the current situation in Greece. It is very clearly written and pulls no punches. The book discusses key historical events that help the reader to understand how Greece got into its current mess. It is essential to understand the historical

underpinnings of the social and economic problems that confront the country. Anyone reading this book will come to the conclusion that it is not simply economic reform that Greece needs, it is fundamental social reform. The author is optimistic that both of these are possible, but those who are familiar with Greece and its people might not be so sure.

I have actually read the Greek translation (2nd edition). A spectacular book. A deconstruction and re-synthesis of Greece's modern history which many of us already knew very well from encyclopedic history books. If every Greek bothered reading this book, they would surely vote far more rationally....

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