



Five Years of Feeding: A Recently Published New Source on the Living Conditions of the Children of late 1940s Greece

Gonda Van Steen

Koraes Chair of Modern Greek and Byzantine History, Language and Literature
King's College London

On 17 May 1946, the American social worker Charles Schermerhorn arrived in Greece. He arrived at a critical time: Greece had just come out of a brutal Nazi German Occupation and was about to engage in a three-year-long and devastating civil war (1946-1949). Charles was appointed by UNNRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration), subsequently by the Near East Foundation, and eventually by UNICEF. That means that, in the course of a mere five years, Charles saw a tremendous amount of American-influenced administrative and logistical planning for Greece, which was a focus of intense early Cold War friction and scrutiny. Charles' own appointment as an UNRRA child welfare specialist attests to a Western-imported and hegemonic humanitarian model, which had to serve as an antidote to the rise of Soviet-style communism in Southern Europe and the Balkans. The global focus of the time was on children: they held the future of their respective societies and, as adults, would determine whether a nation would align itself with the West or with the East.

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