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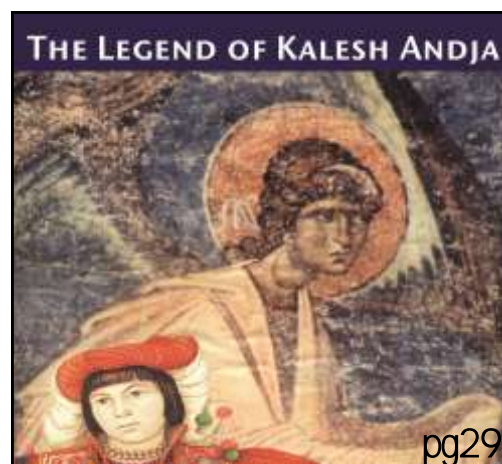
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An Appeal to the European Parliament for Equitable Treatment of the Republic of Macedonia

Dear MEP,

We, as representatives acting on behalf of members of the Macedonian communities, whose very existence is denied and actively negated by the authorities in Greece and Bulgaria, wish to express our deep dissatisfaction with a significant number of the amendments proposed by the Greek and Bulgarian MEPs, in regard to the progress report on the Republic of Macedonia – a country which the EU does not even have the decency to refer to by its official and democratically chosen name.

Our disappointment is based, more than anything else, on the fact that the nature of the proposed amendments promotes a politics of negation, not only of the Macedonian minorities in Greece and Bulgaria, but of the Macedonian nation itself. At the same time, all of that practically amounts to a negation of what are supposed to be core values of the new Europe – inclusiveness, tolerance, respect for diversity and in particular, respect for people's ethnic and national identity.

Below the surface of demands for the Republic of Macedonia to work for 'good neighbourly relations', there is a destructive nationalism – as those who are making the demands are representatives of countries, Greece and Bulgaria, which are refusing to reciprocate. We need to remind you that these countries and their European representatives are the ones refusing to recognise the existence of a Macedonian nation, language and the Macedonian minorities residing in their countries – even though they have been found guilty of violating the rights of their Macedonian minorities by the European Court of Human Rights.

The Media, Hate Speech, History and Good Neighbourly Relations

One cannot rightly regard Macedonian news media reports about the mistreatment of the Macedonian minorities in Greece and Bulgaria, as examples of 'hate speech'. Moreover, if one consults a series of findings and statements made against Greece and Bulgaria, by the European Court of Human Rights; the Commissioner for Human Rights; various bodies connected to the Council of Europe, the UN and various NGO's, one would also have to regard these bodies as responsible for spreading 'hate

speech'. In fact, of course, the Macedonian media reports, alongside the reports and findings of these other bodies, are about trying to end Greek and Bulgarian anti-Macedonian intolerance.

The demands of Greek and Bulgarian MEPs aiming to interfere with the way Macedonian history is taught are based on sheer nonsense and essentially involve an attempt to truncate academic/scholarly freedom and ultimately, freedom of thought and speech – this is something that is unacceptable from any EU member. It involves the ridiculous assertion that to teach that Macedonians have a past, involves "stealing history" and even asserting that Macedonians exist, is viewed as some sort of 'provocation'. Yet we now have a situation where two EU member countries are actually attempting, via the European Parliament, to impose this draconian form of censorship on another European nation.

Once again, it is crucial to note here, that in the official historiographies of Greece and Bulgaria, students are taught that the Macedonian nation does not exist and that its history actually belongs to Greece and Bulgaria. That really is teaching to hate!

Bulgarian parliamentarians, ministers and high state functionaries permit themselves to use the most offensive epithets in relation to members of Bulgaria's Macedonian minority (and indeed the whole Macedonian nation) – like "traitors", "national traitors" etc, simply because we identify as Bulgarian citizens with a Macedonian ethnic identity. And now Bulgarian MEPs, who should be defending our rights as Bulgarian citizens, are abusing their position of power, by attempting, with the aid of the European Union, to serve their national prejudices which involve a denial of the existence of a Macedonian nation, by making Macedonia's partial acceptance of them as the conditional basis for Macedonia's European integration. Similar abusive language is used by Greek politicians and especially by members of Greece's neo-NAZI "Golden Dawn" party, which took 18 seats at the last national elections held in Greece.

It is no accident that there are no essential differences in the amendments from the ultra-nationalistic circles of "ATAKA" and the other Bulgarian representatives, as in Bulgaria, there is a mainstream anti-

Macedonian consensus. Thus the problems at hand will not be found in the Republic of Macedonia, but rather in Greece and Bulgaria, states which refuse to accept our existence and ‘naturally’, this is what causes difficulties in the maintenance of ‘good neighbourly relations’.

A Macedonian political party in Bulgaria and a number of Macedonian organisations in both Greece and Bulgaria, have been attempting to obtain official registration for around two decades and still have not been registered in spite of a series of findings in favour of their registration by the European Court of Human Rights.

Yet Bulgaria and Greece have the audacity to carry on as if they possess some sort of moral high ground when they seek to order a neighbouring sovereign nation state to change its name – that is, when they are seeking to take away its rights to self-identification, sovereignty and to impose

to freely decide on whether to be treated in such a manner or not” and according to that, to the extent that members of a minority do not want to be treated in such a manner, the state is then not in a position to force such a status upon the group in question, nor can somebody else seek such a status on its behalf. Thus, in the absence of a request before the Macedonian government by those possessing a Bulgarian ethnic identity, it is not possible for other institutions, like the EU, to intervene.

If those citizens of the Republic of Macedonia possessing a Bulgarian ethnic consciousness pursue official minority status from the Macedonian government and if it follows that their application is rejected, then EU intervention would be appropriate and even we would seek to support such an intervention, as our organisations are fundamentally based on the protection of human and in particular, minority rights.

and Bulgarian MEPs, are based not on a concern for the advancement of democracy, the rights of individuals or minorities, but rather, on the promotion of nationalistic political goals to be achieved at the expense of a much smaller and weaker neighbour.

We believe that Greece and Bulgaria, as members of the EU, should be leading by example in respecting the rights of their minorities. Yet, despite a myriad of attempts to gain official recognition, Greece and Bulgaria refuse to recognise our existence. Both countries actively and officially deny our existence and have refused to implement the Framework Convention in relation to our and other minorities. In fact Greece refuses to recognise the existence of any ethnic minorities residing within its borders and absolutely refuses to ratify the Framework Convention. And while Bulgaria has officially ratified the Convention,

The demands of Greek and Bulgarian MEPs aiming to interfere with the way Macedonian history is taught are based on sheer nonsense and essentially involve an attempt to truncate academic/scholarly freedom and ultimately, freedom of thought and speech – this is something that is unacceptable from any EU member.

censorship on its society by taking away its rights to freedom of speech, thought and even the right to erect historical monuments of its own choosing etc. The implicit meaning of all this is that Macedonians are something less than human – and indeed, how else can one justify the taking away of these basic human rights!?

Good neighbourly relations need to be based on mutual respect and equality of treatment, as is required by the current bases of European values and not on the basis of the misuse of power to impose one’s nationalistic will over a small and weak neighbour.

It is to be understood that we respect the rights of all minorities seeking recognition. However, those rights need to be pursued in a manner made clear by the ‘Framework Convention’, in article 3.1 which states: *“That every individual belonging to a national minority has the right*

However, this has not occurred. Rather, we have the Bulgarian state presuming, without first asking their permission, to speak on behalf of Macedonian citizens and in actuality, the essence of the matter involves the Bulgarian state pretending to represent Macedonian citizens who have obtained Bulgarian passports, in order to gain the benefits, especially employment opportunities, of EU membership.

Thus this is a case of Bulgaria utilising the economic hardships of Macedonian citizens, for the purpose of executing an aggressive nationalistic policy against its neighbour – so much for ‘good neighbourly relations’.

The Irrelevance of and the Nationalistic Hubris contained in many of the Greek and Bulgarian MEP Proposals

The majority of the abnormally large number of amendments proposed by the Greek

it does not apply it to all minorities and the country’s foreign minister regularly makes public claims asserting that Bulgaria has no minorities. Moreover, at the request of Bulgarian representatives, on the 22nd of January 2013, two minorities were actually erased from the PACE Resolution on Post Monitoring Dialogue with Bulgaria – the erased groups were the Macedonians and the Pomaks.

While it might be convenient for Bulgarian and Greek MEPs to express concern for human rights matters located beyond the borders of their respective states, we call upon them to do right by the minorities inhabiting their own countries, by appealing to their own governments to finally recognise their existence. It is time for these Greek and Bulgarian MEPs to express concern for us, for we are citizens and voters from the countries they represent! How absurd it is for representatives of countries that actively negate our exist-

ence to express concern about the rights of minorities in other countries!

There has been but one case in Macedonia of the non-registration of a Bulgarian association, which the EHCR found to be a violation – and we in principle support the registration of this body, in spite of serious concerns about its public promotion of notions which regard the Macedonian nation to be “... *a cancer (parasitic mutation) ... these parasites ... are eating the organism* [of the Bulgarian nation] ... *the only way to stop the spread of the cancer is timely surgical intervention with the aim of physically removing it...*” (From an official programmatic statement by the association in question: Radko Program issued 5 July 2009, <http://www.radkomk.com/PROGRAMA.pdf>).

And for all that it needs to be pointed that our situation in Bulgaria is not remotely comparable to that of the Bulgarians in Macedonia, whose existence in Macedonia, is not negated. All minorities in Macedonia are officially recognised and free to express their existence in Macedonian censuses – unlike the censuses held in Greece and Bulgaria. Minorities in Macedonia have rights accorded to them that Greece and Bulgaria’s UNRECOGNISED minorities can only dream about.

Furthermore, in Bulgaria and Greece there are over a dozen Macedonian associations which remain unregistered and decisions, in some cases made over a decade ago by the ECHR ordering the registration of these bodies have not been implemented – and we are supposed to be European citizens!

We implore all of you, to check our assertions for yourselves, ask your Greek and Bulgarian colleagues if their respective countries officially recognise the existence of their Macedonian minorities.

As European citizens we appeal to the European Parliament to treat Macedonia equitably and with the respect it would afford to any sovereign nation. Anything less will compromise the fundamental basis of Europe as inclusive and as focused on the protection of democracy and human rights. These attempts to undermine the basis of our Macedonian identity and thereby our actual existence and dignity, are an embarrassment to Europe and if accepted, will

lead to new causes of instability in the Balkans and perhaps even new attempts to forcefully change national borders.

It is simply unacceptable for Europe to seriously consider acting against its own interests by placing conditions upon Macedonia that require it to undermine basic freedoms like the rights to self-determination/identification, freedom of academic research, freedom of speech etc.

The European Parliament needs to tell its Bulgarian and Greek members that EU membership cannot be a tool for the implementation of their intolerant nationalistic desires and they should be reprimanded for not recognizing their Macedonian minorities.

The following proposed amendments, should be viewed in the context of the information we have presented in this letter, no’s: 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 29, 37, 42, 72, 73, 75, 77, 82, 84, 88, 120, 149, 167, 182, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 194, 200, 201, 202 and thereby rejected.

In Conclusion

1. Under the guise of seeking ‘good neighbourly relations’ and ‘preventing hate speech’, Bulgarian and Greek nationalism have launched a new attack against Macedonian identity and against freedom of speech, of the media and of academic research.

2. Acceptance of the amendments in question, will impose upon Macedonia, a series of anti-democratic conditions, in addition to the already existing EU refusal to respect the Republic of Macedonia’s official self-chosen name. In the long term, this will lead to a further destabilization of the Balkans.

3. The coordinated actions of the Greek and Bulgarian MEPs are designed to negate the national identity of Macedonians everywhere, including the Macedonian minorities inhabiting those countries.

4. Even though we are European citizens, our existence remains unrecognized and indeed, Greece and Bulgaria actively work to negate our existence and we appeal to the European Parliament to finally put an end to this abuse.

Respectfully and sincerely, the political secretariats of OMO “Ilinden” PIRIN

and EFA-Rainbow/Vinozhito,

Co-presidents of OMO “Ilinden”- PIRIN: Stojko Stojkov, Angel Bezev, Ivan Singartijski, Botyo Vangelov, Krum Filatov.

The Political Secretariat of EFA-Rainbow/Vinozhito: Pavle Filipov Voskopoulos, Dimitri Ioannou.

(This letter was distributed among EU parliamentarians throughout February and March 2013. Translated from Macedonian by George Vlahov of the AM-HRC.)

OMO “Ilinden” PIRIN is a political party supporting the rights of the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria. It has been banned since 2000, despite a 2005 European Court of Human Rights Judgement ruling that the decision was a violation of the European Convention on Human Rights. For more information please visit www.omoilindenpirin.org.

The European Free Alliance – Rainbow/Vinozhito is a political party struggling for the rights and recognition of the Macedonian minority in Greece. The party has offices in Florina/Lerin and Edessa/Voden. For more information please visit www.vinozito.gr, or by email: vi-nozito@otenet.gr or on +30 23850 46548.



A Declaration in Protest against the removal of the words: “in view of the non-recognition of the existence of the Pomak and Macedonian minorities,” from the Resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly on the Post monitoring of Bulgaria.

2 March 2013

In the name of the organizations of the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria, we express our enormous disappointment and shock at the removal of our minority from the final resolution. We are shocked, as the problems facing our minority and its negation in Bulgaria, are registered in numerous acts in the *Council of Europe*; in the reports of *ECRI* and by the *Commission for Monitoring the Framework Convention*, over the course of the last 13 years; in many statements by the *Commissioner for Human Rights*; and was also the subject of nine court hearings at the ECtHR, in which, dozens of incidents of the negation of the rights of members of the Macedonian minority of Bulgaria were recorded.

In this context, it was entirely logical to include the sentence quoted in the heading at the beginning of this declaration, in the *PACE* resolution. We have no objections to the text devoted to minorities in the resolution, though we categorically protest against the removal of our minority and also against the cynical and manipulative arguments which were employed in favour of the removal of the Macedonian minority.

It is because we believe the delegates were manipulated into approving the final form of the resolution, that we present this response.

I. Official recognition of the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria is necessary because Bulgaria implements an official politics of negation and denial, which manifests itself in the following ways:

A) Our existence has been denied by the Bulgarian parliament, with an official declaration in 1990; by Bulgarian Presidents, via official public statements made to the media; by the Constitutional Court in

2000; by the local court of Sofia in 2007; and by other lower level courts, for example between 2008 – 2010; by ministers and other authorities.

B) By the refusal to introduce a category for Macedonians in Bulgarian censuses and the rejection of all proposals to introduce such a category, with the argument that such an ethnic group “does not exist”. In relation to that, we mention the example of the removal from their posts in 2010, five public servants in the National Statistical Institute, because they permitted the creation of categories for “non-existent ethnicities”, especially Macedonians, in the draft census.

C) By refusing to accept the operation of the Framework Convention in relation to Macedonians.

D) There is not one political party in existence which recognizes the existence of our minority or that is concerned about defending the rights of our minority. Moreover, attempts to register such parties have been rejected. Two such parties have attempted registration over the last 13 years and registration was refused precisely because of their stance on Macedonians – OMO PIRIN and OMO “Ilinden” PIRIN. Registration laws have been changed on multiple occasions in order to prevent the registration of these parties. In this regard, a further change to the laws is being contemplated by the Bulgarian parliament at present.

E) The negation of our existence is not treated as hate speech, no legal action has been taken by the state against anyone who has engaged in public denial of our existence. Rather, such negations are readily accepted and we have been the object of public condemnation for our choice of identity. Indeed, our self-identification is treated as treason and alike.

F) Via the refusal to register NGO’s con-

cerned with protecting the rights of Macedonians in Bulgaria.

In practice, from 1963 until the present, the position of the Bulgarian dictator, Todor Zhivkov: “that Bulgaria has no Macedonian minority and nor is it possible for it to have one”, has remained in force.

II. Thus the removal of our minority from the text will not contribute in the least to an advance in our rights, rather, it will be used as a means to further discriminate against us and it will serve to embolden our negation. In other words, the request of the Bulgarian representative was motivated by a desire to serve the politics of negation.

III. The assertion that there exist “several registered entities – NGO’s of people who identify themselves as Macedonians” is quite cynical – our organizations are not registered, even though some of them have been struggling to become registered for more than 20 years. In fact, they are compelled to operate as unregistered bodies, with all the limitations that imposes upon them. And the reason for their non-registration, according to the Bulgarian courts, is that the Macedonian minority “does not exist”, and therefore, on that basis, there cannot be any such organizations.

IV. The argument in support of official non-recognition, that there is no systemic bureaucratic machinery available to enable recognition, is not acceptable. There is no need for any special processes in relation to the recognition of a minority, all that is needed is good will and concrete positive actions. The question relating systemic matters would become applicable once all Bulgarian institutions recognize our existence, for the practical management of those rights emanating from the fact of our recognition.

V. The assertion that everyone in Bulgaria is free to express their ethnic affinity is not

practically true. In Bulgaria there are no official documents containing categories for ethnic affiliation. In the census, categories for Macedonians and for most other minorities do not exist. The declarations of people presenting themselves as Macedonian are not accepted; they are treated as hostile and are used as a reason to discriminate against such people.

VI. The recognition of Macedonians can easily be achieved in the following manner:

- a) An official declaration by the government stating that it recognizes our existence.
- b) An acceptance of the Framework Convention in relation to our minority.
- c) The introduction of a category for Macedonians in the next census.
- d) The treatment of the negation of our minority as hate speech.
- e) The acceptance of a representative of our minority in the relevant commission

for minorities in Bulgaria.

VII. We believe that special attention needs to be given to the question about the apparent existence of an official list of recognized minorities, in relation to which the Bulgarian state implements the Framework Convention. For, if such a list truly exists, then it will evidently confirm the official non-recognition of the remaining not listed minorities. If such a list exists, then it is necessary for it to be publically revealed and annulled or be made legitimate by adding the minorities not presently on it.

Respectfully,

OMO "Ilinden" PIRIN (Mr. Stoyko Stoykov)

The newspaper "People's Will" (Mr. Georgi Hristov)

TMO (Independent) "Ilinden" (Mr. Georgi Solunski)

The Association of Repressed Macedonians in Bulgaria (Mr. Stoyan Gerasimov)

Macedonian Christian Brotherhood "St. Prokorok Iliya" (Mr. Emil Eftimov)

KPD "Nikola Vaptsarov" (Mr. Damian Rizakov)

KPD "Ilinden" (Mr. Krum Filatov)

Macedonian Club for Ethnic Tolerance (Mr. Angel Radonov)

Bulletin "Macedonian Voice" (Mr. Iliya Delilakiev)

(Translated from Macedonian to English by George Vlahov of the AMHRC.)



Stojko Stojkov

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The Hon. Brendan O'Connor MP
Minister for Immigration and Citizenship

12 February 2013



Dear Minister,

Reported upcoming visit to Australia of neo-Nazi “Golden Dawn” delegation

It has come to our attention that the Greek neo-Nazi political party “Golden Dawn” is planning to send a delegation to Australia to “open up an Australian office”. This disturbing news has been circulating in the Australian-Greek media, including the English edition of the Neos Kosmos newspaper (please see: <http://neoskosmos.com/news/en/uproar-as-golden-dawn-set-to-open-australian-office>).

As you may be aware, at present, the Golden Dawn political party has no less than 18 members in the Greek Parliament. The party preaches an openly “neo-Nazi” platform, promoting the supremacy of the Greek nation and hatred of others. According to a report submitted by the Greek Helsinki Monitor (an Athens based human rights organisation) to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racism and Discrimination (UN CERD), Golden Dawn is “openly neo-Nazi, anti-Semitic, racist and white supremacist and have been involved in many violent incidents against migrants, Macedonians ... as well as in desecration of Jewish monuments.” In the Greek Parliament, MPs belonging to the Golden Dawn party openly and frequently refer to Macedonians as “Gypsy-Skopians” (a disgusting term of abuse) and call for the destruction of the Macedonian state.

While such manifestations of intolerance and racism may be acceptable to Golden Dawn supporters and more widely to certain elements within Greek society itself, they have absolutely no place in Australian society.

Minister, as you are aware, you have the statutory power under Section 501 of the Migration Act 1958 to refuse entry into Australia of persons who do not meet the character test as defined in the Act. We strongly believe that no sitting MP in the Greek Parliament belonging to Golden Dawn party or any office bearer of the Golden Dawn party would meet the character test requirements as defined in subsection (6) of Section 501.

Namely, we believe that there is strong evidence to support the view that in the event that any such person as described above were allowed to enter or remain in Australia, they would:

- (iii) vilify a segment of the Australian community; or
- (iv) incite discord in the Australian community or in a segment of that community; or
- (v) represent a danger to the Australian community or to a segment of that community, whether by way of being liable to become involved in activities that are disruptive to, or in violence threatening harm to, that community or segment, or in any other way.

Minister, bearing in mind that Greek passport holders can apply to enter Australia using the convenient online eVisitor system, we urge you to take preventative steps to identify potential visitors to Australia from the Golden Dawn party, so as to ensure that they do not slip through the system and enter Australia.

Given that the media reports indicated an upcoming visit “soon” to Australia by Golden Dawn, we request that you to deal with this issue as a matter of urgency.

Yours sincerely,

David Vitkov
Executive Member
Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee Inc.



Australian Government
Department of Immigration and Citizenship



Mr David Vitkov
info@macedonianhr.org.au

Dear Mr Vitkov

Thank you for your email of 12 February 2013 to the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, the Hon Brendan O'Connor MP, regarding the possible visit to Australia of the 'Golden Dawn' political party. The Minister has asked me to reply on his behalf.

Section 501(6) of the *Migration Act 1958* (the Act) enables the department to refuse to grant, or to cancel, a visa on the basis that the person does not pass the character test. A person may not pass the character test if they have a substantial criminal record, or - as you note in your correspondence - if there is a significant risk that they may engage in criminal conduct, vilify, incite discord in, or represent a danger to, the Australian community or a segment of the Australian community.

However, the Act requires specific evidence relating to an individual for these provisions to be effected. Should you have such specific information about an individual you are invited to provide it to the department for consideration. When a person who has been granted entry to Australia engages in conduct described in section 501(6) of the Act, then their visa may be cancelled.

The Australian Government believes that our democracy is strong enough, our multiculturalism strong enough and our commitment to freedom of speech entrenched enough to withstand the views of organisations such as the 'Golden Dawn' party. The way to deal with extremist commentators is to defeat their ideas with the force of our arguments and experiences in Australia.

I trust this information is useful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dermot Casey'.

Dermot Casey
Assistant Secretary
Character and Case Management Branch
24 February 2013

people our business

Talat Xhaferi: Macedonia's New Defence Minister

By Tom Vangelovski



Talat Xhaferi, a former commander of the extremist Albanian National Liberation Army (NLA) that instigated an armed attack against the Macedonian state in 2001, was appointed as the new Macedonian Defence Minister on 18 February 2013. The appointment was part of a reshuffle of Albanian Ministers within the Government, resulting from several resignations of Ministers who ran as mayoral candidates in the March 2013 local elections.¹

Xhaferi was an officer in the Yugoslav army (JNA) from 1985 to 1991, and then became an officer in the Macedonian army (ARM) from 1992 to 2001.² When the 2001 war began, Xhaferi, like many other Albanian police and military personnel, deserted the army and joined the NLA. Few details are available about Xhaferi's actual role during the war, but it is understood that he was the commanding officer of the NLA's 116th Brigade, which was stationed in the mountains surrounding Gostivar. Few, if any, actual clashes took place in this region and reports suggest that as few as 50 NLA combatants were actually present in the area.³ As such, it is unlikely that Xhaferi or the 116th Brigade actually engaged in combat, and claims from Xhaferi that he did are most likely to be political posturing aimed at his constituency.

Violent protests erupted in Skopje soon after the announcement of Xhaferi's appointment. Macedonians clashed with riot police, while Albanians responded with

counter protests the following day, also clashing with riot police, damaging police cars and private vehicles, and burning buses. Sporadic clashes between Macedonians and Albanians have ensued throughout the city since then, with 22 people injured (including 13 police officers) and 19 arrested. All major political parties have customarily condemned the violence, each blaming their opponents for 'manipulating' the situation for political purposes, but none managing to provide any actual details.

While it caused outrage within the Macedonian community, particularly amongst police and army veterans of the 2001 war, the appointment was not a surprise. Both SDSM and VMRO-DPMNE have led governing coalitions with DUI, reconstituted out of the NLA. SDSM and VMRO-DPMNE have both included senior DUI officials within the Government and have placed them in charge of key Ministries. In fact, Talat Xhaferi was previously a member of the Parliamentary Committee on Defence and Security⁴ and Deputy Minister for Defence from 2004 to 2006 under the former Prime Minister, Vlado Buckovski (SDSM).⁵

While there was no opposition to his previous appointments, his latest has aroused Macedonian sensitivities. Stojance Angelov, leader of Dostoinstvo (representing police and military veterans from 2001), is particularly incensed at the appointment of Xhaferi, denouncing it as a 'humiliating act' and a 'national catastrophe'.⁶ He has

argued that because Xhaferi deserted the Macedonian army and fought against it, he is unfit to lead the Ministry of Defence. Further, it was Xhaferi that led Albanian opposition to a Bill before the Macedonian Parliament that sought to provide state benefits for police and military veterans of the 2001 war. Xhaferi made a mockery of the process by submitting over 15,000 amendments and either remaining silent or reciting poetry and other irrelevant material for hours on end during Parliamentary debates.

In response to Xhaferi's appointment, Dostoinstvo has announced that it will collect 150,000 signatures needed to support a referendum on Xhaferi's appointment.⁷ However, there have been conflicting reports about this initiative, with some suggesting that it will actually be targeted at the Amnesty Law.⁸ As usual, nothing is certain and rumours abound. Even so, some local analysts have criticised the move by Dostoinstvo, suggesting that it could provoke counter referendums.⁹ These analysts, however, fail to explain what these counter referendums might target and how they would succeed, considering the Macedonian majority. Others (assuming that the proposed referendum will target the Amnesty Law) have noted that the Law on Referendums specifically prohibits a referendum on the Amnesty Law.¹⁰ Angelov is reported to have responded that Dostoinstvo is not seeking to annul the entire Act, but rather one clause within it, without clarifying which.¹¹ Re-

ardless, it is unclear whether such a referendum would be possible and, even if it is, whether the Macedonian community has the will to challenge the government and the Albanian community on these issues.

Further controversy has also been sparked by the discovery that Xhaferi has a criminal record, due to an incident that occurred in 2008 when he prevented a policeman from carrying out his official duties in Tetovo.¹² Xhaferi was convicted of obstructing a policeman on 14 October 2010 and received a six month suspended sentence, conditional on not committing another offence within the next two years. Xhaferi appealed this sentence, only to have the Court of Appeals in Gostivar dismiss his plea and confirm the original verdict.¹³

Meanwhile, VMRO-DPMNE has come under criticism in relation to Xhaferi's conviction and what is seen as a double standard. In May 2008, Minister of Interior (and police) Gordana Jankulovska, named Xhaferi as responsible for serious incidents in Tetovo related to the Parliamentary elections. She is also quoted as claiming that "Xhaferi threatened police officers and the deputy commander of the police station in Grupcin with liquidation".¹⁴ This is a very serious accusation and yet the governing party has promoted him to one of the highest positions in government and placed him in charge of the states' most powerful security service.

Considering the relative calm over the appointment of Fatmir Besimi, it seems that Xhaferi's predecessor was a much more palatable choice for Dostoinstvo and the Macedonian community more widely. Some suggest this is because he took no active participation in the 2001 conflict, even though he was no stranger to controversy as Minister.¹⁵ However, this is an odd stance. Xhaferi's views are no more radical than those of Besimi or his party. It is unclear why such a heated response has occurred now and not in relation to Besimi's appointment or, more broadly, the inclusion of DUI in successive governing coalitions since 2002.

It should not be forgotten that it was the NLA, reconstituted as DUI, which instigated a violent conflict to pursue extremist goals and is now a key proponent of the Framework Agreement which institutionalises extremist ideologies and violates basic democratic principles. Further, key figures within the NLA, some of which are

now senior DUI officials including party leader Ali Ahmeti, are suspected of committing acts of terrorism and war crimes during the conflict. In addition, some of DUI's Parliamentary representatives, such as Xhevat Ademi, continue to be listed on the United States' Specially Designated Nationals List (SDN) which includes individuals who are guilty or suspected of involvement in terrorism and war crimes.¹⁶ None have been prosecuted as they have all received amnesty from the Macedonian Government.

The latest events have certainly raised a number of moral questions about Macedonian public life and positions of trust. How is it that an armed extremist group that used violence to pursue its political agenda can be awarded political legitimacy and become an acceptable governing coalition partner? How is it that one of its officials, who deserted the lawfully constituted military in order to join an extremist group be an acceptable individual for such a sensitive role as Defence Minister? Finally, how can an individual who has been convicted of a criminal offence be appointed to a position of trust within the highest levels of government?

Ultimately, it is unlikely that much will change in Macedonian politics with Xhaferi as Defence Minister. DUI will continue to use the Framework Agreement to pursue its policies of political and cultural Albanianisation in Albanian populated areas and gaining as much political and institutional control within the central government as possible. For Macedonia, it's business as usual.

¹ S. Marusic, "New Defence Minister Outrages Macedonian Veterans", *Balkan Transitional Justice*, 20 February 2013 (accessed 12 March 2013).

² Sobranie na Republika Makedonija, *Predlog za izbor na clenovi na Vladata na Republika Makedonija (Celosen Text Na Matrijalot)*, <http://www.sobranie.mk/ext/materialdetails.aspx?Id=a6300329-a199-45db-8c8a-6d17b6824bfa> (accessed 27 February 2013).

³ P. Petrovski, 2006, *Svedostva*, Kiro Dandaro, Bitola, p. 231.

⁴ Sobranie na Republika Makedonija, *Committee on Defence and Security 2008-2011*, <http://www.sobranie.mk/en/default-en.asp?Item-ID=5D3D202E3CAF3F49B654D665D0A402C5> (accessed 27 February 2013).

⁵ Sobranie na Republika Makedonija, *Predlog za izbor na clenovi na Vladata na Republika Makedonija (Celosen Text Na Matrijalot)*.

⁶ S. Marusic, "New Defence Minister Outrages Macedonian Veterans", *Balkan Transitional Justice*, 20 February 2013

⁷ S. Marusic, "Macedonian Veterans Seek Referendum to Oust Defence Minister", *Balkan Transitional Justice*, 26 February 2013.

⁸ Nova Makedonija, *Referendum za meguetnicki temi e odenje po zica*, 6 March 2012.

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ *ibid.* See also *Zakon za Referendum I Drugi Oblici na Neposredno izjasnuvanje na Gragjanite Br. 81 2005*, Clause 28, Paragraph 1.

¹¹ Nova Makedonija, *Referendum za meguetnicki temi e odenje po zica*.

¹² S. Dimovski, "Macedonian Defence Minister Has Criminal Record", *Balkan Transitional Justice*, 7 March 2013.

¹³ *ibid.*

¹⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁵ In August 2012, Fatmir Besimi, attended a ceremony for the 11th anniversary of the signing of the Framework Agreement and laid flowers before a monument to Albanian NLA fighters killed in the 2001 conflict.

¹⁶ US Department of the Treasury, *Specially Designated Nationals List*, <http://www.treasury.gov/ofac/downloads/tl1sdn.pdf> (accessed 14 March 2013). Xhevat Ademi is reported to have been head of the KLA's 'secret police' in Macedonia, head of the 'Albanian National Army (ANA)' and a key organiser of financial assistance for the NLA.

The Secrets of ... the Map

By George N. Papadakis



At the beginning of the 20th century, the guerrilla leader Apostol Petkov Terziev [commander of detachments of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation, IMRO, which fought for the creation of an autonomous Macedonia] was undoubtedly one of the most recognised figures in the liberation struggle of the Macedonians in the part of Macedonia, today located within the borders of Greece. He was born in Boimitsa which is located in the Kukush region and came from a revolutionary family. He operated with great success, around and on the lake of Enidzhe Vardar and it was for that reason that he became known as the “Enidzhevardar Sun”. This appellation was fully justified, as apart from his enormous reputation among Macedonians and his opponents among the Greeks and the Ottomans, this intelligent leader, always remained unpretentiously human.

He had even accepted to follow the instructions of some less competent but more senior IMRO leaders, in order to set an example for others to follow in the need

for discipline. He never permitted any pillaging by his guerillas and the punishments for breaking this rule could be quite severe – ranging from beatings to the firing squad – and he always compelled the return of stolen property. He had a special regard for children, irrespective of their ethnic background and upon meeting children during his revolutionary work, he would divulge and spread among them, the contents of his wallet.

The American journalist, Albert Sonnichsen, who met Apostol on his revolutionary ‘ground’ among the reeds of the lake in 1904, wrote:

“Had I not known him personally, I could still have guessed his identity, for you see his portraits in all the taverns ... just in that brigand dress ... Apostol was Macedonia’s Robin Hood. For thirteen years he followed the war trail. In the days before Damian Gruev organized the famous Central Committee, Apostol roamed the mountains, one of those picturesque brigands who have appeared among oppressed peoples during all

semi-barbaric periods of history, their exploits handed down in the folk songs of the peasants.”

Now let us compare the character sketch of Apostol written by the exalted Penelope Delta, who happens to be a great grandmother of the current premier of Greece, in her book “The Secrets of the Swamp”:

“... Apostol Petko Terziev was the most horrible leader of the committees, bloody, ever-present and enmeshed in all killings. But nobody could catch him, they couldn’t even find him. He was like the devil, you could feel him everywhere but you could not see him anywhere. He had become a mythical figure who sowed fear everywhere ...”

And a little further on in the text, Apostol is described as having a shaved head, rings on his fingers and other ornamental adornments/jewelry. You will say ‘but this is a novel and the author has the right to express herself as she wishes’. Fine, except the problem here is that this novel forms the basis of the view the majority of

Greeks possess about the so called “Macedonian Struggle”, which in reality, was an unrelenting anti-Macedonian campaign, that unfortunately continues in various forms, in the present.

I was reminded about this fictional description of Apostol (who despite being a “devil”, died tragically as a result of a betrayal in the village of Krushare) when I recently read a speech given by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dimitris Avramopoulos, during the launch of another book, possessing the bombastic title “European Cartography and Politics: The Case of Macedonia”. The authors of the book are the Minister for Regions, Evangelos Livyeratos and the PASOK Euro-Parliamentarian and professor of archaeology at Aristotle University, Hrisula Paliadeli. In this work the authors attempt, by examining ancient and contemporary maps, to ‘demonstrate’ the neo-Greek theorem that “Macedonia is Greek”.

What is the connection between this “scientific” book and the “harmless” novel authored by Penelope Delta? Well, the answer is given by Avramopoulos in his speech at the book launch:

“... From 1870, parallel with other manifestations of national antagonism, there began a geographic or better put, cartographic war. In this war of the maps, the politicians from the newly created Balkan states attempted to disorient and to influence western European scholars in regard to geography.

The Greeks were the first in our wider area to defend themselves with historically argued positions in this war of the maps. Our national historian Konstantinos Paparigopoulos, was the one who presented a map, underpinned by the nationalist tendencies which predominated and not least on statistical data ...”

Impressive, don’t you think? Directly and without dodges, our uncle Dimitris recognizes with great pride that the

Greeks were the first to attempt to deceive (or as he stated, to “disorient” and “influence”) Westerners (yes, the ancestors of those who today, artificially sustain our state with their money) by subverting reality and presenting it as they would like it to have been. And isn’t that precisely what Penelope Delta does in her book? Is there really any difference?

On the night of the book launch, the loquacious minister, it seems, wanted to excel himself and he pushed on even further. He revealed (not that we did not already know) that the “chief organizer” of this attempt to deceive, was the Greek national historian par excellence, Konstantinos Paparigopoulos. Another “brilliant scholar” who is worshiped only within the borders of Greece, because outside those borders he is generally unknown and has in any case, been thoroughly and justly discredited. What did this respected falsifier of history do? In his attempt to deceive Europeans, he presented them with maps which were not based on geography, but rather on the fantasies of neo-Greeks about how they would like the national make up of the Balkans to appear!

And what is that we are talking about here, with this new text? A book, supposedly scientific, but is in fact nothing but a tract designed again, not on the basis of geography/cartography, but on a desire to serve the so called “national interest”. This is schizophrenia! Poor Matthew Nimitz was sent a free copy of this new book, obviously in an attempt to sway him on the Macedonian name issue. But I asked myself, why didn’t they also send him a copy of “The Secrets of the Swamp”? Penelope Delta, also possesses paranoid nationalist pretensions....

George N. Papadakis is a journalist who writes for Nova Zora and is a member of Viozhito – a political party struggling for the human rights of Macedonians in Greece. Article translated from Macedonian by George Vlahov of the AMHRC.



Apostol Petkov Terziev

Who was Liberated in 1912?

By Akis Gavrilidis



Akis Gavrilidis

Last year, the city of Solun/Salonika celebrated “one hundred years since its liberation”; though it would be more accurate to say that it was really the city’s authorities who were celebrating. Indeed there were some disputes about which authorities should possess the responsibility for organizing the festivities – the Solun Council alone or a wider collective involving the local authorities from the outlying regions, etc.

However, far more important than the disagreements to do with that issue, there is a question which needs to be posed and publicly discussed: what is the exact meaning of the term ‘liberation’, as used in this context?

From the outset, it is clear that the usage of the term in this context conflates freedom/liberty with the state, or more accurately, a particular state. In a way, this is perversely related to one of Hegel’s elementary formulations identifying liberty and the state; a group of people and or a strip of land came to be regarded as “liberated” on the basis of a single criterion and that is whether they ended up in one particular state or another. The governing proviso being that the state in question is “suitable”, which is determined on the basis of the ethnic origins/national character of the people and land.

Thus it is obvious that here we have an example of a nationalist misappropriation of the term ‘liberty’ (or ‘freedom’), which involves a severely limited, exclusionary understanding of its meaning. All the same, even with this overly narrow definition, it remains highly problematic to assert that Solun was “liberated” when the Greek army entered the city in 1912. At the time in question, it does not appear that the inhabitants considered themselves to have been especially “liberated”. When the Greek army invaded what was the Ottoman Empire and took the city by force, Solun was and had for many centuries been, inhabited by a variety of ethnic groups; of which, the most numerous and influential from a socio-political, religious and economic perspective, were the Sephardic Jews – whereas Christian Orthodox Greek speakers, were numerically in third place and made up no more than 25% of the city’s population.

Therefore, even on the basis of conventional ethno-state criteria, the most appropriate way to characterize what took place in 1912

would be to refer to it as a “*military conquest of Solun by the Greek army*”. The standardized usage of the term “liberated”, creates the false impression that prior to 1912, all was “slavery” and darkness or that in any case, the earlier period is of no interest – the “true” history of the city begins post 1912. Anything that occurred earlier might be deemed relevant only if it contributed to the military conquest and the creation of the current situation.

However, if we attempt to sketch a picture, so to speak, of the last hundred years and examine the results of the city becoming a part of Greek state territory, we would definitely confirm that it is untenable to maintain that Solun was “liberated”, irrespective of which definition of the term is used.

In the first place, two decades after the “liberation”, the largest ethnic group was almost totally ‘liquidated’. It is true that this was planned and realized by the NAZI’s, though the remaining inhabitants do not appear to have been particularly concerned about this. On the contrary, many of them, along with the local authorities, nationalists and collaborationists, hurriedly worked towards eliminating all signs of the previous Jewish presence – taking for themselves what they wanted and destroying the remainder. Among the latter and of very significant archeological interest, were the Jewish graves, which were totally destroyed with a maniacal hatred in a short period of time. Today, the majority of Solun’s inhabitants are not even aware that these graves existed. On the space these graves occupied, cynically, the authorities erected the city’s university, which carries the name “Aristotle” and possesses a logo which represents a Roman soldier who was declared a Christian saint after his death – even though he wasn’t known for being a man of letters.

Another result was that a generation later, the Greek state placed in Solun and the wider area, tens of thousands of refugees from Pontus and Asia Minor and it was on their back that the state was given the opportunity to test, on a massive scale, the technology of the concentration camp. After the obligatory symbolic and physical quarantine, these people were strategically utilized as colonists to “Greekify” the wider territory, under strict surveillance, because of concerns about its “questionable Greek con-

science". Today, this concern is generally not so publicly perceptible (if we exclude certain banners which appear at sporting stadiums), though an obvious example demonstrating its continued existence, are the Metaxas [brutal dictator of Greece from 1936 – 1940] like demonstrations which were staged in the early 1990's against the Republic of Macedonia's declaration of independence. These events cannot be described as having anything to do with "liberation".

In addition to this sometimes silent and other times noisy ethnic cleansing (and sometimes self inflicted ethnic cleansing) – we need to mention the collapse of the multi-ethnic Socialist Federation as a result of the blocking of demonstrations, which caused the death of many strikers, by the military in 1936. The same military which supposedly "liberated" the city's inhabitants and which seems to have aided in the murder of Grigoris Lambrakis [a popular advocate for Greek state democratic reform] in 1963 [which eventually led to a new military dictatorship in Greece].

One thing which continues to undermine the apparently complete control of social memory and the elimination of undesirable aspects of the past, is the arrangement of Solun's landscape and especially the politicking on questions to do with collective memory and monuments.

When observing the choice of statues which grace (?) the streets and city squares of Solun and even the names and former names of these streets and squares, one forms the impression that the city is or has been until very recently, under occupation;

that one is in a town which is under a cloud of acute uncertainty and that therefore, it is necessary to continually impart *just who is in command* and the glare of both locals and visitors is constantly directed towards the manufactured "Greek reality". These relentless attempts to convey a particular view indicate that the message has still not been completely accepted, that it has not yet become spontaneous and obvious.

In other words, nearly all the statues one meets in Solun's public spaces, exhibit honor for a militaristic remembrance of the past; for a military conquest. Many of them represent various bandits, leaders of the so called "Macedonian Struggle" at the beginning of the 20th century. Even though there are so many of these statues, they generally remain of no interest for the majority of inhabitants. Apart from them, there are the obligatory statues of Alexander (on a horse), Philip, Pavlos Melas [a more famous leader in the so called "Macedonian Struggle"], Emanuel Papas and Kolokotronis.

Notably, someone recently went to the statue of Kolokotronis and sketched some interesting graffiti over its surface and no one made any effort to remove this graffiti. Thus it is that we had to wait 99 years to pass from the "liberation" of Solun/Salonika/Thessaloniki/Selanik, for some practical doubt about the city's ethno-Greek homogeneity, to be exhibited in the city's public space.

Apart from the addition of new monuments, the control of memory is carried out via the intentional demolition of all buildings and structures which could not be pre-

sented as Greek or at least Roman and which negate the modern Greek story/fiction. A classic example is the dozens of minarets which can be seen as part of the city's skyline in all photos up to the second decade of the 20th century. The one building which could not be 'ethnically cleansed' from historical memory is the White Tower, so it was converted into a 'symbol' by giving it a new significance, which conveniently serves to hide the old one: at its entrance there is an "explanatory" plaque which informs the interested visitor that the structure is a "post-Byzantine" monument – all so as to avoid mention of the word 'Ottoman'; usage of which, would be seen as 'polluting' the city.

If we turn our eyes and ears away from these attempts to Greekify the city and towards the discussion of what has been mentioned above, we can view a demonstration of doubt, which cannot be escaped, rather, this doubt is strongly reinforced by the massive attempts of the authorities to control and drive the inhabitants into Greek parameters. This results in a need among the city's citizens to continually test themselves and each other, in a manner which I don't think can be accurately or usefully described as "liberation". It seems more like *slavery* to me.

Akis Gravididis is a Greek scholar who originally wrote this article for *Nova Zora*.

Translated from Macedonian by George Vlahov of the AMHRC.



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MHRMI and AMHRC Call for the Reinstatement of All Original Macedonian Names in Mala Prespa and Golo Brdo

Toronto, Canada and Melbourne, Australia (March 19, 2013) - Following the Albanian Parliament's long-overdue decision to reinstate the original Macedonian name of the village of Pustec, MHRMI and AMHRC call for the reinstatement of all Macedonian names in the regions of Mala Prespa and Golo Brdo in Albania. The Albanian government had previously renamed Pustec using the Albanian name "Liqenas" in an attempt to suppress the Macedonian identity of the region.

Albania must also immediately end its state-sponsored persecution of its large Macedonian minority and ensure that Macedonians have instruction in the Macedonian language in all levels of education and throughout the country, not just in official "minority zones".

Ironically, European Union members Greece and Bulgaria continue their outright denial and blatant persecution of their Macedonian minorities. One hundred years after the fateful partition of Macedonia in 1913, Bulgaria and Greece are still attempting to eradicate the Macedonian identity without fear of repercussions from the European Union. Greece, in particular, forcibly changed the names of all Macedonian people and toponyms into Greek in the 1920s, and any attempt to reclaim personal names by Macedonians continue to be suppressed by the Greek government.

MHRMI and AMHRC demand that the EU force its member-states to live up to their human rights obligations under international law. Furthermore, as the use of dual-names in other EU countries has become commonplace, MHRMI and AMHRC call on the EU to promote the use of the original Macedonian names of villages and other toponyms in Bulgaria and Greece.



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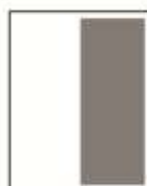
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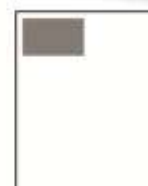
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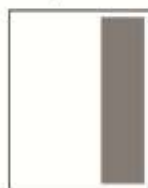
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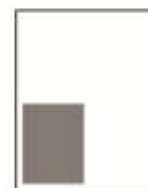
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BOOK LAUNCH: English translation of *THE GREEK ANTI-MACEDONIAN STRUGGLE - PART 1*

by Dimitris Lithoxou

Translated from Macedonian to English by Dr. Chris Popov, David Vitkov and George Vlahov of the AMHRC



Thursday March 7 at around 7pm in the function room of the Castle Hotel, located just a few doors away from the AMHRC office in inner city North Melbourne, the English translation of Dimitris Lithoxou's *Greek Anti-Macedonian Struggle*, was launched before a crowd of around 150.

Melbourne's Indian summer was still in full swing and most of those present were sweating and sought refreshments from the bar. Speeches introducing the text were given by two of the translators, Dr. Chris Popov and George Vlahov, and by Professor Victor Friedman from the University of Chicago.

After the speeches a book signed by all of the translators was auctioned off and was purchased by Mr. Rade Petreski for \$400.00. Thank you Rade!

It was announced that the book will be distributed to all tertiary and state libraries around Australia and to many other tertiary libraries across the Western world, via an international book distributing firm.

The book can now be purchased directly from the AMHRC website: http://www.macedonianhr.org.au/wip/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=111:amhrc-shop&catid=34:-amhrcat&Itemid=50

Two short comments on the book, by scholars renowned for their work in this field:

"In the United States, the examination and deconstruction of national myths already has a long and venerable tradition. In Greece, however, such questioning of

dominant national paradigms is still ignored, discouraged, and sometimes even dangerous. Dimitris Lithoxou's meticulously researched book is as important as it is instructive. His counter-narrative to Greek nationalist discourse deserves a broad audience both within Greece and outside it. As a modern European nation-state, Greece is strong enough to come to terms with the dark side of its relatively recent past, and Dimitris Lithoxou's book is an important step in that direction. It should be read by anyone with an interest in Greek history, Macedonian history, and the fate of the Macedonians of Greece."

Professor Victor Friedman, University of Chicago

"In what the author calls a reverse journey from myth towards history," Dimitris





Lithoxou draws on primary Greek sources – consular reports, private letters and diaries – to turn the dominant heroic narrative of Greece's Macedonian fighters on its head. The tragic picture of nationalist icon Pavlos Melas that emerges – a young man from a privileged background, tormented by the isolation and physical hardships of a campaign of ter-

ror in an alien, non-Greek land, and ultimately killed by one of his own men – is a potent and timely reminder of the danger that romantic ideals of expansive chauvinism pose for human reason and decency – among perpetrators and victims alike. This book is vivid testimony to the enduring importance of open-minded archival research in preserving the frag-

ile and vital habit of critical thinking."

Professor Keith Brown, Watson Institute, Brown University

Some photos of the evening taken by the MHR Review's roving photo journalist, Diane Kitanoski.



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Commemorating the 65th anniversary of the plight of the Detsa Begaltsi and the 100th anniversary of the fateful partition of Macedonia

Macedonian Child Refugees (Detsa Begaltsi) were evacuated from Greece as children during the Greek Civil War of 1944-1949. To escape the bombing of Macedonian villages by the Greek army, children aged 2-14 were evacuated by the Red Cross and settled across Europe. Most evacuations occurred 65 years ago, in 1948. The Detsa Begaltsi have consistently been denied entry into Greece simply because they assert their Macedonian ethnic identity.

After the Balkan Wars of 1912 - 1913, the Treaty of Bucharest tragically partitioned Macedonia among Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria, while a small part was given to Albania in 1919. Upon annexation of Macedonia's territory, each country began terrorist campaigns aimed at killing, expelling or forcibly assimilating the indigenous Macedonian population.

The Republic of Macedonia declared its independence from Yugoslavia in 1991, while Macedonians in Aegean Macedonia (annexed by Greece), Pirin Macedonia (annexed by Bulgaria) and Mala Prespa and Golo Brdo (annexed by Albania) are still being persecuted simply for being Macedonian.

MHRMI works relentlessly to help Macedonians overcome the human rights abuses that they face on a daily basis throughout all parts of Macedonia. MHRMI and our partners, the Australian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC), are the only organizations in the Macedonian diaspora that finance and organize Macedonian human rights activities in the Balkans. Among our many initiatives are:

- the purchase and financing of the only Macedonian radio station in Lerin and TV station in Korca, Albania;
- the only Macedonian language classes throughout Aegean Macedonia and Albania, including the opening of another kindergarten in Korca;
- the funding of Nova Zora, Narodna Volja and other Macedonian newspapers and publications in Aegean Macedonia, Pirin Macedonia and Mala Prespa/Golo Brdo;
- the crucial Our Name Is Macedonia campaign, which demands an immediate end to the "name negotiations";
- the operation of human rights offices for Macedonians in Bulgaria, Greece and Albania;
- demanding recognition and support for Macedonia and Macedonian human rights in Washington, Ottawa, Brussels and throughout the world.

silence is not an option.

MHRMI and AMHRC call on Macedonians throughout the world to show their support for human rights for Macedonians throughout the Balkans.

MHRMI and AMHRC finance and organize all Macedonian human rights activities and work directly with every Macedonian human rights organization including Vinozhito, OMO Ilinden PIN, MAEI, Nova Zora, Narodna Volja, Ilinden Tirana, the Home of Macedonian Culture, and all others.

By supporting us, you are directly supporting the cause of human rights for all Macedonians.

Among our many initiatives are:

- Macedonian language classes in Aegean Macedonia and Albania, including the opening of another new kindergarten class in Korca, Albania;
- In addition to the MHRMI/AMHRC-purchased and financed radio station in Lerin, we recently opened a TV station in Korca;
- The historic Detsa Begaltsi lawsuit against Greece for the return of confiscated property, citizenship and financial compensation;
- The funding of pro-Macedonian newspapers and publications in Aegean Macedonia, Pirin Macedonia and Mala Prespa;
- The landmark European Court of Human Rights judgments against Bulgaria and Greece for violating Macedonian human rights;
- The operation of human rights offices for Macedonians in Bul-

garia, Greece and Albania;

- The crucial Our Name is Macedonia campaign, which demands that Macedonia end all negotiations over its name; and
- Funding successful election campaigns for Macedonian candidates in Bulgaria, Greece and Albania.

We also lobby strongly for recognition of Macedonia and Macedonian human rights in Washington, Ottawa, Canberra, Brussels and throughout the world, specifically:

- Meetings with Canadian, American, Australian and European heads of state and parliamentarians;
- Meetings with Foreign Affairs officials from Canada, Australia, the US State Department, Council of Europe, among many others;
- Attendance at United Nations, OSCE and other international human rights conferences and
- Meetings with UN Ambassador Nimetz to reiterate our demand that the international community support the end to the "name negotiations".

Macedonians are organized, energized and determined to pursue their struggle for universal human rights. The biggest challenge we face is a financial one. Please show your support by joining the MHRMI Human Rights Fund or the AMHRC's Macedonian Minorities Support Fund.

Thank you in advance.

Show Your Support For Macedonian Human Rights



The Argument from Numismatics¹ (*Argumentum Numismaticum*)

By Jim Thomev

*This article is based on a true story;
its source is explained in the detail*

According to the French philosopher Descartes, for an idea to be true it has to be “clearly and distinctly perceived” or understood. As he was primarily a mathematician, it was perfectly sensible of him not to confuse a circle with a square. This is a very useful piece of knowledge.

Far be it from me to be facetious, or over-serious, as I prefer the middle ground between these two attitudes, as moderation in all things except the truth, is my guiding principle in life. I could perhaps best describe my position as a gentle but firm sense of irony that combines good sense with decency. But of course there are sceptics who will assert that personal charisma is not possible unless there is deviation from such dull decency and common sense...

Now, as I have always considered the difference between a person freely identifying as Macedonian and one freely identifying as a Greek as two clear and distinct ideas, in the Cartesian sense of the phrase, I have never had a problem distinguishing the two. (Of course “freely identifying” implies that no compulsion, intimidation, violence or terror is has been used by powerful agents.)

Over the years, Descartes has been charged with numerous intellectual crimes since he first explained with mind-numbing clarity his influential philosophy in mid-17th century. Among the worst accusations are numbered his having ruined the French education system to this day, fathering German philosophy and giving the Scotsman Adam Smith the idea of the “free market” from which the whole world is groaning at the moment. So, if he has been that good – and these are only just some of the unmitigated evils attributed to him - I reckon he is worth taking seriously as a thinker.

Now before I go any further, I can’t resist illuminating how much chance is involved in who gets to be regarded as a great thinker and how ideas can come from unexpected places and peoples. I will therefore quote one of the greatest writers/collectors of people’s literature in the Macedonian tradition.

In his short autobiography – very short indeed, as he was a tailor by profession, so very little happened by way of adventure – Marko Tsepenkov (1830-1920) opens with a sentence that should be made the logo of all higher seats of learning: Мнозина философи има гоедари и мнозина гоедари станале философи.² (*Many philosophers there be who are herdsmen, while amongst herdsmen many are true philosophers.*)

In recent years, I have often puzzled over why the present Greek nation has persisted with the irrational and discriminatory policies against all minorities within its borders and the Macedonians everywhere else in the world as well. To no avail, I have tried to work out why human gullibility is so limitless and hypocrisy the mask of so much evil and political skulduggery.

Recently, I was so overjoyed when a relative by marriage (one of the good svatina) shared with me his experience of difficulties and problems with a Greek neighbour in the same street in a northern suburb of Melbourne. I was so impressed I decided to present his story to a broader public. It is a tale that is as salutary as any in the simple tradition of the parables that the Lord Jesus of the Christians made famous: simple in the extreme, with a beginning, middle and end, as all good story tellers have intuited, and as Aristotle the Stagyrte had written well over 2,300 years ago.

Another rich source of happiness from this story that I shall unfold shortly, was the fact that its source was an exchange in the Greek language with sloses of Australian English from both interlocutors, and retold to me in a combination of both standard and dialect Macedonian with many English embellishments and the odd Greek phrase or expression thrown in. And in what follows, I present it in my own quirky, roadside Australian English prose.

Therefore I have to own up that the original exchange between the neighbours or verbal sequence of the event is not what I could possibly present here, but a mutation of the story, thanks, to the channels through which it was communicated to me. In the first instance, there are the linguistic code switches. As well as this, there are the contributions in the telling due to the highly individual personalities of the three players – the two original elderly men in dialogue dealing with a hot topic, the Svate’s inescapably biased report aimed at impressing his interlocutor, and the vagaries of

temperament, creative capacities and powers of understanding (or lack thereof) of yours truly, the person who has given the tale its written form. These considerations, needless to say, highlight the difficulties in all historiography and all forensics where truth is to be established by evidence.

Having clarified this much, we can tell the story without anger or prejudice and thereby avoiding all accusations of having made little or no attempt to be even-handed.

Svateto and the Greek - let's give the latter the false name of Konstantinos Papakonstantinou, Con for short - have been neighbours for decades in the Melbourne suburb of Reservoir. Always a difficult customer, Con believed the Greek line that there is no Macedonian ethnic identity, and those that call themselves Macedonians have a "Slav" or "Bulgarian" or "Serbian" or "Yugoslav" ethnicity; and since the sovereign state the Republic of Macedonia declared its independence in September of 1991 after the break up of Yugoslavia, Con the Greek, taking his cue from the nationalistic Greek propaganda from his country of origin, often used the disparaging terms "Fyromians", or "Skopjani".

From the outset of their acquaintance, the Svate had 'clearly and distinctly perceived' that the tension on the ethnic issue would never be settled by Socratic dialogue between two rational creatures seeking truth in mutual respect under the illuminating light of reason.

Consequently, our Svate, who had also been born in Greece not more than two decades since it had assumed its present borders by usurping half the territory from the collapsed Turkish empire, had decided to live and let live without too much interaction with the neighbour whom he had come to regard as an irreparable victim of Greek chauvinist brainwashing.

In recent years, the Greek neighbour often approached the Svate, in order to express his anxiety that the "Skopjani" were getting out of hand. On the occasion we are recording here, he had told the Svate that the "Skopjani" were being very intransigent in claiming Alexander the Great, the Macedonian conqueror of the East, as a hero for their own nation.

Having put up with insults and name-calling for years from the most

boastful tribe in the Balkans, Svate had had enough by now, but being a man of peace like all his compatriots wherever they find themselves in the world, told the insolent Con that he should not complain about the Macedonians. And he should not call Macedonians "Skopjani" as this only referred to the citizens of the capital city Skopje. It would be as stupid as calling all Greeks "Athenians", which would only show a person's ignorance and malice.

As the Svate was being terrorised regarding his ethnic origin or identity by his Greek neighbour just before Christmas, he decided in the interests of peace and good will, albeit against his better judgement, to speak to Con as though he were a reasonable human being.

He therefore presented the following argument which should henceforth be known among those whose capacity for thought is normal, as the *Argumentum Numismaticum*. It runs as follows:

On the issue of whether Alexander was a Macedonian or a Greek, the Greeks themselves had already conceded to the Macedonians, argued Svate. They had in no uncertain terms admitted the fact that Alexander was a Macedonian king and therefore the Macedonians in the Republic of Macedonia had every right to name their airport or whatever else on their land took their fancy, after Ancient Macedonian celebrities, or famous places and events. The Modern Greeks did this sort of thing all the time, so why shouldn't the Modern Macedonians do it?

The alleged victim of Greek nationalistic brainwashing was so taken aback he asked how it was possible that the Greeks had made such a concession. He asked whether he had missed something about the round of talks over the name which the Greek government or media out here in Australia had kept from him.

At this point, the Svate told Con to wait and be patient, while he went inside his own house to fetch the evidence that there and then in that backstreet of Reservoir, would demonstrate, once and for all, that the Greeks had let the cat out of the bag on the name issue, and especially on who Alexander was. He promised he would show him concrete evidence written in golden letters, in the Modern Greek language, that the Greeks had given back to the modern Macedonians a piece of im-

portant history that they have always stolen from them and have always falsely, wilfully and wrongfully been claiming as Greek.

Con looked as displeased and upset as if he had been told as he was hoeing into a portion of mousaka that what he was eating with such zest was in historical fact a Turkish dish in origin, and that the dessert to follow, the baklava, was an Arabian sweet prepared by Muslims from time immemorial.

Now, Con, of late, had become more sensitive about being made fun of and of being treated with suspicion as soon as he let people know that he was Greek. He was astute enough to realise that it was linked to the disrepute that the state of Modern Greece had fallen throughout the world as a result of the Euro-zone crisis; the patriots were unequivocally scorned as a nation of irresponsible layabouts who were living on other people's money since they had joined the Euro-zone. So went the mortifying stories about Greek laziness, incompetence, deception, baseness, corruption and many other appalling characteristics of both the ruling class and the Greek people in general that did the rounds in the world thanks to their financial collapse and the need for the nation to be propped up by the western Europeans. As he stood in the street in reservoir outside Svate's house where he was no longer asked in as he had been, in the first few years of residence in the area, Con became uneasy with foreboding.

After a few minutes, Svate came out waving a gold coin slightly bigger and heavier than the Australian dollar coin he held between index finger and thumb.

A look of alarm appeared on Con's face, as the Svate pointed to the damning print on the coin.

'Here', said Svate in Greek, which was the language they were communicating in. 'Do you see what it says?'

The coin was for a 100 drachmas minted in 1990; our Svate took the anxious Con through the message engraved and written on both sides of the coin:

'Here,' he said pointing to the "heads" side of the coin (see *fig.1*), 'is not this Alexander the Great's head in profile with the ram's horn over his right ear and his luxuriant hair bound by a ribbon to keep it from blowing in the wind, as it would have done every time he galloped around

on his faithful Bukefalos? Is this not “*Megas Alexandros*” written just over his head? And here – and this is my point to you “file” (friend) – this phrase here, underneath the profile of the great young hero’s head it writes – see for yourself – “*Vasileus Makedonon*” – wasn’t this coin minted by the Greek Government in 1990 (see *fig.2*) telling the whole world that Alexander was a Macedonian and not a Greek? So how can you or anyone else say that he was a Greek king? If he was a Greek king it would have said so on this very currency, which was the currency of the Greek-Democracy – the Hellenic Republic of 1990!

‘My God! The bastards, they have been shamming us all along!’ Con was outraged, shocked, in a state of utter confusion.

‘Why are you so surprised that the Macedonians with their independent nation with its democratically elected Government seated in Skopje have called the airport in their capital Alexander the Great?’ pressed on the Svate. ‘Among others, you have your Greek Treasury to thank for that, when it was still using drachmas! The Greeks are jumping up and down and have been running around the world telling everybody there is no such thing as a Macedonian people or nation – that it was a communist plot or an attempt to take the land the Greeks won with much bloodshed in the Balkan Wars of 1912-13? You’ve heard all that rubbish, but the truth always comes up no matter how much you try and bury it!’

‘I never thought about any of this!’

‘Of course not! You weren’t allowed to – just like everybody else in Greece or any of your expatriates, or anyone else who has ties to Greece. They don’t really have a democracy there in the *patrida* – never have! The word ‘democracy’ entered the international vocabulary with the Ancient Greeks, the English, Americans and French (in that order) have tried to put it into practice, everyone, including dictators praises it these days as a form of government, and like the Christian religion, no one seriously believes in it, if we are to judge from actions rather than words.’

‘But this is very upsetting because

the *Skopjani* are likely to keep the name Macedonia for their country. I heard that most of the United Nation members have recognised it with that name – excuse me, but I find something stops in my throat and I can’t say the word Macedonian about those people. My friend Aristides-who got a Melbourne University education, told me that the Americans did some research and they found the sound of the Slavic languages – especially the one you and the *Skopjani* speak in your home – damages people’s ear drums.’

‘Aristides did not get a university education – I know about him, the idiot even said we should call ourselves Dardanians! – he’s just a fool who once crossed from Swanston Street through the Melbourne University grounds to the other side when he wanted to catch a tram in Royal Parade on his way to the Queen Victoria market where he packed frozen fish.’

‘Anyway, if he really heard things like that from the Americans it was probably some CIA agent in Greece having a joke with him when he noticed what super-Greeks are bred in Australia!’

‘But if you ask me, I can’t imagine a sweeter and more beautiful language than Macedonian because it was the language I was spoken to by my nearest and dearest elders. I’m sure everyone, unless they have been so oppressed that they have been made to hate themselves, feel the same way about the language they used with their loving family.’

‘Listen, Con, wake up to yourself! The Greeks are so unreasonable they destroyed the economy of their own country and made everyone in the *patrida* a slave to the western Europeans with their reckless spending of other people’s money! And what could be more ridiculous and stupid than the Greeks complaining and carrying on about the sunburst on the flag of the Macedonians when on this very coin – look again, mate! – it says Alexander is a Macedonian king – I’ll have to repeat the truth because people have always poisoned your mind by repeating lies just as the Nazis poisoned the German people about how superior they were to the Jews and everybody else in the world. There is nothing special about the Greeks, just as there was nothing special about the Nazis – you have been lied to about how terrific you are! The

Greeks had gone feral when the Macedonians declared an independent nation with a flag that carried the sunburst from Phillip of Macedon’s sarcophagus...all the Greeks showed was their own barbarism, how deluded and stupid they were! Phillip of MACEDON, not Hellas! Think about it!’

‘But I never heard any of this,’ said the Greek.

‘Of course not, Con! The ruling class of Greece – the rich bastards – didn’t consult you when they got rid of the drachma as soon as they smelled billions and billions of Euro dollars and joined the Euro zone! Did they? They just pulled the wool over everyone’s eyes after having appealed to their greed – and bye bye drachma!–and *ayde, sto kalo!* – not just the drachma they thought was useless now, but with all the so-called 6000 year traditions, since our first parents Adam and Eve offended Yahweh, the jealous God of the Jews, with their disobedience in the Garden of Eden! Do you get my drift?’

‘And now your Greek governments have stuffed up big time, and are making ordinary people pay through the nose and live in poverty! It makes a big, bad joke of all the boasting about your connections with the glorious past...’

‘You’re right there – *i malakizmeni! I poustides mas poulisan!* They have embarrassed the shit out of us Greek patriots not living in the *patrida*... that’s what my cousin Dimitri from Thessaloniki was saying when he came out here and was hoping I could help him to emigrate from Greece with his whole family!’

‘Fat chance of that happening these days, my dear friend. They don’t need wogs for the factories like they did just after the war. Australia had the best economy in its entire white history! The white bosses needed brutes to work in the factories and fields, so the rulers, who weren’t exactly running a charitable organisation as no government ever does, just brought us dagoes and lowly types over in shiploads! You should know they couldn’t get enough real white men from the west or north of Europe, so they went for us! These days, of course, it’s show me some big money (e.g at least half a million dollars, last I heard) and I’ll let you in – and...I don’t care how you made it! And the last

thing they want now, Con, is what they consider lazy tax evading business and professional types from a financially ruined country!’

‘What a disgrace! *Rezili!*’

‘See, we speak the same language! Let me remind you of an old Macedonian proverb – *If you are a sheep you will be shorn by everybody.* (Ако си овца сите ќе те стрижат). But let’s say no more about it. And let’s spare a thought instead for good old Captain Cook and thank him for discovering Australia, because it opened the door for us as well, not just the criminals from the UK who were dumped here in 1788!’ concluded Svateto on a bitter-sweet note.

I’ll finish it there as the story has been told in sufficient detail to illustrate my basic point about the nature of human greed and boundless gullibility. The tale that has been told is shot through with a peculiar logic which gives us cause for optimism. To those who are of open minds and hearts it perhaps teaches that all views held unthinkingly, may easily override common decency and basic respect and recognition for other people.

Endnotes:

¹ *Numismatics*, n. the science of coins and medals. Also, *numismatical* [F *numisma-*

tique, from L *nomisma* coin, from Gk] Macquarie Dictionary.

² I will be very grateful for anyone who could make any helpful suggestions to improve the English version of this sentence. I have struggled to capture the nuances and subtlety of the original but cannot do it with concision and compactness equal to the Macedonian original.

The complete opening paragraph reads: Мнозина философи има гоедари и мнозина гоедари станале философи. Вака велат нашите стари. И вистина така си е, спроти како сум ученил мнозина мој пријатели и непријатели, а најповеќе сум се чудил на татка ми, бог да ми го прости. (страна 303) (*Many philosophers there be who are herdsmen, while amongst herdsmen many are true philosophers. This is what our elders tell us. And it is true as far as I can judge among the many friends and enemies of my knowledge, but above all, it is my own father who has most astonished me, may God have mercy on him. p 303*)

Марко К. Цепенков, Македонски народни умотворби, книга десетта, издавач Македонска Книга, Скопје, 1972, ред. Д-р Блаже Ристовски.

In the quote from Tsepenkov’s original text there are no typos or grammatical errors; it is the original form of Macedonian the author used so it is not the literary standard of

today. I do not think it is possible to come anywhere near the social reality or culture of a particular author or period in history without a good knowledge of the language used in the society of that time.

I will merely note this here as it is a very large theme. It has been rightly said that future generations will not be interested in knowing a language of a past epoch, say Macedonian under the Ottoman Empire, in order to order food and drink in a hotel or ask for directions to Istanbul. Rather they would want to know what their ancestors understood of the world, what their culture was like and how they went about dealing with the basic difficulties of life – in other words what makes the heritage so unique and interesting. Macedonians are lucky in having so much of the oral traditions and non-verbal aspects of culture preserved by the collections of folklore of the preliterate epochs.

Marko K Tsepenkov, Macedonian folklore, volume 10, makedonska Kniga, Skopje, 1972, ed. Dr Blazhe Ristovski.



Др. Сузана Котевска

СПЕЦИЈАЛИСТ ГИНЕКОЛОГ - АКУШЕР

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"WHO GAVE YOU THE RIGHT TO NEGOTIATE MY NAME?"

Do not be deceived by the terms 'international, bilateral, constitutional'

- Change it once, even bilaterally, and it will be changed **everywhere**
- Do you want to be called '**Northern Macedonian**', '**Vardarian**', '**Skopjan**' or simply '**Macedonian**'?
- We applaud the Macedonian government for saying "**We will not change our name**", but by negotiating we are telling the world "**We will change our name**"
- **No dual-name.** Greece is the only country that objects to our name. It is not our problem. No bilateral or international "solution" is needed
- Countries that have recognized Macedonia have said "**If a bilateral solution is reached, we will abide by that decision and use the new name for Macedonia**"
- **Any change to our name is unacceptable**, even 'qualifiers' like '**Democratic**' or '**Northern**' in front of '**Republic of Macedonia**'. **We would be known everywhere as 'Northern Macedonia' and 'Northern Macedonians', who speak 'Northern Macedonian'**

WE ARE WINNING. 127 COUNTRIES HAVE RECOGNIZED MACEDONIA, INCLUDING 4/5 UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBERS. WE HAVE THE POWER TO END THIS. STOP NEGOTIATING OUR OWN NAME.

Prior to 1988, Greece's policy was that Macedonia did not exist. Then it renamed 'Northern Greece' to 'Macedonia'. Now suddenly Macedonia is Greek?

As former Greek Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis admitted in 1995, the reason Greece objects to our name is to deny the existence and persecution of its large Macedonian minority

- Macedonians in the Balkans are fighting for their human rights as Macedonians, nothing else

REMEMBER: IT IS A LIE THAT A COMPROMISE WILL SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS WITH GREECE. IT WILL JUST STRENGTHEN GREECE'S POSITION TOWARDS ITS FINAL GOAL: TO ERASE MACEDONIANS FROM HISTORY, THE PRESENT AND FUTURE.

We are Macedonian! Do you want to go down in history as the people who changed our name and identity?

What gives the EU and NATO the right to ask you to sell out your identity?

- The EU and NATO are violating their own principles and laws by asking us to change our name
- Do not give in to scare tactics from Greece and media reports that Macedonia will 'collapse' without EU & NATO membership
- Look at the current economic crisis in Greece
- **Scare-mongering is being used to get Macedonia to change its name**

Greece is holding the EU and NATO hostage

- Despite overwhelming support for Macedonia's NATO membership, Greece was permitted to use its veto power against Macedonia
- Greece lied about its economic situation, and now the rest of the EU is being forced to bail them out

The European Union cannot allow its member-states to be handcuffed by Greece's xenophobic policies. Recognize Macedonia.

- If the EU and NATO insist on a name change, what other concessions will they ask for?
- By continuing the negotiations, we are telling the world "we will change our name"
- **Stop negotiating our own name**

Common sense. Would any other country negotiate its own name?

- Should the US state of Georgia demand that the *Republic of Georgia* change its name?
- Should the Belgian province of Luxembourg demand that *Luxembourg* change its name?

THE MOST BASIC HUMAN RIGHT IS SELF-IDENTIFICATION.

THE MACEDONIAN PEOPLE MUST TELL THEIR GOVERNMENT TO STOP NEGOTIATING OUR NAME.

DEMAND AN END TO 'FYROM' REFERENCE.

DEMAND IMMEDIATE INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION.

MHRMI
MACEDONIAN HUMAN RIGHTS MOVEMENT INTERNATIONAL
www.mhrmi.org

AMHRC
AUSTRALIAN MACEDONIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE INC.
www.macedonianshr.org.au

and other Macedonian organizations - www.mhrmi.org/our_name_is_macedonia

OUR NAME IS MACEDONIA

new theatre production

Sydney and New South Wales, Australia

нова театарска престава

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"Wrestling the Bear" is a play about men's health. Told with a blend of comedy and drama, "Wrestling the Bear" revolves around two Macedonian men dealing with cancer, illustrating their struggles to cope with and tell others about their serious illness.

Драмата "Борење со мечка" обработува тема за здравјето на мажите. Преку комични и драматични сцени драмата го опишува животот на двајца Македонци кои се соочени со канцерозно заболување. Илустрирани се нивните тешкотии да се справуваат со својата сериозна болест без да им кажат за тоа на своите најблиски.

Australian-Macedonian Theatre of Sydney

WRESTLING THE BEAR

- 11th May 2013
Macedonian Cultural Centre "Ilinden"
65 Railway Street, Rockdale
Start at 7:00 pm
- 24th May 2013
Bankstown Polish Club,
11 East Terrace, Bankstown
Start at 7:00 pm
- 25th May 2013
Macedonian Community Centre,
266 Crawford Street, Queanbeyan
Start at 7:00 pm
- 31st May 2013
Macedonian Cultural Centre "Ilinden"
65 Railway Street, Rockdale
Start at 7:00 pm
- 1st June 2013
Port Kembla RSL,
Cnr Allen St & Military Road, Port Kembla
Start at 7:00 pm



Австралиско-Македонски Театар од Сиднеј

БОРЕЊЕ СО МЕЧКА



Writer: Dushan Ristevski
Director: Stefo Nantsou

CAST
Vasko Srbinovski
Irena Veljanova
Nikola Apostolovski
Valentina Apostolovska
Stefani Stepanovska
Javorka Kotevska
Samoil Mitrevski
Vlado Sazdanov
Mena Ristevska

For ticket information please contact:
Dushan Ristevski 0425 231 335
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PRICES
\$20 Standard ticket
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This project is part of the theatre based health promotion project 'Alive and out there' which is coordinated by the Multicultural Health Service, South Eastern Sydney Local Health District and funded by the Cancer Institute of NSW



Health
South Eastern Sydney
Local Health District



The Novel *Kalesh Angja* by Stale Popov

Reviewed by Dr. Michael Seraphinoff

Stale Popov was born in the Mariovo region of Macedonia in the village of Melnitsa in 1902 during the final turbulent years of the Turkish Empire in Southeastern Europe. He grew up in a traditional village, where he learned farming, the tending of livestock and various other village crafts and trades. He later pursued an education in Bitola and Belgrade, which eventually led to a career as a teacher and writer. His first novel, *Krpen Zhivot*, was published in 1953. This was followed by the novels *Tole Pasha* in 1956, *Dilber Stana* in 1958, *Kalesh Angja* in 1958, *Neobichno Dete* in 1966 and *Doktor Oreshkovski* in 1966. His works also include a collection of stories entitled *Itar Pejo*, published in 1965 and a fictionalized biography entitled *Shakjir Voivoda*, published in 1966. All of his works explore themes from the history and culture of the Macedonian village, land and people. Stale Popov died in 1965. In 1975 the "Stale Popov Award" was established to recognize outstanding works of fiction and drama with Macedonian historical themes.

I first read the novel *Kalesh Angja* back in 1973, when I was given an old copy upon my first visit to aunts and uncles and cousins in the Macedonian village of Ratae. Born and raised in America, and with only a rudimentary knowledge of the language of my forefathers, I struggled my way through the book the first time, but I was totally charmed and fascinated by the story, the somewhat archaic language of the storyteller author Stale Popov, and the folklore and history and culture of our people woven into the legend of Kalesh (a not so easily translated word for lovely, dark eyed, dark haired) Angja. (The name Angja, pronounced much like the English



name Angie, but with a short 'a' sound instead of 'e').

My elderly uncles presented me with a copy of the book with the words: "Mihailo, read this and learn about the past of our people." For those of us born far away from Macedonia, there

is, indeed, much to learn from *Kalesh Angja* and Popov's other novels. While his novel is set in Popov's native Mariovo region and takes us back several centuries to the dark days of medieval Turkish rule, it informs readers of wider times and places. In the 1970's my uncle Stale could still

point out portions of walls of Mehmed Pasha's chiflik or estate from the early 20th century. Ratae had been a Turkish plantation much like those described by Popov in *Kalesh Angja*. My ancestors in past centuries had worked as serfs on a Turkish master's estate, much as the Macedonian peasants in the novel.

Stale Popov's Angja and her brother Angele and most other characters in his story may only be the product of legend and storytelling. However, most incidents in this story, the way of life of the people of Mariovo and the Macedonian people generally, during the days of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent and his Grand Vizier Mehmed Sokolovich's reign in the 16th century, as depicted in the novel, are quite real.

Popov has written a story for us in a voice of the traditional village storyteller that takes us on a journey into the heart and soul of the medieval Turkish Empire in Europe. His story of the brave peasant girl Angja is based on an old legend and a documented peasant rebellion against Turkish rule in the year 1565 in the Mariovo region of Macedonia. Popov offers us a window into a world and a way of life that is foreign to us today. And yet, Kalesh Angja's story of a struggle for freedom and justice, from far away and long ago, can still move readers, both young and old. If I were to try and draw comparisons with works from English literature, I would probably say that it is comparable in style and theme to Robert Louis Stevenson's classic work for young people, *Kidnapped*.

The idea of the divine right of kings and emperors was acceptable to Christians and Moslems alike in Europe and the Middle East at the time of the Ottoman Empire. However, monarchs had, together with their privileges, specific responsibilities as a result of tradition and religious law. The struggle for justice under the rule of law in the Ottoman Empire is a major theme of Popov's novel. He stresses that the rebellion of the peasants of Mariovo in the 16th century occurred due to the lawlessness of a

regional Turkish kadija, or judge, who did not respect the rights of the Mariovo villagers. The villagers had received the right to their property, land and homes from an old firman, or decree, by the former Sultanness Mara. Popov's novel provides readers with a realistic picture of the wrongdoing of some in positions of authority and the possibility for justice under the rule of law in that medieval empire.

The romantic story line of the young and beautiful Angja, kidnapped by a Turkish lord who demands her conversion to Islam so that he can make her one of his wives, and her stubborn refusal to accept conversion, also appears in the popular folk song "Kalesh Angja." Popov even has a moment in his novel when the Turkish lord:

"...took down a tambura. He began to play nervously and in the course of a familiar song he sang: 'Will you listen, listen, my kalesh Angja, what the tambura plays for you,' to ask her consent.

When he had played the final stanza of the song for her, he stopped playing and a wicked look came into his eyes; seething with rage, he swung the tambura and hit Angja a fierce blow to the head. The tambura shattered to pieces and blood streamed down her head and poured over her face. But Angja remained silent and still by the wall. Only her upper lip trembled, but she bit it with her white teeth until it showed red with blood."

Stale Popov wove a good deal of authentic Mariovo history into his story. In the following passage he provides us with a plausible version of the communication between the Sultan and the local Turkish authorities in Mariovo, dated October 3, 1564, at the time of the peasant revolt:

'To the Skopje beg and to the Kadiya in Prilep:

A command.

The Kadiya has written us a let-

ter, naming the following as the ringleaders inciting revolt among the Christian peasants of the Prilep region; Dimitri Stalev of Satoka, priest Dimitri, Mate Nikola from the village Peshino, Stoyan Pejo and priest Yakov of Staravina. These lawbreakers were the subjects of an earlier royal decree calling for their arrest, but they have reportedly fled.

Recently we have been once again informed that these rebels continue to disturb the peace in the aforementioned land. I have concluded that the aforementioned Christian peasants must be captured.

Therefore, you are hereby notified of my command, to take all measures necessary to achieve their capture and put an end to their activities. You are to execute some of the rebels, and send the others to the capital to serve as galley slaves on our ships. You will give the conduct of this campaign to capture the aforementioned rebels the highest priority.

Given in the hand of the Vizier Mustafa on 26 Sefer in the year 973

Prilep was the scene of revolt the same year after the Ottoman court ruled in favor of a pasha in a dispute with the peasants. According to a document dated December 1565, a revolt broke out inside the town of Prilep when the Prilep Court, in settling a dispute between the peasants and Mustapha Pasha, ruled in favour of the pasha. When the news reached the streets, more than a thousand peasants from the surrounding villages, armed with sticks and stones, assembled and stormed the court. It is not known for certain how this revolt ended, but Stale Popov described the final days of the 1565 rebellion in Mariovo in the following way:

The Skopje begler-bey was also a pasha, a commander of the Skopje garrison, so he had a troop of two hundred paid professional soldiers to lead on this expedi-

tion, and in Kavardarsi five hundred additional men awaited him from the estates of the Tikvesh beys, with Yashar-bey in command. Men had volunteered from all over Tikvesh province at the prospect of plunder in Mariovo. Five days before the Easter holiday, four heavily-armed Ottoman war parties made their way to Mariovo by four different routes, each party burning and looting every Christian village in their path. But the leaders of the expedition kept their forces directed toward their main objective, the villages of Gradeshnitsa and Staravina.

The Kadiya, with the first party, and Selim, Fazli and Daut with the second party, arrived at the Tsrna River after two days- the first party at the Chebrenski Bridge, and the second at Svetets- while Mehmed, Muarem and Feta had already crossed the Konyarka River above Skochivir and had ascended the rocky slopes to Budimirts and Gurunishta, arriving at the very approaches to Staravina.

The Kadiya ordered an attack across the Chebrenski Bridge, but priest Yakov, with his village guard-force from Staravina, Gradeshnitsa, Bzovich and Satoka, held his forces on the opposite shore of the river for two days. Though on the third night, the Turks took the bridge and stormed up the steep rocky slopes, where the rebels had their positions. And other Turks, on the other side of Bzovich, had already taken the high ground, and they were about to make another charge on Baba, on the outskirts of Staravina. Many Turks fell in the battle here, just as they had at the Tsrna, but there were so many attackers, well over 500, that the rebels, along with all of the inhabitants of Staravina, were forced to take refuge in the old roman fortress at Peshta. The kadiya's men swarmed into

Staravina. They plundered the houses and burned down the homes of known rebels. Then, they re-crossed the river above the village to reach Gradeshnitsa.

Most of the people of Gradeshnitsa had also managed to escape to the fortress at Peshta or into the mountains, and only a few ancient grandmothers and grandfathers remained in the village. Since Gradeshnitsa had offered them no resistance, and the kadiya's forces would need shelter for the night, they looted the houses, but they didn't destroy any except the homes of the two rebel leaders, Petre Mitre and Riste Naide.

While the Kadiya had waged his campaign to take these villages, Selim Fazli and Daut had forded the Tsrna above Svetets, since the bridge had been destroyed earlier, and with only minor losses, they attacked the rebels beyond it. The rebels, upon seeing the great size of the enemy force, hurried off to report the approaching peril to their home villages, so that the elders, women and children could seek safety in the thick forests. In this way this party advanced and took the hamlets of Manastir and Melnitsa, plundered them, and when they reached Vitolishta, they discovered the Skopje bey already there with a thousand-man force that had carved a similar path through the villages. Coming up from the south the third party under Mehmed, Muarem and Feta, after plundering Budimirts and Gurunishta, joined the kadiya's party in Gradeshnitsa and prepared for the assault on the Peshta fortress.

The Skopje pasha pacified Vitolishta, Zhiovo and Vrpsko. They bound the young men and women, and some were butchered or beaten. Then, they plundered and burned many of the houses, and after passing through Polchishta, they reached Satoka. Here, many

Turks fell in battle with the rebel forces of Mate Nikola and Dimitri Stale, but they were eventually overwhelmed, and the two leaders, along with those villagers who were still alive, fled from their village, which was then burned to the ground and destroyed. And so, already by Easter day all four Turkish forces met in Gradeshnitsa and Staravina, and together they laid siege to Peshta.

Almost every rebel leader who was still alive had assembled with his people in the Peshta fortress, and they had sealed the heavy iron gates. Here were: priest Yakov, Dimitri Stale, Mate Nikola, Stoyan Peyo, priest Dimitri, priest Peyo, Vasil Petko, Risto Naide, Stoyan Traiko and all of the armed peasants...

This revolt against Ottoman Turkish colonial rule in Macedonia eventually ended, like so many others, in defeat. However, Popov has provided us with one more reminder that the Macedonian people did not willingly relinquish their homeland to invaders. It had to be taken by force and repeatedly retaken by force. It is a constant, in the long history of Ottoman and subsequent foreign occupations, that the Macedonian people did not give their land, it had to be taken from them by force. This fact more than any other is the proof of indigenous Macedonian right to their homeland.

My English language version of the novel is available through the publisher, the Sydney based Macedonian Literary Association "Grigor Prlichev." P.O. Box 227, Rockdale, NSW 2216. Or email contact: dristeovski@optusnet.com.au

Dr. Michael Seraphinoff

Did Tito Invent the Macedonians and Their Language?

By Ivan Hristovski



Marshall Tito

Over the course of the last 6 months, members of Australia's Greek community have staged some events, once more propagating the fiction that Tito invented Macedonians in 1945, so Ivan Hristovski, the AMHRC's New York representative, volunteered to present a small sample of the evidence demonstrating the falsity of the claim...

For many years the false rhetoric emanating from modern Greece about the legitimacy of the Republic of Macedonia, the Macedonian language and culture, as well as the existence of Macedonians (especially those Macedonians whom they deny exist within the boundaries of Greece today) has produced insidious assertions as to how the Republic of Macedonia and the Macedonians came into existence. One dastardly claim in particular is that Marshall Tito, the famous President of Yugoslavia, invented the Macedonian nation and its language.

But as is the case with numerous modern Greek nationalist claims, the 'evidence' for such allegations, is easily revealed to involve a series of distortions.

One way to begin is to give some exposure to a rather intriguing idea from the beginning of the 19th century, belonging to John Capo d'Istria, the first head of state of independent Greece. During the war for independence from the Ottoman Empire, which eventually led to the creation of a state called Greece, the Great Powers (Great Britain, France, and Russia) held a conference in the island of Poros to establish a boundary line between "Greeks" and "Turks". As the document *Protocol of the Conference Held at Poros, Between the Representatives of Great Britain, France, and Russia, on the 12th of December 1828* details, the meeting:

After mature consideration of the information furnished by the Greek Government, and after frequent communications with Count Capodistrias, the Representatives, conforming themselves carefully to the instructions with which they have been collectively furnished, agree to record in this Protocol their definitive opinion upon the several points of the Treaty of London, upon which the Courts are called upon in their benevolence to decide (Page 21).

The Protocol goes into fine detail on what the continental and insular boundaries of the new self-governing Greek state would be in accordance with the Treaty of London (for more information on the Treaty of London please see <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1827gktreaty.asp>).

Point 5 of the Protocol indicates:

The two lines of frontier proposed by

the Greek Government, independently of their special defects, would include Thessaly and Epirus

a few districts of which alone have taken any share in the insurrection, and of which several of the chiefs have even borne arms for the Porte; while the Greek population in general has lived peaceably with the Turks settled in those provinces. On this account, these two lines could not be adopted without contravening the principles on which the Representatives are bound by their instructions to found their opinion.

(Page 22)

John Capo d'Istria and the working Greek government left Macedonia out of the equation entirely.

What Boundary Line would suit Greece best, giving her a continental frontier clearly defined, easily defensible, and which would best separate the populations?"

What also is the insular Boundary which would best suit Greece?" (Page 25)

The following answer from the Greek government would make today's nationalist Greek ill and uneasy.

"In its reply, the Greek Government has brought forward two projets, admissible, the one in case of the accession of the Ottoman Porte to the Treaty of London, or, in other words, to the mediation of the Allied Courts,—the other, in case of its non-accession.

It is with the Greek projet founded upon the last hypothesis that we shall commence the successive examination of all the Boundary Lines pointed out to the attention of the Representatives."

According to the first projet, the Boundary would follow the line of mount Olympus from Katerin as far as the summit of Pindus, in the direction of Zygos or Metzovo. Not far from Katerin this line meets with the river Haliacmon or Indge Karassou, the course of which it follows through Servia and Grevena. (Pages 25-26)

Capo d'Istria himself said of the proposed borders described in the Protocol of 1828 that:

“In ancient times this boundary also separated Greece from its northern neighbors. In the middle ages and in modern times, Thessaly was always kept Greek while Macedonia was conquered by the Slavs and other races. Thessaly, thanks to its geographical position, avoided foreign peoples” (Koliopoulos & Veremis 2002, 335).

Capo d'Istria would actually propose that Macedonia become an independent nation. Capo d'Istria proposed the following plan in 1828 outside of the Protocol thus far mentioned:

“The Ottoman Empire in Europe should be replaced by five states of the second rank. These states should be: 1. The duchy or kingdom of Dacia, consisting of the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia. 2. The kingdom of Servia, to include Bulgaria, Servia, and Bosnia. 3. **The kingdom of Macedonia, to consist of Macedonia proper, with the islands of the Propontis and the islands of Imbros, Samothrace, and Thasos.** 4. The kingdom of Epirus, to be formed out of Epirus, with the provinces of Upper and Lower Albania. 5. The Hellenic state, to include Greece proper, from the river Peneus in Thessaly to the city of Arta” (Appleton’s Cyclopaedia 1884, 264).

A former General and aide-de-camp to Capo d'Istria, Dimitrios Kallergis, who would become an Ambassador, expressed his opinion to the English economist and writer Nassau William Senior in 1860 that

“The real Greeks would never have driven out the Turks. They were too degraded even to wish for liberty. For many years after we had achieved our own independence they called the times of Turkish rule ‘the good times’. It was the Albanians and Macedonians and foreigners who fought the Turks” (Senior 1878, 305).

Kallergis’ admission would have him branded a traitor in Greece today and he would certainly be ostracized for acknowledging a separate Macedonian

ethnicity.

The Kallergis thesis certainly is a serious problem for present day Greek nationalist sensitivities. But it was far from exceptional during his time. In official documents of the Greek foreign ministry in the 19th century *“the inhabitants of what was then Turkish Macedonia are distinguished as ‘Greeks’ and ‘Macedonians’.* *The latter term referred to the Slavonic-speaking Exarchist Macedonians”* (Nakratzas 1999, 111).

In the Greek census of 1920, **the Macedonian language** (without any prefixes or suffixes) was listed as a language spoken by some of the population in Greece. Parts of the official census results were published and therefore recognised by the Greek state.

Thus far we have three Greek examples that run counter to the Greek claims that the Macedonian language and identity were creations of Marshall Tito in 1945. We will now examine what some Macedonians themselves said.

In August-September 1907, M. Petraiev, a Russian consular official and keen Balkan observer, accompanied Hilmi Pasha, inspector general for Macedonia, and an Austro-Hungarian representative on a tour of Macedonia. Afterward he reported to his Ministry of foreign affairs:

“In the Kastoria (Kostur) Kaza, delegations from the villages came to see us and declared that they wanted neither Greek nor Bulgarian teachers and priests; rather they insisted that they be Macedonians. When questioned about their nationality, they replied that they are Macedonians. These declarations, which are far from being isolated, demonstrate that the Christian population of Macedonia is fed-up with the oppression of the various propagandas, and that in them is beginning to awaken a national consciousness different from those being imposed on them from outside.” (Moscow: Institut Slaviano-ovedeniia, Rossiiskaia academia nauk, 1999, 63)

In 1891 the Exarchate Metropolitan of Skopje, Teodosij Gologanov, wrote a



John Kapodistrias



Teodosij Gologanov

letter to Dionysus of Sofia, a Macedonian from Strumica who shared a similar view in favour of the renewal of the Ohrid archbishopric. Teodosij puts forth that the:

“holy Exarchate....does everything possible to persuade the poor Macedonian people that it has good intentions, that it cares about its present and future and wants to rescue them from the darkness of national unawareness and make them a people consciously Bulgarian. And it does not require much from me to persuade you, that our holy Exarchate with its ecclesiastical and educational activity here in Macedonia is actually performing the most wretched task of taking away the name of a people and replacing it with another, taking away its mother tongue and replacing it with another, taking away all its national symbols and replacing them with others, all in order to secure for its government and Bulgarian merchants commercial penetration into new territory.... I will be sincere, my dear brother in Christ, and tell you openly: we the Macedonians suffer less from the Turks than from the Greeks, Bulgarians, and Serbs, who throw themselves on our pitiful country like eagles on a carcass and want to dismember it....I took on myself to renew the Ohrid archbishopric and from that there is no return....We are ready to recognize the Patriarchate as the universal throne and obey it in everything, just as other Orthodox churches do, but only if it registers the Ohrid archbishopric in the codex of the Orthodox churches on an equal footing with the others....I organized Paisos (the local Greek metropolitan) and told him the plan about the Ohrid archbishopric....I told him that for the majority of the eparchies we already have appropriate men to be metropolitans, and in those places where we do not have any we would accept Greek bishops provided they know our, that is, the Macedonian language.” (Trencsényi, Kopacek 2007, 191-193)

Paul Argyriades, a French socialist of Macedonian origin, wrote:

“...Present day Macedonia is one of the European provinces of the Turkish Empire. It borders on the south with Epirus, Thessaly and the Mediterranean, on the east with Thrace and the Mediterranean, on the north with Mount Haemus, Bul-

garia and Serbia and with Albania on the west....Macedonia, as the homeland of the two greatest personalities of the Ancient World - Aristotle and Alexander the Great, who conquered the world. Should it anew conquer its independence and its autonomy?...And if an autonomous Macedonian administration were to be introduced in this land in ten years only, it would be the earthly paradise of the world...The small states - the Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian ones - argue for the acquisition of Macedonia, using all kinds of proofs - chauvinist and historical - invented in support of their interests, while no one seems to realize that if the historical truth were to be respected, Macedonia should rather have the right to possess all those countries, which would like to devour it, since once it governed and ruled them itself....The Macedonians do not want the kind of caresses which may strangle them. They want to remain Macedonians without any other epithet, guarding for themselves their beautiful Macedonia...” (Almanach de la Question Sociale Illustre'. Paris, Pour 1896, pp. 240-244).

And indeed, one the leaders of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation (IMRO), which fought for the creation of an autonomous Macedonian state, Nikola Karev, in 1902 wrote: *Let us not expect freedom either from the Greeks or the Bulgarians; it is we, the Macedonians, who should fight for our Macedonia ourselves...*

This small sample of the available evidence makes it abundantly clear that Tito did not invent Macedonian ethnic identity. This is why renowned non Greek, non Macedonian scholars, specializing in this field, like the anthropologist Loring Danforth, flatly and confidently assert: *“The Macedonian nation is not an artificial invention of Marshall Tito, the former Yugoslav leader, as Greek nationalists claim”* (Danforth 2010, 573). A point that the classicist Eugene Borza, has also made: *“Thus it is clear that Tito did not invent either a Macedonian ethnicity or a Macedonian language — as has been alleged — when he created a Macedonian Republic as a part of the postwar Yugoslav federal state. He rather provided legitimacy and support for a movement that had been underway since at least the late nineteenth century”* (Borza 1999, 254).

The notion that Tito invented a people and their language is not only ridiculous but also a tool for racist nationalist propagandists in Greece that cannot tolerate the existence of difference and who therefore continue to deny the existence of a Macedonian minority with a distinct Macedonian language and Macedonian identity within Greece's boundaries.

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"НИКОЈ НЕМА ПРАВО ДА ПРЕГОВАРА ЗА МОЕТО ИМЕ!"

Немојте да бидете измамани од термините 'меѓународно, билатерално, уставно'.

- Ако се промени еднаш, дури и билатерално, насекаде ќе биде променето
- Дали сакате да бидеме нарекувани 'Северномакедонци', 'Скопјанци', 'Вардарци' или само **Македонци**?
- Ние и честитаме на македонската влада за ставот "Ние нема да го промениме нашето име", меѓутоа со самиот факт дека преговараме, му кажуваме на светот дека "Ние ќе го промениме нашето име"
- Земјите кои што ја признале Македонија велат дека "ако се постигне билатерално решение, тие тогаш тоа решение ќе го прифатат и ќе го користат новото договорено име за Македонија"
- Било која промена на нашето име е неприфатлива, вклучувајќи и одредници како 'Демократска', 'Вардарска' или 'Северна' пред името 'Република Македонија'. На пример со една таква промена ние би биле основувани насекаде како 'Северна Македонија' и 'Северномакедонци' кои зборуваат 'Северномакедонски' јазик.

НИЕ ПОБЕДУВАМЕ. ВЕЌЕ 127 ЗЕМЈИ ЈА ПРИЗНАА МАКЕДОНИЈА ПОД ИМЕТО РЕПУБЛИКА МАКЕДОНИЈА, ВКЛУЧУВАЈЌИ И 4 ОД 5-ТЕ ПОСТОЈАНИ ЗЕМЈИ ЧЛЕНКИ НА СОВЕТОТ ЗА БЕЗБЕДНОСТ НА ОБЕДИНЕТИТЕ НАЦИИ. НИЕ ИМАМЕ СИЛА ДА СТАВИМЕ КРАЈ НА СЕТО ОВА. ДА ПРЕСТАНЕМА ДА ПРЕГОВАРАМЕ ЗА НАШЕТО СОПСТВЕНО ИМЕ.

Пред 1988 год., Грција тврдеше дека Македонија не постои. Тогаш ја преименува 'Северна Грција' во 'Македонија'. Сега одеднаш Македонија е грчка?

Во 1995 год., поранешниот грчки премиер Мицотакис призна дека причината поради која Грција се спротивставува на нашето име е за да може да го негира постоењето на бројното македонско малцинство и да продолжи да го прогонува. Сите знаеме дека проблемот на Грција е македонскиот идентитет и јазик.

- Македонците на Балканот се борат за своите човекови права како Македонци и ништо друго

ЗАПОМНЕТЕ, ЛАГА Е ДЕКА БИЛО КАКОВ КОМПРОМИС ЌЕ ДОНЕСЕ РЕШЕНИЕ НА ПРОБЛЕМИТЕ СО ГРЦИЈА. ТОЈ САМО ЌЕ ГИ ЗАСИЛИ ПОЗИЦИИТЕ НА ГРЦИЈА ДО НЕЈЗИНАТА КРАЈНА ЦЕЛ - ДА ГИ ИЗБРИШЕ МАКЕДОНЦИТЕ ОД ИСТОРИЈАТА, СЕГАШНОСТА И ИДНИНАТА.

Ние сме Македонци! Дали сакате да влеземе во историјата како луѓе кои го променија нашето име?

Кој им дава право на ЕУ и НАТО да бараат да го промениме нашиот идентитет?

- ЕУ и НАТО ги прекршуваат своите сопствени принципи и начела со тоа што бараат ние да си го промениме името.
- Да не се предаваме на заплашувањата од страна на Грција и медиумските предупредувања дека Македонија ќе 'пропадне' без влез на земјата во ЕУ и НАТО
- Видете ја сегашната економска криза во Грција
- Кампања заснована на заплашување се користи за да ја натера Република Македонија да си го промени името

ЕУ и НАТО се заложници на Грција

- Грција лажеше за економската состојба во својата земја и сега останатите земји членки на ЕУ се принудени да и помагаат за да се справи со кризата

ЕУ не смее да дозволи ксенофобичната политика на Грција да ги врзи рацете на нејзините земји членки. Признајте ја Македонија!

- Ако ЕУ и НАТО настојуваат да се промени името, какви ли други отстапки ќе побараат тие и Грција подоцна?
- Со продолжување на преговорите ние праќаме јасна порака дека ќе го промениме името
- **Мораме да престанеме да преговараме за нашето сопствено име!**

Здравиот разум порачува: Дали некоја друга земја би преговарала за своето сопствено име?

- Дали би требало американската сојузна држава Грузија (на англиски *Џорџија*) да побара од Република Грузија да си го промени името?
- Дали би требало белгиската провинција Луксембург да побара државата Луксембург да си го промени името?

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НАШЕТО ИМЕ Е МАКЕДОНИЈА

Muzikorama's Australian Tour

Organised by the AMHRC in cooperation with the Macedonian Community of Western Australia Inc and the Macedonian Community of Adelaide and South Australia Inc



The very popular Macedonian band from the Lerin region of Aegean Macedonia, *Muzikorama*, toured Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth, during the course of last January and February. The group is made up of five members: Kocho Tolkov from Petoratsi, Micho Ristov from Leskovets, Spiro Petrov from Ajtos, Ilo Plashnikov from Boreshnitsa and Vasil Trenov from Neret.

Events featuring Muzikorama were held by the AMHRC on January 26 at Brookwood Receptions (attended by close to 600 people); the annual St. George picnic at their Kinglake picnic grounds on January 27 and at the Macedonian community centres in Perth and Adelaide on the 2nd and 9th of February, respectively.

On February 6 the group made a special appearance at the Macedonian retirees club in Doncaster and then the tour ended with the AMHRC being compelled, by popular demand, to host, in cooper-

ation with the Lerin FC soccer club, another picnic on February 10 at the Whittlesea Showgrounds in Melbourne's outer north.

All the events were very well attended and the authentic Macedonian songs and dances performed by Muzikorama were widely appreciated.

Apart from our partners, the MCWA and MCASA, the AMHRC would also like to thank the following major sponsors: Vlado Trpcevski of Sun Line Roller Shutters, John Chapkoun of the Chapkoun Pharmacy, Novatsis and Alexander Lawyers and George Coussas.

Special thanks also to the following members of the AMHRC sub-committee which managed the tour so well: Con Filin, Tase Filipov, Con Talidis, Jim Karafiliov and David Vitkov.







ABOUT MHRMI & AMHRC

Macedonian Human Rights Movement International (MHRMI) has been active since 1986. The Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC) has been active since 1984.

Both MHRMI and AMHRC are non-governmental organisations that inform and advocate about combating racism and promoting human rights. Our joint aspiration is to ensure that Macedonian communities and other excluded groups throughout the world, are recognised, respected and afforded equitable treatment.

RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

The AMHRC and MHRMI are part of an international Macedonian network that spans Australia, North America and Europe, including:



AUSTRALIAN MACEDONIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

Address Suite 106, Level 1
55 Flemington Rd
North Melbourne, 3051
Telephone +61 3 9329 8960
Email info@macedonianhr.org.au
Website www.macedonianhr.org.au

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Telephone 1 416 850 7125
Email info@mhrmi.org
Website www.mhrmi.org

MACEDONIAN ALLIANCE FOR EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

The political party of the Macedonians in Albania

Website www.macedoniansinalbania.org

EUROPEAN FREE ALLIANCE—RAINBOW

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rainbow@vinozito.gr
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p.k. Mechkaroovi
Email omo_ilinden_pirin@yahoo.com
Website www.omoilindenpirin.org

MACEDONIAN SOCIETY "ILINDEN" TIRANA

A Macedonian cultural association in Tirana, Albania

Website www.ilinden-tirana.com

NOVA ZORA

A pro-Macedonian newspaper based in Aegean Macedonia, Greece, edited by Dimitri Jovanov and with a printed circulation of 20,000 copies per month

Website novazora.gr

NARODNA VOLJA

A Pro-Macedonian newspaper based in Pirin Macedonia, Bulgaria, edited by Jan Pirinski and Stojkov. The first edition was published in 1980

Website www.narodnavolja.com

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