



SLAVÉ KATIN

SELECTED PAPERS
FOR MACEDONIA

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**Published by
Makedonska Iskra (Spark) – Skopje
Macedonian Literary Association “Grigor Prlichev” – Sydney**

**Sponsored by
The Foundation “George Atanasoski” – Prilep
Printed in Macedonia, 2024**

**Reviewers:
Dushan Ristevski-Macedon
Victor Bivel
George Atanasoski**

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ISBN 978-0-6457272-8-9

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, numerous authors have served many lies and caused much controversy regarding the real arguments, facts, and documents about Macedonia. These authors have inflicted immense pain to the Macedonian people. Despite these lies and fabrications, in this book we give the historical facts which are known and give a true picture of the past and present of this country and people. According to the records, many citizens of ethnic Macedonia know that they are a direct descendant of the Macedonian people that has existed since the Macedonia, from the time of Philip the Second of Macedonia and his son Alexander the third the Great (of Macedon), up today.

It is also known that the two hundred years of wandering brought the Macedonians to USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South America, European countries (European Union), Russia, Turkey, South Africa and other countries. But if one believed the stories, they always managed to preserve blood relations with scattered communities. Their uniqueness always remained preserved.

Nevertheless, this time we will stress the direct reason for the publication of *"Selection of Papers for Macedonia"*. This is the opening up once again of the *"Macedonian issue"* as a conspiring concept of history, which has not left the daily political world scene for 2,500 years already, thus disturbing the international relations in this very sensitive part of Europe – the Balkans.

Research in this field, as well as the texts concerning *"Selected Papers for Macedonia"*, and the traveling stories of the author of this book, Slave Katin, of all parts of Macedonia, aim at contributing to the realization of the historical truth regarding the autochthonous fact of the Macedonian people, their national identity and continuity, as that of Macedonia and the world civilization, and also the Macedonians and their confronting the historical abuse of the Macedonian issue.

The book *"Selected Papers for Macedonia"*, is especially devoted to Macedonia, to the Macedonian Orthodox Church and the Macedonians all over the world. It is devoted to the question of whether the separate political entities have the exclusive right to monopoly over the historical heritage, i.e. of whether the young generations of today, born and raised in the two confronted parts of Macedonia, were raised and educated believing that the Macedonians are not sufficiently informed of the historical fact that they are parts of one people and of one land called Macedonia.

The destiny of the Macedonian world has been observed under the rule of Rome and Byzantium during different periods with the role of the Macedonian dynasty and Alexander's "Koine" language. The migration of the Slavs and the establishment of Samuil's empire, the Slavic language and literacy, and the cultural contribution of the Macedonians to the world heritage is also very interesting, as is the Ottoman occupation of Macedonia, to its period of the renaissance of Macedonia and afterwards.

The predecessors of the modern Greeks came to the Balkans in the 11th century B.C. without this name, but in fact came as Doric (Herodotus, I, 56), and were not given this name even 800 years later in Homer's "Illiad" in the 7th century B.C., but came as Achaians, Aegeans or Danaians, and later as Hellenians, Grekis or Romeians (Mpampiniotis, 1998, 596)? How is one to understand why the name of Macedonia is not immediately connected with what some modern historians wrongly referred to as "Hellenism"? The Hellenians for the first time in their centuries-old history administratively conquered the southern part of Macedonia as late as after the First Balkan War in 1912, i.e. 1913 (Bucharest Agreement, 13 August 1913).

Furthermore, how can the modern-day Macedonians, who also did not "colonize" the Balkans with their own name in the 6th century B.C., accept that in their autonomous process of development the geographical term Macedonia was gradually accepted as a sign of national belonging and creation of a Macedonian national awareness? What about the natives of Macedonia, and the descendants of the known-world empire of Alexander of Macedon, etc.?

It is of importance to stress that to see the problem better and the inheritor of the traditional Macedonian culture and heritage in general, a number of researches and analyses cover first the period of the most ancient history of the Southern Balkans. They cover the huge role of the natives and the Paleo-Balkan, i.e. "Aegean culture" in this region, the movement of the Hellenians – Achaians with the development of the Michanos state and the migration of the Doric. This is followed by the history of Ancient Macedonia, the Macedonian occupation of Hellas and the creation of a Macedonian empire and its contribution to world civilization, the role of the Paleo-Balkan language in the formation of the Ancient Greek language, the Macedonian or Alexander's "Koine", which is presently the basis of the official language in Greece, etc.

Otherwise, the primary sources for studying the ancient history of Macedonia are mostly of Greek, followed by Roman origin, even though recently many historians have shown increasing interest in this matter. Thanks to the advantages that the Hellenic civilization inherited from previous cultures the use of the letters and the bringing of Macedonia to the head of the European cultural world, numerous moments of prehistory have shed light not only through works and remains of the material culture, but also through written information, which are mostly found in Greek literature.

Macedonians were born and have lived since ancient times in these areas that were in the past the center of the civilized world. Cultures sprang here, and great people were born here who were not only significant to the history of European culture but also for mankind.:

Therefore it can be said that the book *"Selected Papers for Macedonia"*, is a part of the chronicle of the terms and conditions of the Macedonian people to the historical scene. The papers concern Macedonia, the Macedonian Orthodox Church and the Macedonians in the world, who today have an independent and sovereign state and who have confirmed successfully their identity to the world.

This book is devoted to the question of whether separate political entities have the exclusive right to monopolize the Macedonian historical heritage, i.e. whether the young generations of today, born and raised in the confronted parts of Macedonia, were raised and educated believing that the Macedonians are not sufficiently informed of the historical fact that they are part of one nation and of one land called Macedonia.

Macedonia is traditionally an emigrational region from which emigrational movement of the Macedonian people and movement to the transoceanic and other countries took place in the mid of the 19th century. Such movements were especially increased during the second half of the 19th century and were known as "pechalba" (going abroad for economic reasons). With a ranging scale and intensity they have continued till the present day. Thus, according to some data, the first group of "pechalbari" (people who went to work abroad) reached the North American continent in 1885 and Australia in the 1920s. However, individuals who had joined groups of "pechalbari" from the neighboring and other countries had crossed the ocean even before that

The Macedonian Orthodox Church-OA- has been and probably will continue to be the target of discussions, arguments, and even attacks from the church institutions in the neighboring countries and wider that are trying to prevent or postpone its joining the family of the equal Orthodox Church organizations. In so doing, an entire propaganda and media mechanism has been engaged to conduct pressure, isolation, and negation of the Macedonian Orthodox Church-OA and its legitimate existence. Its aim is to distort and hide historical facts from the past and the present.

The purpose of this write-up is to bring into question the essential characteristics of the Macedonian Orthodox people, its church organism and its truth as a people that possesses its own independent and sovereign state – the Republic of Macedonia.

For more than a millennium the Macedonian Orthodox Church, in the face of the Ohrid Archepiscopate, has lived spiritually with its protector Saint Clement of Ohrid. In the ninth century he opened the ways to the cultural renaissance of the Macedonians who had migrated to Macedonia toward the end of the sixth century where they met with the already Christianized native Macedonians whose Christian beginnings are linked to missionary work of St. Apostol Pavle (Apostle Paul) and his followers.

Christianity is the largest and most important religion in the Republic of Macedonia with approximately 65% believers of the population being believers. Of the total Christian population, about 95% belong to the Orthodox Christians, 3% are Protestants, while 1.2% are Catholics. First to preach the gospel in Macedonia was the apostle Paul, where the first Christian communities and churches were founded at the time. According to the New Testament, the first resident of Macedonia to adopt Christianity was St. Lydia Macedonian.

At the time of Tsar Samuel, the Ohrid church was raised to the rank of Patriarchate, and in 1767 it was abolished. At the end of World War II, the Macedonian Orthodox Church was founded as a successor of the Ohrid Archbishopric. The arrival of St. Clement of Ohrid in Macedonia is also of a great importance for the first Slavonic alphabet, because the moment of destiny had come when the Macedonians found themselves able to be educated by their own teachers in their mother tongue. In addition to other missionary activity, in a period of only seven years, three thousand and five hundred students passed through Clement's University.

From 1944 the Macedonian language has been codified and was the official language of the People's Republic of Macedonia and one of the three languages in Yugoslavia. That was the time when the literature developed and called the attention of the European and the world literature scene; that's the time when Macedonian cultural, spiritual, religious, social and political life developed.

St. George's Church in Melbourne (1962) was the first Macedonian church on the Australian Continent, and the Macedonian Diaspora was blessed by a Macedonian bishop in a joint service with Macedonian priests. For all the Macedonians in Melbourne and Australia this event was of particular importance and represented the foundation stone to the organized establishment and construction of a number of Macedonian Orthodox churches in the Diaspora.

As a result of this their number has been increasing constantly so that at present there are about eighty active churches and church communities and

monasteries with the four eparchies of the Macedonian Orthodox Church: the America-Canada, Australia-New Zealand, Sydney- Australia and the European eparchy.

These eparchies provide conditions for an increasing affirmation of the entire national and cultural heritage and modern progress of the Church and the Macedonian nation in general. Through their activities the eparchies represent a live bridge of friendship between the Republic of Macedonia and the countries in which the Macedonian immigrants reside. The role and positive attitude of the Macedonian believers and the clergy in those Macedonian church institutions in the Diaspora are also of enormous significance.

The Macedonian Orthodox Churches - Ohrid Archbishopric (MOC-OA) and communities in Australia, Canada, and the USA, and recently in the countries of the European Union, are the most significant and most massive gathering places of the Macedonians from every part of Macedonia. In addition to the church services, the Macedonian language, the authentic mother tongue brought from the native land, can be heard freely at these Macedonian shrines.

It should be mentioned that the Macedonian immigrants in the Diaspora have achieved remarkable results in business, religious and cultural life, education and social life in general. There are a large number of business people of Macedonian origin who are known and appreciated in their environment, within the nation and all over the world. Such progress contributes in particular to their social affirmation and favorable treatment in the places where they live, since other people treat them as a distinct ethnic community on equal footing with other ethnic groups in the multinational societies of the U.S., Canada, Australia, European Union and other countries in the world.

The process of national affirmation of the Macedonian newcomers in the Diaspora commenced with their arrival in the new settings at the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century. Macedonians brought with them their innate folk traditions, culture, and national identity. It is proved by the fact that nowadays Macedonians are an integral and important part in the Diaspora, creating a significant community among other ethnic groups. At the same time, they have affirmed their national values through their cultural institutions and associations; enriching in that way the cultural mosaic in the World.

The book *"Selected Papers for Macedonia"*, also includes texts concerning the Macedonians in Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria and Albania. Thus, with the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia all peoples of the other republics, including the Macedonians living in Serbia, have become minorities and have had to organize themselves in order to exercise their minority rights under the Constitution and the national laws and regulations of the local governments in Serbia.

Nowadays, in addition to Macedonian institutions in Vojvodina, which had worked successfully for seventy years, the Macedonians as a minority in Serbia have their new Macedonian organizations, clubs, schools, folk groups and other associations which bring hope that the situation will improve and they will have a happier tomorrow.

It is impossible to say what the exact number of ethnic Macedonians in Bulgaria is, especially because different sources give conflicting data. However, all agree that a large number (over two million, including mixed marriages) of citizens of the Republic of Bulgaria are the descendants of immigrants from Macedonia who found their home in Bulgaria either as immigrants or refugees. According to the census of December 1946, out of a total of 252,908 inhabitants in Pirin Macedonia of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, 160,541 persons or 70 percent identified themselves as ethnic Macedonians. The facts confirm the truth about Macedonians in Bulgaria, which Bulgaria has been trying to skilfully manipulate. Unfortunately, and shamefully for the democracy, according to the 2011 census of the Republic of Bulgaria, only 1,654 Macedonians live there, out of whom 561 live in the Blagoevgrad area and 1,163 speak their native Macedonian language, while 1,091 of them are citizens of the Republic of Macedonia living in Bulgaria.

Fortunately, the democratization of the Albanian society in the last decade of the 20th century has created conditions for the Macedonians to engage actively in the social and political processes in Albania – Mala Prespa or Dolna (Lower) Prespa as the local residents call it, the geographic area along the southwest coast of Lake Prespa. The entire area consists of a dozen villages which are organized within the municipality of Pustets. The village of Pustets is the largest settlement and is also the seat of the municipality, whose mayor and all of the members of the municipal council are ethnic Macedonians.

It is interesting to mention that the coat of arms of the municipality contains the ancient Macedonian symbol, the 16-ray Vergina Sun (Palatica - Kutlesh) above which is the inscription "Municipality of Pustets" in Macedonian and below it, the same inscription in the Albanian language. The village only has a primary and secondary school and it is only possible to study in Macedonian up to the fourth grade.

The Macedonian people in the Aegean part of Macedonia differ from the Greeks (Hellenes) according to their characteristics and customs, language and ethnic origin. For these reasons, as soon as the Greek bourgeoisie expanded its power over Aegean Macedonia, it introduced a policy of physical extermination of the Macedonians and changing the ethnic composition in Greek favor.

The publication "*Selected Papers for Macedonia*" also consists of texts about my travels all over the world. Therefore I have published numerous texts and publications about the Macedonian emigrants who live in the United States, Canada, Australia and Europe. In addition to our talks about their golgotha,

their typical problems and issues of an intimate nature were not avoided. Their genetic connection however with their families is very characteristic. The Macedonian man faces the fact that his major problem in the Diaspora is not only his day-to-day survival, but also his choice of a lifelong mate, to marry and start a family with, since marriage is holy for them and worthy of making great sacrifices.

"Selected Papers for Macedonia" is composed of eight parts, in which each part has ten sections, representing: 1. Prehistoric Macedonia 2. The Macedonians in the Diaspora 3. Immigration as a Destiny 4. Macedonian Orthodox Churches in Australia, Canada and USA 5. The Religion of the Macedonians, 6. Well-known Macedonians in the World 7. A Part of the Well-known Macedonians in the World. 8. Macedonians in the Neighboring Countries, and 9. Appendix.

The monograph *"Selected Papers for Macedonia"* is a significant contribution to further the expansion of knowledge about the Macedonian people's drama. And it is about those who, with immeasurable persistence, have continued for years, decades and centuries and still persistently continue with their satanic acts, hopes and intentions to finally eradicate the Macedonians from their part of the Balkans and the world.

It is the work of the Publishing House "Makedoska Iskra" in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia and the Literary Society "Grigor Prlichev" in Sydney, Australia, sponsored by the Foundation "George Atanasoski" – Prilep. This is the work of my many years of engagement in the study of Ethnic Macedonia, the Macedonian Orthodox Church – OA, and the Macedonian Diaspora, which led to the publication of numerous papers in these fields.

The Author



MACEDONIA

BIOGRAPHY OF SLAVÈ NIKOLOVSKI – KATIN,

SLAVE' NIKOLOVSKI – KATIN, who is known only as **Slavè Katin**, is a great lover of his native Prespa, of Macedonia, ethnic Macedonians, as well as of the Macedoniaj Orthodox Churvh-Ohrid Arcbisopric and the Macedonian Diaspora. He is known to the Macedonian and international community for his numerous publications, journalistic and scientific papers devoted mainly to the ethnic Macedonia and the Macedonians in the world.

Slavè Katin does not belong to any political party, because he belongs to the Ethnic Macedonia, to the Macedonians in the Diaspora and to the Macedonian Orthodox Church-Ohrid Archbishopric, which as an institution plays an important role in gathering of the Macedonians outside Macedonia, especially in the overseas countries and all over the world.

Katin's diverse palette for realization of the strategic objectives in this field covers numerous endeavors, part of which is already functioning. In addition to his relatively frequent visits to the three continents and his private meetings with the migrants, through his monographic publications about the most successful of them Katin also tries to arouse interest among state leaders in the country for collaboration with the Diaspora. This is especially expected by publishing of his 55 book *Israel and Macedonia* (in English Macedonian and Hebrew).

He was born on August 19, 1941, in Dolna Prespa in a house which the waves of Lake Prespa used to splash at that time, near the old settlement Nakolec. He was born at the start of World War II when Hitler's Germany, opiated by fascist ideology, rose against the entire world believing it had the power to seize it all.

His biography tells us that several months after he was born his family moved to Ljubojno, where his mother Sandra came from. Until he finished the Primary school in Ljubojno and the Technical school in Skopje, he carried the family name of his mother Sandra – Grezhlovski, then at the Faculty in Belgrade continued with the family name of his biological father Risto (Bardxevski) – Nikolovski Slavè spent most of his childhood and early years in Ljubojno, where he has a library of about 4.000 books, and has continued to return to it almost his entire life. Thus, from a very young age he felt the hard migrant life of the people from Prespa, particularly through the migrant saga of his grandfather, Alekso (Alek) Ristov- Grezhlov in Detroit, USA, his mother Sandra and his stepfather Josif Nichevski in Toronto, Canada

Slavè Katin completed eight years of primary school in the school “*Dimitar Vlahov*” in Ljubojno gaining his certificate, and learned Geodesy (Land Surveyng) at the Secondary Technical School “*Zdravko TSvetkovski*” in Skopje. He studied at the Geodesy Department of the University of Belgrade, then he continued his education in Toronto, but graduated from the Department of English, Macedonian and German Languages and Literature at the Faculty of Philology “*Blazhe Koneski*” at the University of St. Cyril and Methodij in Skopje.

Slavè Katin is married to Nada Nikolovska, maiden name Ivanova, born in Vinica, 1949. She is retired today, but she was an advisor for the Macedonian language in the Association for the development of education in the Republic of Macedonia in the Ministry of Education and Sciences of the Republic of Macedonia. Nada Nikolovska - Katin is an author of about twenty school books and other literature, and on more than twenty didactical school works of Macedonian language, which greatly contributes to the educational process in the schools in Macedonia. At the same time, her school works are affirmers and protectors of the Macedonian language and literature in Macedonia and abroad.

Nada and Slave Katin have two children: Their son Aleksandar (who has the name of his grand father Alekso-Alek), born in Skopje, 1974, doctor of veterinary medicine – DVM, and their daughter Dafinka,(who has the name of her grand-grand mother Dafina) born in Stip, 1975, professor of English, Spanish and Macedonian languages. Aleksandar is married to Radmila Nikolovska, maiden name Chrcheva, born in Gostivar, 1974, Doctor of veterinary sciences. They have three daughters, Sandra Nikolovska – Katin, born in Skopje, 2003, who carries the name of Slavè Katin’s mother.The second daughter Kostadina (Dina) Nikolovska - Katin was born in Skopje, 2006. The third one Nadya, who carries the name of Aleksandar’ mother, Nada, was born in 2016 in Skopje. On their 6th birthday, Katin published monographs with Sandra’s, Dinna’s and Nadya’s drawings which they did in kindergarten, and photographs of their preschool period.

Dafinka is married to Gianpaolo Scatozza, known as Jippi, born in Rome. He finished Music at university in Rome, and is now a jazz musician and a teacher of music. They have two children, the daughter Isabel Katin - Scatozza was born in Toronto, 2006, and Massimo Katin - Scatozza, was born in Toronto, 2007. Also on their 6th birthday, Katin published two monograph with Isabel's and Massimo's drawings which they did, and photographs of their preschool period. Isabel is also an author of the poetry book "The Rain", which is written in the three languages Isabel communicates in her every day life: English, Macedonian and Italian. Upon her request the first book was launched in Ljubojno on August 2, 2017 on the Macedonian national holiday named Ilinden.

Finishing Technical school Slavè Katin worked as a surveyor for the Assembly of the Municipality of Resen for several years. During his studies in Belgrade, in 1965 he went to the UDA to visit his grandfather Alek and stay the one month. Next year at in 1966 he went to Canada, where he remained for four years. In Toronto he attended the special Institute for English Language and Literature at the Ryerson University, a part of the University of Toronto. For a while he worked as a surveyor, and was also active among the Macedonian colony in Toronto. In 1968 he spent a term as Secretary General of the church management of the Macedonian Orthodox Church of "St. Clement of Ohrid" in this city. At the same time he was active in the field of journalism, collaborating with the "Duhovna iskra" (Spiritual Spark) magazine in Toronto, and with other Macedonian printed and electronic media in Canada and the United States of America.

During the summer of 1970, under recommendation of the time being Yugoslav ambassador, his exelency Mitko Chalovski, Katin returned to Macedonia as a student of the Government of the Socialistic Republic of Macedonia, actually of the Association (Matica) of Immigrants of Macedonia. Together with a few students from Canada and Australia he had a status of a foreign student in Macedonia, with an aim to return to Canada.

However, in 1972 he got married with Nada Ivanova, a professor of Macedonian language and Literature, and he stayed to live in Macedonia, in the ancient Ohrid. After graduating from the Faculty of Philology, Katin worked as coordinator and translator for the Hydrobiological Institute in Ohrid for five years. This took place during the period of research on Lake Ohrid determined in the Agreement between the Institute and the Smithsonian Foundation in Washington. During this period he worked intensively on a number of translations of scientific and technical character, translating from Macedonian to English and vice versa for the needs of the Institute. He also worked on a series of English translations of scientific papers published in the country and abroad.

During the period 1979 -1984 Nikolovski worked for the "Matica" or head office of the Macedonian emigrants where he headed the Information Service and worked as translator and journalist for the "Makedonija" (Macedonia)

magazine. Between 1984 and 1990 he found himself at the National Conference of the Socialist Soyuz (Alliance) of the Working People of Macedonia (RK of SSRNM), where he edited the *"Informative pregled"* (Informative Summary) and other informative publications of this public organization. At the same time the executive council of RK of SSRNM appointed him head of the Information Service and Secretary of the Commission of RK SSRNM for interethnic relations and of the Board for realization of the role of SSRNM in the sphere of religion and religious communities.

During the period 1991-1998, appointed by the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia as an independent state, Katin was Vice President of the National Commission for relations with the religious communities. In 1999 once again he returned to the "Matica" which had by now been transformed into the Ministry of Emigration, and following a reconstruction of the government, was again named into the Agency of Emigration. With the aim of devoting himself more intensively to the emigrants, in 2001 Katin left the Agency retiring early.

However, during the past twenty five years after retirement, he has been active in the publishing business. As an editor-in-chief in one of the prestigious publishing houses – *"Makedonska iskra"* (Macedonian Spark) from Skopje, he has achieved great results in publishing, especially in publishing of school books. Slavè Katin has edited and published several hundred titles, out of which the greatest number are school books and didactical literature, which are a great contribution and achievement in the educational processes of the Republic of Macedonia and for the Macedonian pupils in the Diaspora, and which are proved by the Ministry of Education and Sciences of the Republic of Macedonia, a great number of books of the Macedonians, associations, organizations in Canada, USA, Australia and United Union, then books of well-known and unknown authors from Macedonia, as well as books by Slavè Katin.

As an official of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, Slavè Katin has visited and has had talks with the heads of the Romanian, Ukrainian, Russian and Serbian Orthodox Churches. Slavè Katin has also visited the Patriarchy in Tsarigrad (Istanbul) and the Vatican in Rome, mote times. He was a member of the Republic of Macedonia's Delegation during Mother Teresa's funeral in Calcutta, India, and many time he traveled with delegations of the Macedonian Orthodox Church-Ohrid Archbishopric to Canada, the United States of America, Australia, and a number of European countries, Turkey and Israel.

Within his creative opus of works, starting from his first book, ***"English-Macedonian Limnological Dictionary"*** (1986) up to the present days, the following publicationsdeserve special attention: ***"Macedonians in the United States and Canada"*** (2002)(in Macedonian and English), ***"Macedonian Holocaust"*** (1990), ***"The Macedonian Orthodox Churches in Australia, Canada and the United States"*** (1991), ***"In Australia as at Home"*** (1992), ***"Macedonian***

Immigrant Press" (1993), *"An Emigrant Desire"* (1993), *"Macedonian Immigrants Panopticon"* (1996), *"Emigrant Horizons"* (1999), *"Atanas Bliznakoff"* (2000), *"My Travelings Around the World"* (2001), *"Ilinden 1903-2003 and the Macedonian Immigrants"* (2003), *"Immigrants Carousel"* (2008), and *"The World on the Palm"* (2014), (in Macedonian). He is also the author of the publications *"On the Tracks of Evliya Çelebi"* (2007), (in Turkish), *"Love Stories"* (in English) *"Macedonians in the World"* (in English), and *"A Postcard of Prespa"* (in Macedonian).

In addition, special attention deserve the following mono--graphs: *"Andrea Branov"* from Melbourne, Australia (in Macedonian and English) (2001), *"The Family of Janovski"* from Toronto, Canada (in Macedonian and English) (2002), *"Svetle (Steve) Stamevski"* from Detroit, US (in Macedonian and English) (2005), *"Metropolitan Kirill"* from Macedonia (in Macedonian and English) (2007), *"George Tomov"* from New York, US (in Macedonian and English) (2007), *"Bosko Rajchovski - Pelisterski"* from Florida (in Macedonian and English) (2008), *"Gorgija - George Atanasoski"* from Florida (in Macedonian and English) (2012), *"Atanas Bliznakoff"* from Gary, US (in Macedonian and English) (2000/2017), *"Esma Redzepova -Teodosievska"* from Skopje (2016) (in English, Macedonian and Roma), *"Steve Pliakes"* 2018 in English and Macedonian, *"Goga Pechenkovski"* from Resen (2004) (in Macedonian), as well as *"Macedonian Immigration Meridians"* (2017) (in Macedonian), *"Israel and Macedonia"* (2017) (in English, Macedonian and Hebrew), *"Macedonian Immigrants Meridians"* (2017), *"Macedonians in the World"* in Macedonian, the monograph *"Vidinovski"* (2019) in Macedonian and English, *"Prespa Postard"* and *"Selection of Papers"* (2023) in Macedonian.

Slavè Katin is also a co-author of the following publications: *"The Contribution of Macedonia to the World Civilisation"* (2004), *"From Pannonia to the Aegean"* (2007)(in Macedonian), with Academician Antonije Shkokljev-Doncho, PhD; *"Macedonia in Ancient Time"* (2010), and *"The Balkans and Macedonia"* (2014) (in English), with Academician Antonije Shkokljev-Doncho, PhD and Risto Stefov, than *"In Honor of St. Cyril and St. Methodij"* (1994), *"The Aureole of the Virgin Mary and St. Mary Monastery of Slivnica in Prespa"* (2007), with Professor Vera Stojchevska-Antich, PhD *"40 Pilgrimages in Front of the Grave of St. Cyril in Rome"* (2008), (in Macedonian),with Professor Vera Stojchevska-Antich, PhD and the archbishop Kliment, as well as of the books *"Macedonian Exaltation"* (1994), *"Poetic Immigrant Meridians" (1995)*, and *"The Macedonians in Hanburg (1978-1998)"*, (1997), (in Macedonian) with Fidanka Tanaskova, then *"Petar Stamatoff"* from Chicago (2010) with Professor Metodija Trajkovski, and *"Ilinden in Ljubojno and Prespa"* (2013) (in Macedonian and English) with Boshko Rajchovski - Pelisterski, as well as *"Siljan Micevski"* (2022) (in Macedonian) with Georgi Lumburovski and *"Aleksandar Makedonski"* with George Branov (2019) (in Macedonian).

He is also known for his children lexicographical publications ***“Let’s learn Macedonian and English”*** (1997) (in French, German, Vlah, Turkish, Albanian and Roma), with Isnia Shaban, Liria Redzepe, Zaharitsa Porchu and Liatif Demir, the ***“English-Macedonian Biotechnical Dictionary”*** (1994), than the ***“English-Macedonian Veterinary Dictionary”*** (1996) with Professor Ilinka Drakulevska-Grubovich and Professor Nikola Jordanovski, ***“Biblical Dictionary”*** (1997), with Professor Petko Zlateski PhD (in Macedonian), and ***“Guide of the Computer Terminology”*** (2000) with Stefan Tomovski (in Macedonian and English)

Slavè Nikolovski-Katin is also known for his numerous translations such as: ***“The Village of Nevoljani, District of Lerin”*** (1986) by Risto Kiradziev (in Macedonian and English), then the translation of the ***“Jubilee Edition of the 50th Anniversary of the Hydrobiological Institute of Ohrid”*** (1985), ***“Development and Nutrition of the Young Cyprinids of Lake Ohrid”*** (1988), the doctoral disertation of Milcho Tochko, (from Macedonian into English), ***“Pages About Macedonia and the Macedonians”*** (1990) by Hristo Andonovski, ***“Macedonian Economic Directory”*** (1990) by Economic Chamber of Macedonia (from Macedonian into English), and vice-versa of other different scientific works. He is especially known for the translation of the novel ***“Alexander the Great”*** (1988) by Ulrich Wilken, (from English into Macedonian).

In addition to the 60 mentioned publications, Katin is an author of more than a hundred scientific papers of different fields, and of over 5.000 journalistic and other texts published in the Republic of Macedonia and in the world.

Two books are published about Slave Katin: the monograph about his life and work entitled ***“Katin”*** (2004), (in Macedonian and English), and the book about his publicist activity titled ***“Macedonian Emigrants Portrait”*** (2004), (in Macedonian) by Borche Naumovski, former Minister of Culture of the Republic of Macedonia, as well as the monographs ***“Creative Work of Slavè Katin”*** (I and II addition) (2022 / 2023) (in Macedonian and English) by Dushan Ristevski – Makedon from Sydney, Australia.

Throughout his work and creative activities, he has publicshed 63 publications, lexicographic editions, translations from Macedonian to English and vice versa, scientific papers, newspaper articles, etc. In addition, he is an author of around five thousand journalistic texts and serials, descriptive reports, reviews, and portraits, translations of literature, linguistics and culture in English and in Macedonian, as well as other texts and materials published in the country and abroad.

Slavè Nikolovski-Katin was an accredited journalist from Macedonia for the newspaper ***“Australian-Macedonian Weekly”*** from Melbourne for three years, and ***“International Politics”*** from Belgrade. Most of his works refer to and are connected with the activities and the life of the Macedonian Orthodox parishes in Australia, Canada, U.S. and European Union, as well as with Macedonian expatriates overseas and in European countries, while around 50 translations

from Macedonian to English published under the Heading of the magazine "*Macedonia*" titled "*From month to month*" refer to the cultural and social life in the Republic of Macedonia.

He has participated in over 60 symposia, debates, conferences and other sessions in the country and abroad where he presented papers mainly relating to culture, literature, language and religion, and the information and other activities of the Macedonian emigrants overseas and in the West European countries.

As an active journalist, he was elected as Secretary of the Association of Journalists of Macedonia, for a period of five years. Then, he was a member of the Presidency and the Commission for International Cooperation of this Association. He was also a member of the Council of the Centre for Foreign Languages in Skopje, the publishing board of "*International Politics*" from Belgrade, and a member of the Association of Literary Translators of Macedonia. He was vice president for two terms, and a member of the "*Society for Literature and Culture Macedonia-Canada*"; he was an honorary member of the Association for the use of the Macedonian Language in Official and Public Communication; a Vice president and lifelong member of the Boards of the Foundations "*Atanas Bliznakoff*" at the "*Ss. Cyril and Methodius*" University. He was a member of the International Academy for Freedom of Religion in Washington, DC, U.S.A, honorary member of the Literary Association "*Miladinov Brothers*", in Toronto, Canada, and Literary Association "*Grigor Prlichev*" in Sydney, Australia, as well as a member of the Macedonian Association of Sciences and Arts from Bitola, and of Macedonian United Diaspora (UMD) from Washington, USA.

For a long time Katin has attracted attention with his dynamic informative and journalistic activities related to this corpus. It has made him a central figure in relations between the church and the state on the one hand, and relations of the state with the church and the Diaspora on the other. This kind of position has brought to him nominations in numerous associations, societies, and organizations in Macedonia and abroad. At the same time he participated in numerous symposiums, panels, and seminars within the country and abroad at the request of their hosts who appreciated and respected his views on a series of issues in their fields. In this respect Katin has established an exceptionally rich and dynamic communication with numerous people in the country and throughout the world. This enabled him to penetrate into the essence of the problems that preoccupied the Macedonians in the Diaspora and the government structures in the state who continued changing their attitudes toward the emigrants during the different periods. This is another reason for the lack of a consistent government strategy toward them.

Aware of this fact Katin tries to fill in this gap, to compensate this vacuum with proposals and suggestions, and to establish a certain balance in the relations between the state and the emigrant Macedonians through concrete

practical steps. Thus, he began building the great golden bridge of their link with their fatherland as an independent state, as well as their mutual acquaintance and togetherness regardless of the distance between their destinations. However, his contribution does not end here. Katin is aware that Macedonia can most be helped if it is invested in through the realization of a series of projects significant for its faster development, i.e. if those in the Diaspora, as successful businessmen, show an interest in this.

The effects of such visits by respectful Macedonians from the Diaspora to their fatherland are yet to be felt, as will also Katin's contribution in this field. The historical dimension of his national project regarding the emigrants objectively affirms him as a unique leader of a global all-Macedonian movement for the promotion of Macedonia, not only as the cradle of an ancient civilization, but as a country which contributes toward the highly developed world feeling it increasingly in its own development.

Over a period of fifty years, Slave Katin has published over 5.000 texts, mainly about Macedonia, the Macedonian Diaspora, religion, culture, Macedonian language and literature and other fields in the following newspapers and magazines in the Republic of Macedonia and abroad: *"Nova Makedonija"*, *"Vecer"*, *"Makedonija"*, *Makedonska revija*, *"Literaturen zbor"*, *"Kulturen zivot"*, *"Studentski zbor"*, *"Vesnik na MPC"*, *"Trudbenik"*, *"Birlik"*, *"Lik"*, *"Klimentov zbor"*, *"Duhovna iskra"*, *"Obedineti Makedonci"*, *"Makedonija"*, *"Iskra"*, *"Povod"*, *"Avstralisko-makedonski nedelnik"*, *"Makedonska iskra"*, *"Makedonski vesnik"*, *"Duhovna iskra"*, *"Makedonski iselenicki almanah"*, especially in the Web-portal *"Makedonska nacija"*, as well as in other press and portals in Macedonia and abroad, as: *"Makedonsko Sonce"*, *"Pollitecon Publications"*, *"Macedonian World"*, *"Publicitet"*, *"Matica na iselenicite od Makedonija"*, *"Macedonia info Diaspora"*, *"Ilinden"*, *"Raibow"*, *"Media 24"*, *"Ogledalo"*, *"Prespainfo"* and others.

Slave Katin has received many awards and recognition from a number of organizations, associations, institutions, churches and church communities in the Republic of Macedonia and in the Diaspora. He has been awarded the prestigious **„Krstè Petkov Misirkov“** (1991) an award from the Journalist Association of Macedonian in the field of journalism, recipient of the, **"Life Achievement Award"** from the Ljubojno Ilinden Emigration Gatherings (2021), **"Charter for Lifetime Achievement"** award at the Pelagonian Cultural – Scientific Meeting (2022), as well as the most prestigious **UMD Global Lifetime Achievement Award** (2022). of the United Macedonian Diaspora from Washington, DC, USA, for his achievements in the field of the Diaspora.

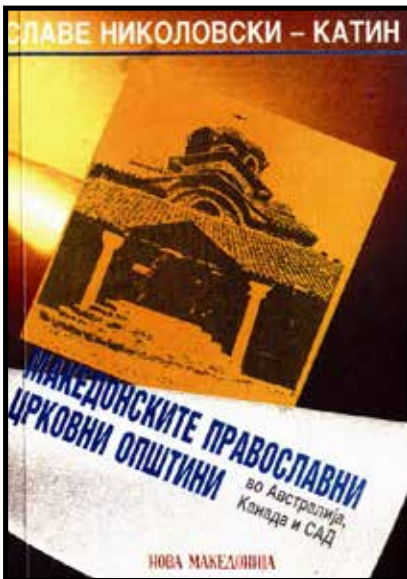
Dushan Ristevski - Makedon

THE CREATIVE WORK OF SLAVÉ KATIN

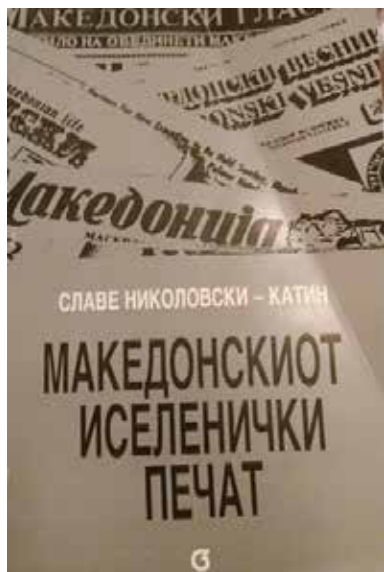




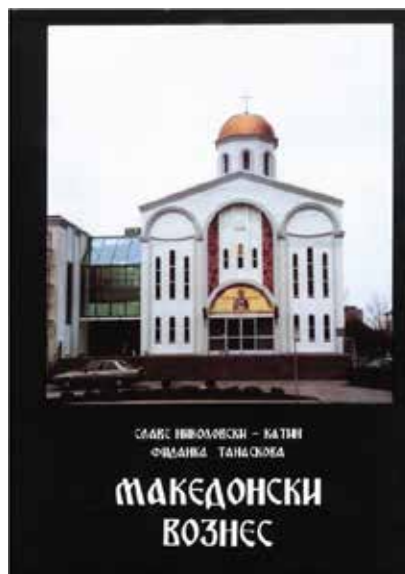
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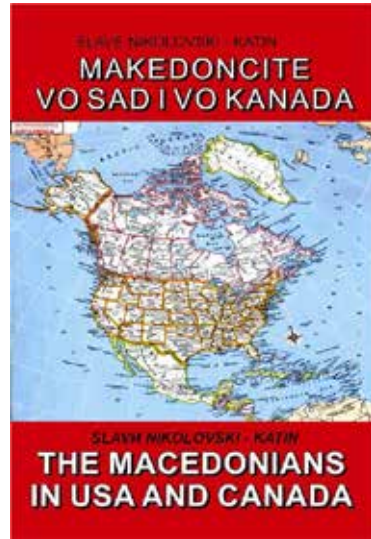
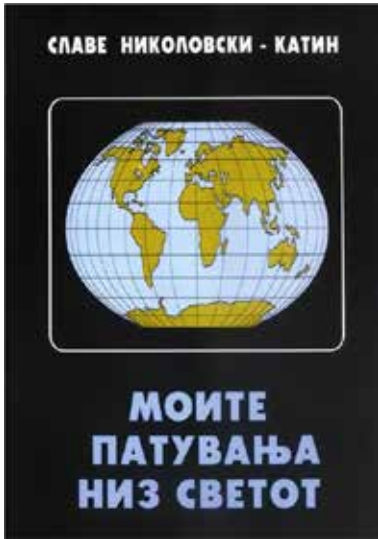
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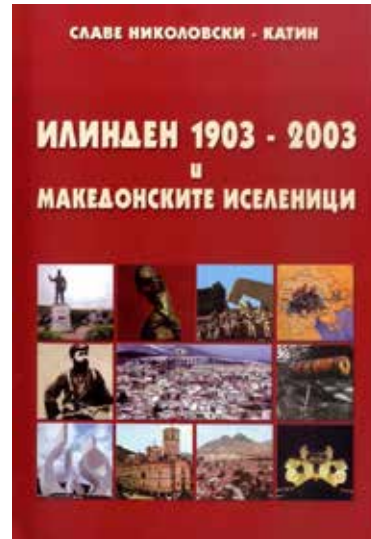
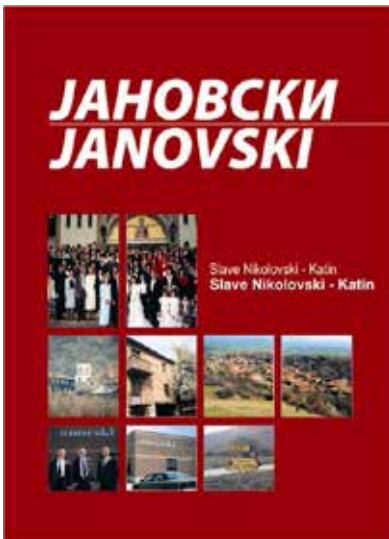
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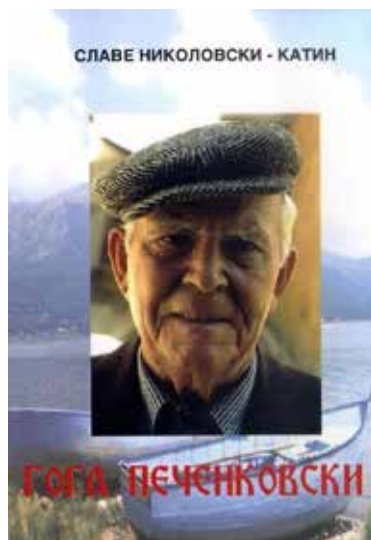
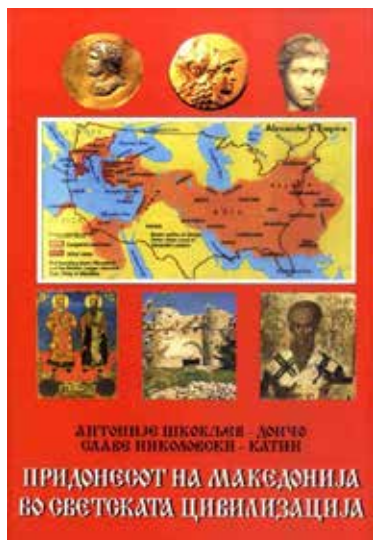
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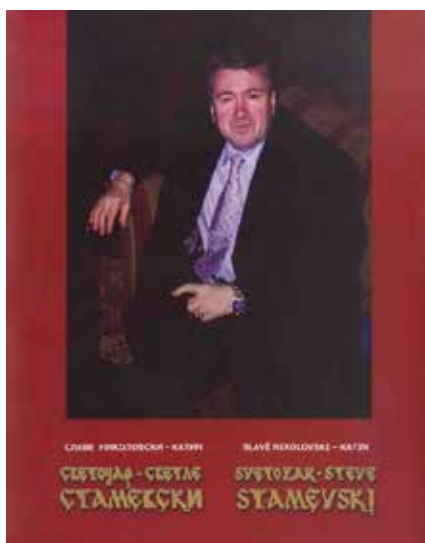
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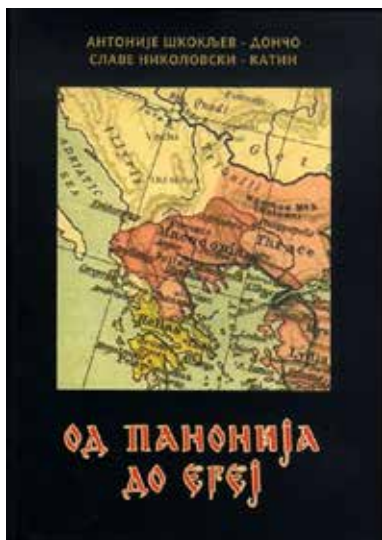
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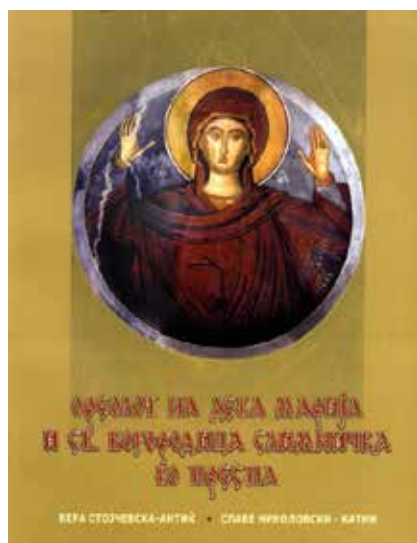
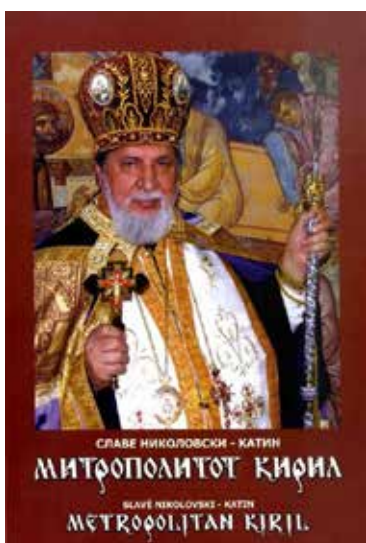
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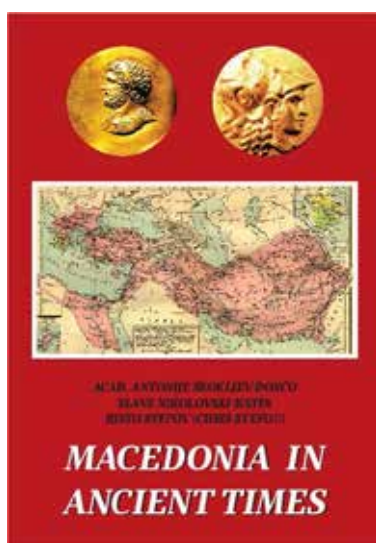
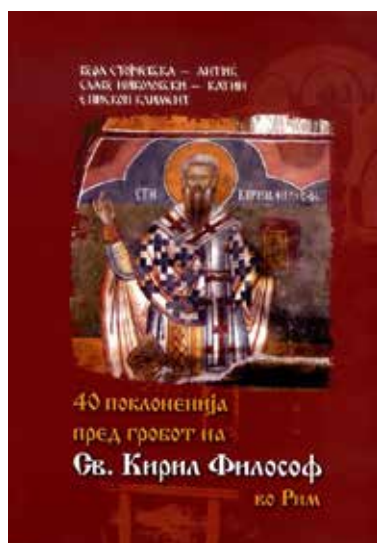
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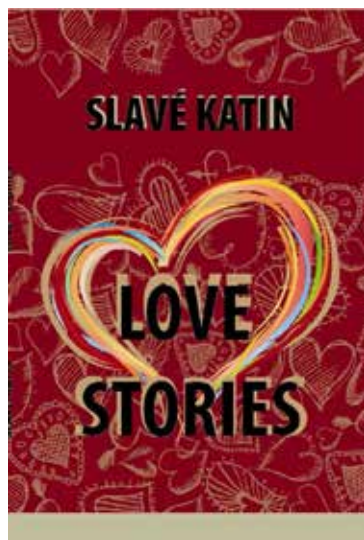
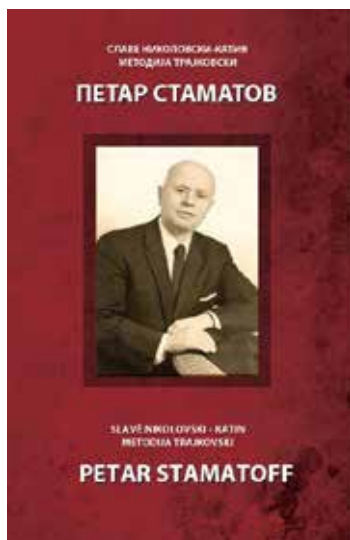
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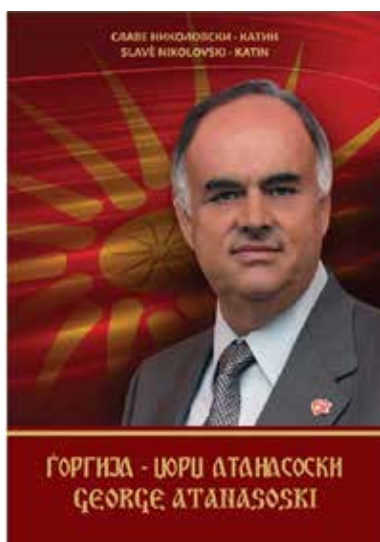
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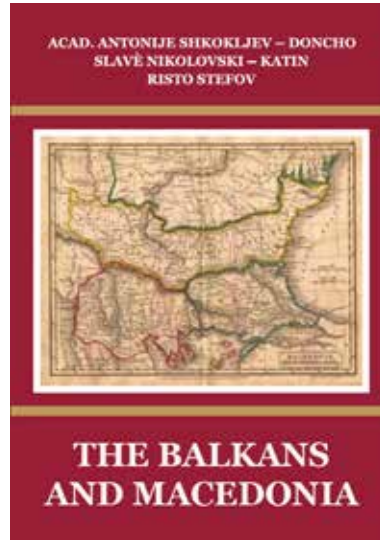
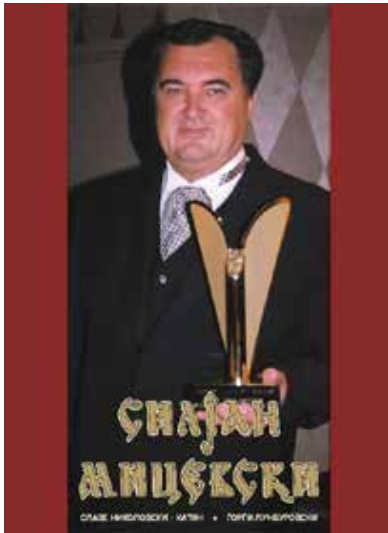
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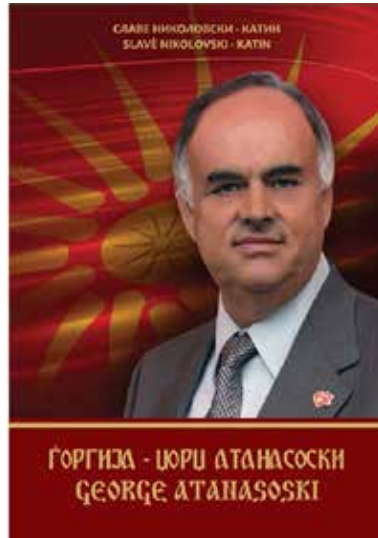
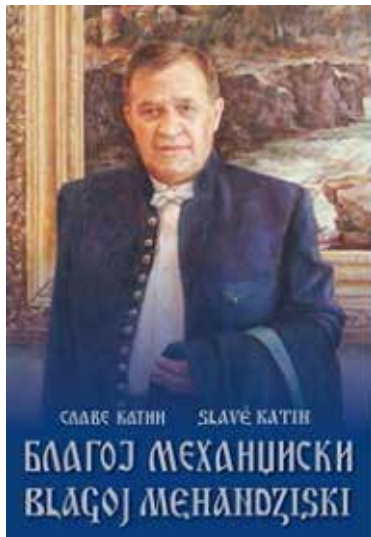
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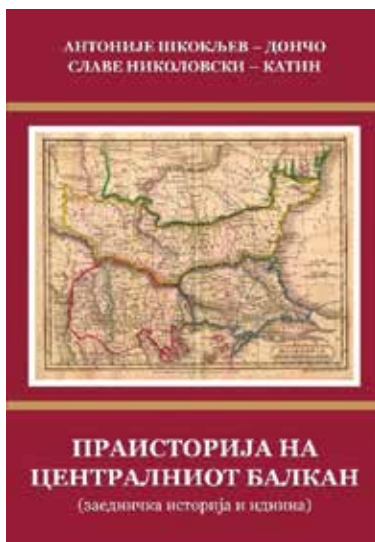
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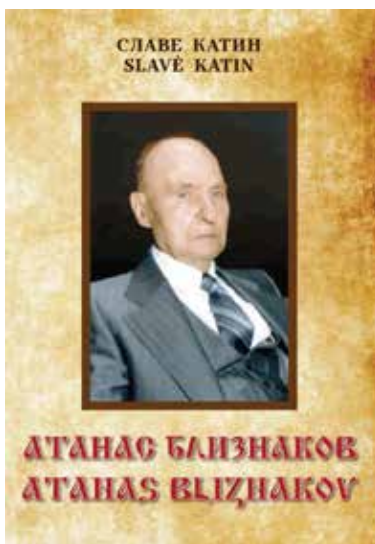
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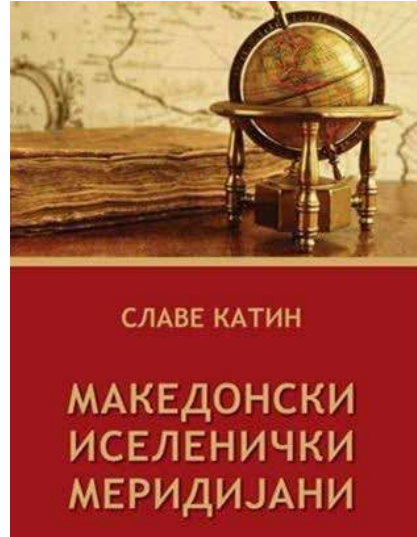
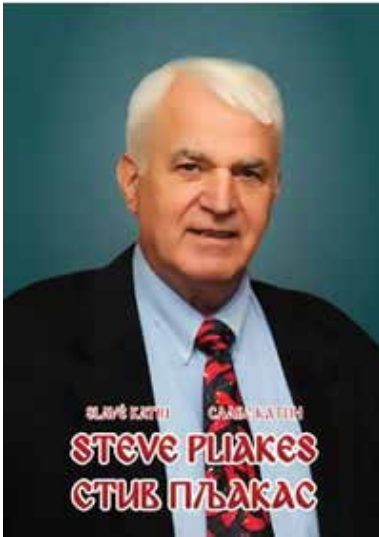
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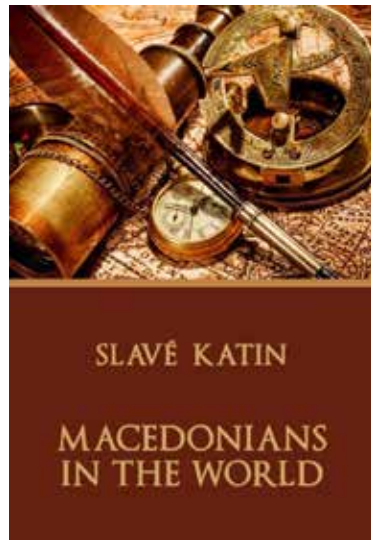
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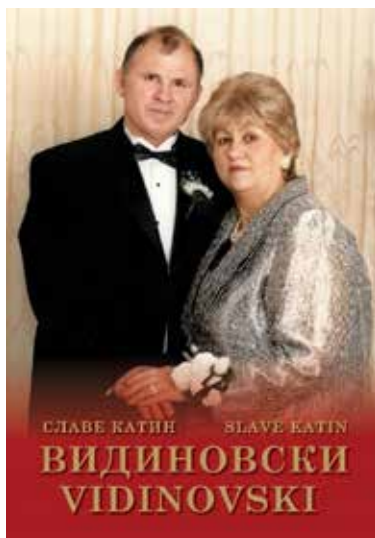
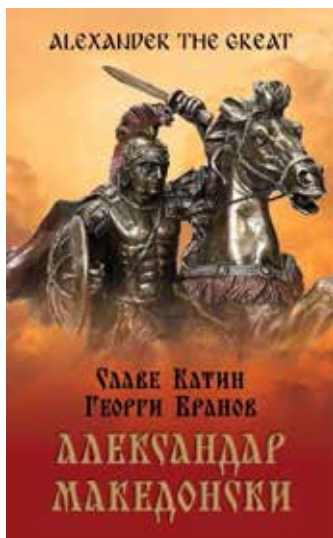
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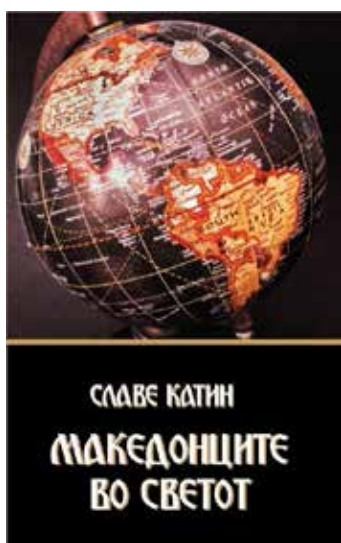
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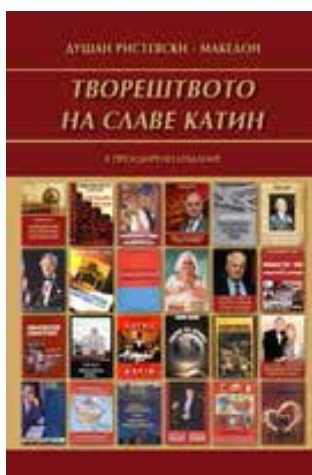


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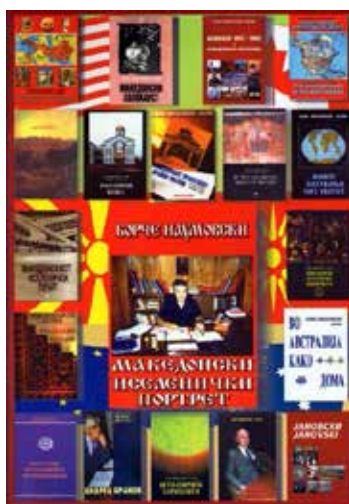
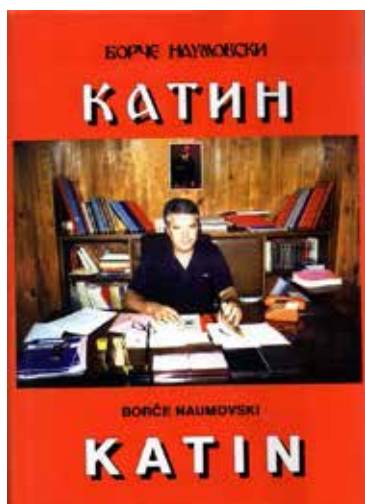


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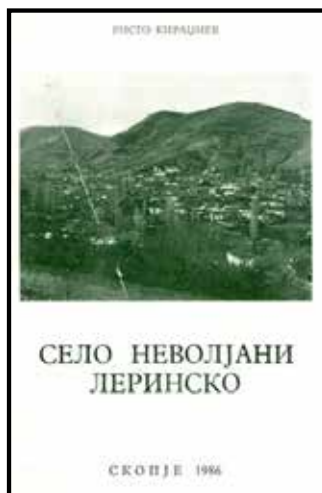


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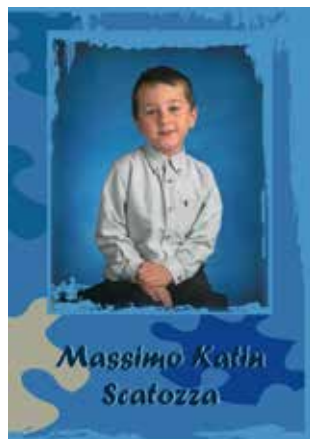
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6. Книгата ба Изабек



***PART ONE -
PREHISTORIC MACEDONIA***



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MAGEDONIA AS A HOLY AND BIBLICAL LAND (I)

With its ancient and with millennial-long history, Macedonia is the pride, joy and sorrow, dream and reality of every Macedonian. Its geographic location makes it the crossroads of various civilizations, religions, traditions, and customs. It is no coincidence that the paths of many tradesmen and caravans passed here, and for many military expeditions, armies, winners and losers it was the battleground for many centuries. It means that every stone, every lump of black earth, every river and mountain speak of the turbulent history of Macedonia. Even today, Macedonia continues hiding in itself many secrets from the past, which will probably be a challenge for future generations.

About the historical development of Macedonia from ancient time up to day, a large number of both foreign and domestic authors have written from ancient times up to the present. Some authors have tried to distort the Macedonian story, while others have presented the historical facts about Macedonia and the Macedonian people too easily. Macedonia has been a country of turmoil, but also a country of beauty and mystery where the strong survived war, famine, conquerors, insults and empires; preserving their name at the same time.

Macedonia is a Holy and Biblical land. Since the glorious times of Philip and Alexander of Macedonia, during the reign of Rome, the Byzantines and the great migrations of the Slavs to the south, During this long and rich period only two nations, two peoples have chosen the name of this country as an integral part of their identity – the ancient Macedonians and the present-day Macedonians. It is this strong connection which spans millennia that shows the dedication of these peoples to their country.

In the rich history of Europe, it is hard to find a people like the Macedonian one who suffered so many upheavals during their national establishment. It is hard to find another people in the world who had so turbulent history, as well. Every single storm struck them. There was no war that failed to strike them. Each misfortune that took place in those areas put Macedonia in the very center, while the Macedonians received the first blows. Following their destiny in the last thirteen centuries, it could be said that destiny was history to many peoples, while for the Macedonians, history was their destiny.



Judging objectively, the people, whose best dance is the ancient one called "Teškoto" could not help having such fate and past. Macedonia was not only always at the point where many swords and yataghans crossed, where sabers and daggers crossed, but it was also the place where a number of different cultures clashed and intersected each other. In fact, Macedonia of that time was and now is a cradle of civilization, a focal point as one of the most ancient civilization.

Since ancient times the name Macedonia stood for a small province in the immediate vicinity of Pella, today the village Postol – the capital of the ancient Macedonian Empire. It covered the area between present-day Lake Pazar, which is dried out, and the lower basin of the Vardar River. But parallel to the expansion of the borders of the Macedonian Empire, this province named Macedonia gradually became larger and larger.

Therefore the ancient Macedonians started to distinguish between Upper and Lower Macedonia mainly based on the geographical characteristics of the area. However, such a division of Macedonia had political, cultural, military and administrative importance. As a result Macedonia, as an historical and geographical region, is mentioned in the Bible several times.

As a geographical region, Macedonia covers the middle part of the Balkan Peninsula, the space which is enclosed by the Shar Mountain, Skopska Crna Gora, Kozjak, Osogovo and Rila to the north and by the river Bistrica and the coast of the Aegean Sea up to the mouth of the Mesta River to the south.

The Bigla River and the watershed of the earlyridged mountains of Korab, Jablanica, Gramos and Pind enclose Macedonia to the north, while the Mesta River and the western parts of the Rhodopes enclose Macedonia to the east. Within these borders Macedonia covers an area of 67,741.2 km².

Unlike Upper Macedonia, Lower Macedonia is mainly a flatland. To the south, Lower Macedonia is enclosed by the waters of the Aegean Sea; it is enclosed by the waters of the Therma Gulf and the Perian Mountains to the southwest; and by the mountains of Vermin, Veras and Payko to the west; it is enclosed by the mountainous massif of the Balkans to the north, while it is enclosed by the hilly dividing line between the valleys of the Vardar and Struma rivers to the east. Vardar divides Lower Macedonia into eastern and western Macedonia.

The western half of Lower Macedonia is spacious and its geographical characteristic is the central plain created by the alluvium of the rivers Vardar, Bistrica, Lydias and Galiakos. This fertile soil (of around 1,500 km²) borders the waters of the Therma Gulf to the south, the mountains of Peria to the southwest, the mountain Vermion to the west, the Payko Mountain to the north, and the Vardar River to the east.



It seems Philip II of Makedon and Alexander III of Macedon (the Great), are the most significant figures in the ancient period. They were warriors, strategists, geniuses and kings of ancient Macedonia. They have changed the course of history, the boundaries of continents, the philosophy of the life paths, therefore even after three thousand years they remained to be constant inspiration and admiration in perpetuity.

Philip II of Macedon (359-336 B.C.) came from Argeada dynasty. He is the son of King Amynta, the Macedonian king became of 23 years of age. Philip the monarch in all his wisdom, knowledge, experience, courage and militancy, opened the doors of his native Macedonia to the world.

However, most, territorial, political, military and economic rise and flourishing, and most unnoticed anywhere else on Earth, Macedonia experienced at the time when on the throne was the most successful sage, strategist, military commander and fearless fighter Alexander III of Macedon (the Great) . He was born in Pella, of father Philip, and mother Olympia from Epirus, in July 356 B.C. of the Argeada dynasty.

He became acquired the fame ingenious strategist, warrior, general, sage and a visionary for a great world state. He subdued his successful military campaigns in Anatolia, Syria, Egypt, Persia and Mesopotamia, extending the boundaries of Macedonia to Afghanistan and India. Under his command were a number of countries, kingdoms, empires, tribal communities, peoples and nations on thousands of square miles.

Wherever he fought and conquered, he introduced special power and authority, with respected local traditions and customs. At the same time he was the initiator and organizer of major construction feats. To this day remain traces of some names, cities, towns and landmarks erected in Alexander's time.

Just one month before he was 33 years, the legend died under still controversial circumstances in July 323 B.C. in Babylon.

Heroes go - but acts, records, myths and legends remain. Alexander III of Macedon (the Great) Insert a new chapter in world history, military doctrine, in literature and culture.

The Monograph of "George Atanasoski"



ORIGIN – ETHNO GENESIS OF THE ANCIENT MACEDONIANS (2)

The prehistoric Macedonians belong to the Indo-European family of people credited with the creation of the Neolithic culture in the Central Balkan Peninsula in the period from about 6500 to 5500 B.C. Macedonians, as proto-Indo-Europeans, were one of the first people to settle “Old Europe” (Gimbutas, 1982) which was part of the Central Danube Basin. When favourable climatic conditions were created by the melt of the last Ice Age, these tribes moved from Pannonia southward and settled in the Central Balkan gorges along the river basins of what we today call Bistritsa, Vardar, Struma and the Thermion Straits.

Even though the original names of their tribal organizations are unknown today, historical data has shown that their ethnic and tribal names were generally derived from the geographical configurations of the terrain on which they settled as shown by the examples: Oresti-Gorani, Elimei-Krivorecani, Desareti-Sumadinci etc. In addition to identifying with geography they also identified with their professions such as Almopissalt mine workers, Botiacattle breeders etc. Within this ethnogenetic revolution one factor remained common, they were all Macedonians and the name of their fatherland was Macedonia, a name that has endured the ravages of time and has remained unchanged to this day. The language those Macedonians spoke was a colloquial tongue, a dialect of a Paleo-Balkan glossology, known as a pro-Indo-European language of the peoples of “Old Europe”.

The word ‘Macedon’ (Με) is of proto-Indo-European origin (IE) that belongs to the paleoglossology of the Balkans (PGB). From an etymological point of view, there are two variants to the name. The first part of the first variant is a complex word consisting of the words *mak-mak* which in Macedonian means rich, blessed, happy well-situated and the word *ar-ar as in makar-makar*, which means least, right.

The second part of the first variant is the word *kednos-kednos* which means attentive, honest and noble. There is an analogous word to this in Hyperborean in today’s Mačva, located on the plain between the rivers Sava and Danube, which verifies this. According to the second variant, as described by etymologist Mpampinioti (1998, 1043?), the word ‘makedon’ (*Makedon*) comes from the epithet ‘*makednos-makednos*’, where the word *maki, makros-maki* means narrow, tall, while *ketwn-ketones-kedon*, *kedones* originates from the



word *hthon-ge*, 'hton-e', which means earth, ground, soil, a meaning that was given to the original toponym. Contrary to this, Senc (1910, 503) says that 'ked-nos' means dear, attentive, honest, while *edna*, *adnos* means 'gift, dowry'.

Therefore, roughly translated, the word 'makedon' could mean 'master, head of a household, landlord, wealthy man' because Makedonija (Macedonia) was a country of landlords and wealthy men, as in *mak* – meaning rich and *edon* – meaning country, respectively.

Modern Greek historians, who often exaggerate and politicize arguments, claim that the Ancient Macedonians were of "Hellenic" origin and base their claims on mythology and on disputed legends which suggest that Makedon was the founder of the Argaed Dynasty of Philip II and Alexander the Great of Macedon.

Mythology has a proto-philosophical and proto-scientific primordial form of artistic creation in itself. Myths represent the original and earliest form of telling folk tales and contain products of folk fantasy, aimed at explaining natural phenomena and human life. Judging by the archeological finds from the material culture, especially from the fine arts and mythology, ancient Macedonia has an outstanding, unique and special mythological system of its own. It has ethnological, ethnographic, linguistic, historical, literary and anthropological elements that topographically are located inside the geopolitical regions of Macedonia.

Macedonian mythology exists as an autochthonous heritage separate from Hellenic myths. This means that the Macedonian myth is a part of the Paleo-Balkan and "Aegean" culture and, to a great extent, is part of the religious-political prehistory of the native population of Macedonia. Several written legends, which refer to Macedonian regions, will be presented here. There are two main legends which refer to the Macedonians and the founders of their dynasties and both are based on ancient literature, specifically covered in Homer and Hesiod's epic and lyric poetry and during later composed myths. (*Enclosure 1. Macedonian Mythological Dynasty*)

According to the legends of Diodorus Siculus (90-20 B.C.), author of the literary work the "Library" (I, 18, 1; 20, 3), Makedon (*Makedwn*), son of Egyptian god Osiris (*Osiris*) and goddess Isida (*Isis*), was the mythological king of Macedonia. According to this legend, when Osiris, who belonged to the first circle of the Egyptian gods and to the fifth dynasty of rulers of this country that ruled around 2500-2340 B.C., left his rule to his wife Isida and set off to conquer the world, he took with him his two sons Makedon and Anubis. When he arrived in Thrace he killed the Thracian king Likurg, son of Dryant, and proclaimed his own son Makedon as king. The country Makedon ruled later became known as Macedonia (Macedonia), named after him.



After the rulers of the Egyptian IV dynasty (Keops, Kefren et al.) created the great pyramids and during the rule of the V dynasty various religious changes were made with the sun god Ra being placed on top of the Egyptian Pantheon. In addition to the above, Osiris or Buziris (*Bousiros*) became god (Amon) of fertility and of the underworld (str. 17, tabela) because life after death had a central place in society according to Egyptian beliefs of the time. Osiris was then identified with Dionysus in the Gulf of Thermion in Macedonia (Thomson, 1954, 133).

Based on this legend, Osiris, as the Egyptian god Amon, became known as Zeus in the Balkans and Makedon his son and king of Macedonia had a divine origin. Thus the legend of Makedon being the son of Zeus was born. According to this legend king Makedon ruled around 2340 B.C. towards the end of the V Egyptian dynasty.

A similar myth was probably also created by the Pseudo-Callisthenes in his book "The life and work of Aleksandar of Makedon" where he attributed divine origins to Aleksandar of Makedon (Alexander the Great) by linking him to the god Amon. According to Pseudo-Callisthenes and other Pelazgian story tellers (Eurinom), the Libyan god Amon wrapped himself around Olympia, Alexander's mother, like a snake and presented us with an Orphic-Dionysus mystery.

The authorship of this legend, however, is ascribed to Callisthenes of Lynthus (360-327 B.C.) a Macedonian and grandson of Aristotle who participated in the campaigns of Aleksandar of Makedon as his official historian. In edition B of his work, published by Diodorus Seculus, the Pharaoh Nektaneb came to Macedonia as Amon and seduced Olympia (Pseudo- Callisthenes, 1987).

Anubis, the second mythological son of Osiris, returned to Egypt and became king and a god. Anubis was depicted as a man with the head of a dog. A shrine or holy place was especially built for him to glorify his fame. Herodotus (II, 144) wrote that Osiris had another son named Oros or Hor who was worshiped by the Pelazgians as the god Apollo.

Hesiod (around 700 B.C.), on the other hand, gave us an older version of the origin of the Macedonians. It is well known that in addition to Homer, Hesiod was the first Hellenic mythologist to create the first stories about the genesis of the gods (theogony) and of the human race. In his work "Fragments" Hesiod tells us that Zeus and the nymph Tia (Thetis) had two sons, Magnet and Makedon.

"Macedonia in Ancient Times"

WHO WAS PHILIP II OF MACEDON (359 – 336) (3)

Philip II of Macedon was born in 382 BC, in Pella, the capital of the ancient Macedonian kingdom, as the youngest son of king Amyntas III. After his father's death, Macedonia slowly disintegrated. His elder brothers and future kings Alexander II and Perdiccas III, unsuccessfully fought against the continuous attacks of the neighboring Thracians, Illyrians, and Ancient Greeks.

Philip II of Macedon was himself a hostage of the Ancient Greeks at Thebes, between 368 and 365 BC. But while in captivity there, he observed the military techniques of then the greatest power in Greece. When he returned to Macedonia he immediately set forth in helping his brother Perdiccas III, who became king of Macedonia after the death of Alexander II, to strengthen and reorganize the Macedonian army.

Philip II was twentyfour years old when he acceded to the throne in 359 BC. Through the use of deft diplomacy, he was able to convince the Thracians under Berisades to cease their support of Pausanians, a pretender to the throne, and the Athenians to halt their support of another pretender. He achieved these by bribing the Thracians and their Paeonian allies and establishing a treaty with Athens that relinquished his claims to Amphipolis. He was also able to make peace with the Illyrians who had threatened his border.

Philip ascended on the Macedonian throne in the most difficult times; the country was virtually at the brink of collapse, its neighbors ready to put an end to its existence. The Macedonian state was further weakened by internal turmoil, Paeonia was independent of Macedonian control, and additional claimants to the throne now supported by foreign powers were a serious threat to Philip's reign.

He bought off the Thracian king with gifts and persuaded him to put to death the first Macedonian pretender to the throne who had found a refuge at the Thracian court. Then he defeated in battle the second pretender who was supported by the Ancient Greek power of Athens. Careful not to upset the Athenians, he made a treaty with them, ceding the city of Amphipolis on the Macedonian coast to them. Thus in little more than a year he removed the internal threats and secured the safety of his kingdom by firmly establishing himself on the throne.



Philip provided his Macedonian soldiers in the phalanx with sarissa, a spear which was long 6 meters, about 18 feet. The sarissa, when held upright by the rear rows of the phalanx (there were usually eight rows), helped hide maneuvers behind the phalanx from the view of the enemy. When held horizontal by the front rows of the phalanx, it was a brutal weapon for people could be run through from 20 feet away.

Philip made the military a way of life for the Macedonian men. It became a professional occupation that paid well enough that the soldiers could afford to do it yearround, unlike in the past when the soldiering had only been a part-time job, something the men would do during the off peak times of farming. This allowed him to count on his men regularly, building unity and cohesion among his men.

Philip marched into northern Greece. In Thessaly he defeated his enemies and by 352, he was firmly in control of this northern Ancient Greek region. The Macedonian army advanced as far as the pass of Thermopylae which divides Ancient Greece in two parts, but it did not attempt to take it because it was strongly guarded by a joint Ancient Greek force of Athenians, Spartans, and Achaeans.

Philip returned to Macedonia and began preparations for a complete expulsion of the remaining Ancient Greek colonies on Macedonian land. In 348 BC, the Macedonian army attacked the Chalcidice peninsula and defeated the city-state of Olynthus. Like Methone, Olynthus and the other 31 Ancient Greek cities in Chalcidice were utterly demolished and razed to the ground, their Greek citizens sold as slaves, and their land distributed to the Macedonians. Among these Ancient Greek cities was Stageira, the birthplace of the Ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle. The whole of Chalcidice peninsula was annexed to Macedonia, marking an end of Ancient Greek settlements on Macedonian soil.

The Macedonian king spent most of 345 subduing the rebellions of the conquered nations. He led the Macedonian army against the Illyrians, Dardanians, and the Thracians. In 344 the Ancient Greeks in Thessaly rebelled, but their uprisings was also swiftly put down. The same year he marched into Epirus and pacified the country.

Ordering the Macedonian troops to lift the sieges of the two Greek cities, Philip led the army northward across Thrace. In the spring of 339 the Macedonians clashed with the Scythians near Danube, who had recently crossed the river with large army. Philip won a stunning victory in which the Scythian king Areas was killed and took 20,000 Scythian women and children as slaves.

But on the return to Macedonia, the Thracian Triballians attacked the Macedonian convoy. The booty was lost, Philip suffered a severe injury which left him permanently lame, and the army returned home empty-handed.



Philip appointed himself "Commander of the Ancient Greeks", as he was already commander of the conquered Illyrians and Thracians. The Ancient Greeks, like the Illyrians and Thracians before them, were now obligated to support and obey the commands of the Macedonian king. Philip already had plans for invasion of the Persian Empire, which would crown his career as world conqueror.

Meanwhile Philip had begun the preparations for the Persian invasion. It is now that he made what the ancient historians considered to be the greatest mistake of his life. Having married 6 times before (all non-Macedonian women save Phila), he now married Cleopatra, a Macedonian girl from of high nobility. The ancients say that he married her 'out of love'. This marriage led to a break with Olympias and his son Alexander.

At the wedding banquet, Cleopatra's uncle general Attalus made a remark about Philip fathering a "legitimate" heir, i.e., one that was of pure Macedonian blood. Alexander threw his cup at the man, blasting him for calling him 'bastard child. Philip stood up, drew his sword, and charged at Alexander, only to trip and fall on his face in his drunken stupor.

In the spring of 336 BC, Philip begun the invasion of Persia. He sent generals Attalus and Parmenio with an advance force of 10,000 Macedonian troops, to cross over into Asia Minor and pave the way for the later advance of the main army. And while the Macedonians were crossing the Hellespont, in Macedonia everything was ready for the grand celebration for the wedding of Philip's daughter Cleopatra to prince Alexander of Epirus, brother of Olympias.

The first day of the celebrations the guests saw a lavish entertained of every sort. But on the second day of the celebration, while entering the theater passing between his son Alexander and his new son-in-law Alexander, Philip was struck with a dagger and killed on the spot. The assassin Pausanias, a young Macedonian noble, attempted to escape but tripped and was killed on the spot by few close friends of Philip's son Alexander. The great Macedonian conqueror was dead, the men who liberated his country from foreign occupation and brought it from the edge of the abyss into a world power during his reign from 359 to 336 BC.

Philip's dream for conquering the Persian Empire now lays on his successor, his son king Alexander But both ancient and modern historians recognize that without the military and political efforts of Philip, Alexander would have never been as successful as he was. After all, it was Philip who created the powerful Macedonian army and turned Macedonia into a strong nation in arms.

The Monograph "Steve Pliakes"



WHO WAS ALEXANDER III OF MACEĐON (THE GREAT) (4)

Alexander III of Macedon (the Great) is the great one for his successors, the present day Macedonians, and the great one for every nation in the world. He created and left as heritage the philosophy of bringing together nations, cultures, religions...Hence, Alexander is a great challenge for numerous researchers, scientists, travel-writers, translators, journalists and ordinary mortal beings, who treat him with respect, love, and strong faith in the past, the presence, and the future. This is also the case with the author of this book, Slave' Katin who has translated the novel "Alexander the Great" by the German author Ulrich Wilken, from English into Macedonian by the publishing house "Misla" from Skopje in 1986.

To travel from Macedonia to Turkey and India and especially to Egypt and Israel was a great challenge. Therefore, the new book "*Alexander of Macedon*" by Slave' Katin and Georgi Branov, an edition by "Makedonska iskra" from Skopje, (2019), for all people it is a significant contribution towards the clearing up of the truth and enigmas related to Alexander of Macedon.

Otherwise, from ancient to modern times, for over two millenniums, Israel, like Macedonia, has been at the crossroads of many people, cultures, languages and religions. That is why we can say that the history of the Jews and that of the Macedonians is tightly connected. In the ancient world, during Israel's troubled times Macedonia, in the Balkan Peninsula, was growing powerful especially under Philip II's rule and later under his son Aleksandar who turned it into the greatest Empire the world had seen. Aleksandar III of Macedon (the Great) was and still is one of the greatest military leaders in the history of mankind who had envisioned a cosmopolitan world confirmed by his campaigns, particularly after he conquered the Hellenic City States and set off to conquer the East.

After crossing into Asia, Alexander declared war on the large Persian Empire whose territories stretched over Egypt, Assyria and Babylonia. After defeating and conquering Persia, Alexander expanded his own Empire from the River Indus in India to the Sahara Desert in Africa encompassing the Black, Aegean, Mediterranean, Caspian, Arabian and the Red Seas and later the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean. Within the structure of this great Macedonian Empire also existed the Jews of Judea.



It should be mentioned that after Macedonia's victory over the Athenian Coalition in Chaeronea in 338 B.C., Macedonian political and military hegemony was established over Elada. Although considered a foreigner (Barbarian), especially according to Demosthenes, the Macedonian king Philip II of Macedon contributed to the unification of the Greek City States. Unfortunately at the same time they lost their independence.

Following Philip II's premature death, Alexander, his twenty-year old son and legal successor to the Macedonian throne, became the next ruler. Alexander III, better known as Alexander the Great, was born in Pella, the Macedonian capital, in May or July 356 B.C., according to the Macedonian calendar. Even though he was only twenty years old when he inherited the Macedonian throne, he had already mastered the art of war and diplomacy. All this he learned from his father and Aristotle, his teacher who laid the foundation of modern philosophy and science. Aristotle was also a Macedonian from Chalcidice, son of Nicomachus, private physician and friend of Amyntas and Philip II.

Aristotle established a Royal School in Mieza, Macedonia in the Pella vicinity between Beroja and Edessa. The caves and landscape that existed in those days still exist to this day with their splendid stalactites and stalagmites, dense forests and rich sources of crystal, fresh water in ancient Aegae located under the slopes of Karakamen (Vermion) Mountain.

In addition to teaching Alexander, Aristotle also taught Alexander's peers including Ptolemy of Eordea, Craterus and Perdikkas of Orestis, Hephaestion, Harpan, the sons of governor Antipater, Parsa, Attalus and Andromeney of Timpaya, Pantal and Miley of Beroa, Nearchus, Erigey, Philotus, son of Parmenio, Leorat and others. These were sons of the Macedonian aristocracy who, as young commanders, in the future would play a role in organizing and running Alexander's vast Empire.

During their short but successful two-year education, Aristotle prepared his disciples for their work which would change the world. As the literature explained: *"for part of his strength and greatness Alexander should be thankful to his teacher, the greatest thinker who understood the human spirit. The two greatest victories of the time were those of Alexander in the military and political arena and those of his teacher, Aristotle in the field of philosophy. These are two sides of the same noble and dramatic plan, of two outstanding Macedonians who united the ancient chaotic world."*

The riots that were sparked in Elada immediately after young Alexander's inauguration, aimed at liberating themselves from Macedonian bondage, were quelled by the young king's lightning quick intervention. By doing so Alexander established order and was clear in his intentions towards Elada. At the Corinthian Assembly, in the autumn of 336 B.C., Alexander was elected chief commander of the Persian campaign, taking his father's place.



Soon after his crowning, Alexander's first task was to secure his country's northern and western frontiers. He did this by declaring war on the Triballians and Getites to his north and on the Illyrians to his west. In the spring of 335 B.C. Alexander gained control over the entire Balkans, expanding Macedonia's borders from the Rivers Danube to Drina and from the Adriatic to the Black Sea.

Believing rumours that Alexander had been killed during his campaigns, Thebes and the surrounding region, with financial and material help from the Persians, Demosthenes and Athens, organized an uprising. Reacting to the news, Alexander, at lightning speed, marched his army to Thebes and crushed the insurrection. To prevent further incidents and to protect the region from destabilizing, Alexander established Macedonian garrisons at various strategic positions in Thebes, Corinth and Eubea. Authority to guard Macedonia and Elada was then delegated to Antipater, a family friend and military commander, placing 12,000 infantrymen and 1,500 cavalymen at his disposal.

Through the battle of Chaeronea and by crushing two major uprisings in 336 and 335 B.C., Elada's independence and freedom were sealed. The Corinthian Alliance and the "General Mutual Peace" became political instruments serving Macedonia's interests. The well organized, highly disciplined, trained and remarkably equipped modern Macedonian army became a reality for deposing the Persian Empire. A new military doctrine, experienced and qualified young officers and new sources of wealth all contributed to meeting this objective.

The powerful Persian Empire stretched from the River Indus to the Aegean Sea, from the Caspian and Black Seas to Egypt and Ethiopia. It was the largest and most powerful empire in the world then, whose military forces numbered around one million soldiers. After Persia's unsuccessful expansion into the European continent following the battles against the Hellenes, and after the Persian defeat at Marathon (492), Salamina (480) and Platea (479), the Macedonians emerged as enemies of the Persians who would once and for all remove this danger which constantly threatened Europe.

There is much literature generated by Callisthenes about Alexander's personality with regards to his abilities as a conqueror, military leader, army organizer, politician, diplomat, etc., which to this day is being studied by historians, military theoreticians, philosophers, philologists and others. Here we are going to take a look at Alexander's attitude towards the Hellenes and their participation in Alexander's campaigns.

Before commencing his campaign, during the preparatory period, Alexander carried out religious rites and held Olympic Games, which lasted nine days, but not in the Hellenic stadiums in Delphi and Olympia, but in Dion and Pella. Being an old holy city for the Macedonians of Pieria and home of the muses in the foothills of Mount Olympus, Dion was the religious and cultural centre of



all Macedonians since Archelaus's (431-399 B.C.) time when he established his own Olympic Games there.

The initial task of the military plans of Alexander was to conquer Asia Minor, to expand to the east and create great Macedonian kingdom, which would provide maritime routes in Aegean, Marmara and Black Seas. This purpose was later changed by the idea of creating a world state, while the destiny of Macedonia remained in the background.

The forces of the enemy which was trying to prevent Alexander of conquering Asia Minor were more than ten times stronger, both in infantry and navy. In addition, Persians hired Hellenic (Greek) mercenaries of around 30,000 soldiers under the command of the Hellene (Greek) Memnon of Rhodes and the entire Mediterranean fleet of Persia which was a master of the sea routes.

As history has shown, Alexander's campaigns against Persia were successful as his Macedonians quickly defeated the great Persian army in only a few great battles. With the Persian territories acquired the Macedonians became the masters of Asia. The Jews, who at the time were under Persian rule, also came under Macedonian rule which affected their political and economic conditions as well as their way of life, tradition and culture.

As for the ancient Jews being conquered by the ancient Macedonians, today's Jews, during our visit to Israel, told us an interesting story that involves Alexander and his first encounters with the ancient Jews. According to Jewish history, when Alexander returned from Egypt where he was welcomed with great admiration and elevated to son of the god Amon, he decided he was going to rule Israel.

After the Macedonian victory at Issus, the Samaritans submitted to Macedonian rule without a fight and voluntarily accepted Alexander as their master. The Judean rulers on the other hand, particularly those who had sworn allegiance to the Persian rulers, refused to voluntarily submit to Macedonian rule. This angered Alexander a great deal and he decided he was going to punish these Jewish leaders and summoned them to assemble in front of his army in Jerusalem.

When they saw the trouble they were in the Judeans became distressed and rushed to assemble a large delegation of leaders and religious figures to calm Alexander III of Macedon (the Great) down. They assembled before the ancient walls of the immortal Jewish capital all dressed in magnificent priestly robes with lit torches in their hands. Led by Yaddua the holy man, they peacefully welcomed Alexander as he arrived before the city walls.

This is where, we were told, a historic moment, a kind of miracle, took place. Here Alexander instead of being angry at the Jews surprised everyone, particularly his own generals and entourage, when he got off his horse and kneeled



before Yadua. Alexander showed no anger and only respect for the old man, which prompted general Parmenio to enquire as to what was going on?

"You are the greatest king of this land," said Parmenio, "why do you kneel and humble yourself before this old Jew?"

Alexander at this point took the holy man's hand and said:

"When I was in Macedonia and had hopes of conquering Asia, I had a dream in which a man who looked like this holy man came to me and told me to take my campaigns to Asia without fear because through these campaigns I will achieve great victories that will bring me a brilliant glory. Now as I look at this Judean holy man I am reminded of that dream and that is why I want to be compassionate and generous towards the people who this holy man is leading..."

And with those words, according to legend, Alexander took the man by the arm and together they entered Jerusalem. The Jews welcomed Alexander not as a conquered and disgraced people but as a trusted friend whose only wish was to make a sacrifice to the Israeli god. The next day Alexander announced to the Jewish leaders that he would allow the peace loving Jews to live free and freely practice their religion, customs and culture in accordance with their own laws and understanding.

While in Jerusalem, Alexander asked the Jewish priests to erect a statue of Alexander in the Jerusalem temple. But the white haired Yadua explained to him that Jewish religious law forbade such an act. He however reassured Alexander that there were other ways of immortalizing him and suggested that every male baby that was to be born within the year in Judea would carry the name Alexander, and every female will be called Alexandra, in memory of Alexander's celebrated victory.

Satisfied with the gesture, Alexander rewarded all the Jews, including those living in Persia and Babylonia, with essential privileges and elevated their rights to the rights he gave the Hellenes. With this act Alexander laid down the foundation of the brilliant Judeo-Hellenic civilization, whose centre for centuries was Alexandria; the city named after Alexander III of Macedon.

The Monograph "Steve Pliakes"

THE FIRST MONUMENT OF ALEXANDER III OF MACEDON (THE GREAT) IN PRILEP, MACEDONIA (5)

Businessman George Atanasoski has always been enchanted by what he heard, read and experienced about Ancient Macedonia; especially about Philip II and Alexander of Macedon. And even his native Marul and Prilep, located in Pelagonia, which was an important part of Ancient Macedonia, has inspired his love for the ancient roots of Macedonia. Thus, on one occasion, he has said:

"I have always followed and I'm going to follow the idea of the most distinctive and unique Macedonian of all times - Alexander of Macedon, who didn't occupy but united nations. As a result, that star-lode- star guided me towards the spiritual serenity of resurrection and the century-old existence of Macedonianess. The name Macedonia has echoed throughout the world with dignity. The latest evidence is the recognition of Macedonia under its constitutional name by the United States of America. Slowly but surely my dream and vision for the future of my homeland is being realized. I know that the road is difficult, but I believe that truth will conquer injustice - that the dream of the Macedonians will come true - to see the day when Aegean, Pirin, Vardar, Golo Brdo, Gora and Mala Prespa will be united in their Macedonia, in Alexander's Macedonia. That is the reason why I am going to cooperate with all goodhearted and honest people who love their homeland, their Macedonia, and fight for the Macedonian cause. We pledge to all Macedonians in the country and beyond that in the days of the following years we shall unswervingly walk on the road we have already paved - whatever it takes for the benefit of Macedonia and the Macedonian people. Let Macedonia be eternal and forever!"

The businessman George Atanasoski confirmed his strong love and respect for ancient Macedonia and the ancient roots on June 30 in Prilep, in 2006, when he marked the official setting up of the monument dedicated to Alexander III of Macedon. He funded the modeling of the bust, created by Zharko Basheski, with the aim of paying due respect to the greatest Macedonian who spread the glory of his country all over the world. Until then, the Republic of Macedonia was one of the few countries where there wasn't any symbol of Alexander. Therefore, this monumental work has just become a hallmark for the Macedonian people who once were led by the great Alexander for the purpose of uniting nations. Thanks to George Atanasoski, the Republic



of Macedonia has got the symbol of its national identity to remind us of the unforgettable Macedonian cause.

In this way Prilep, a city of heroes, the city under Marko's Towers, in 2006 has become the only city in the Republic of Macedonia whose square boasts of the grandiose monument to the Macedonian conqueror and military commander, Alexander of Macedon. Like the great leader Alexander who once united nations, so now George Atanasoski has achieved his unifying mission by putting up this monument. Therefore, on the occasion of unveiling the monument, it was rightly said that Macedonians of the Balkans and Macedonians all over the world have got something to be proud of and something to celebrate the achievements of their great army commander, Alexander of Macedon, because they are his direct descendants.

At the ceremony of unveiling the monument to Alexander III of Macedon, the businessman George Atanasoski, among other things, said: *"As a citizen of Prilep I would like to welcome all citizens of Prilep, all Macedonians from the U.S., all Macedonians from Australia, from Mala Prespa, Albania, Pirin and from Odrin, Aegean Macedonia. Alexander was not only a king of the Macedonians, but he was a king of the vision of the world. That is the reason why I've engaged myself to build this monument to Alexander of Macedon and to donate it to my city of Prilep, but not only to the citizens of Prilep, but also to all Macedonians in Macedonia and abroad, all over the world. Let the road for a more beautiful Macedonia start from here."*

The honor to unveil the monument was given to the Macedonian benefactor—the businessman George Atanasoski and Mr. Marjan Risteski, Mayor of Prilep. Mr. Nikola Gruevski, Prime Minister of the Government of Macedonia, was also present at the official ceremony together with his associates, as well as many other prominent figures of the socio-political, scientific and cultural life of Macedonia. At this great event for Prilep and Macedonia, Mayor of Prilep, Mr. Risteski presented plaques to benefactor George Atanasoski and sculptor Zharko Basheski, as well as to the world famous opera singer, baritone Boris Trajanov, and ethno music group "Synthesis" for their participation in the cultural program. On the occasion of unveiling the monument, Mayor Marjan Risteski, among other things, underlined:

"From this moment onwards the city under Marko's Towers is also the city of Alexander of Macedon. In recent years many articles have been written, many movies have been shot, many discourses have been given about this historical figure, great man and military commander, but only benefactor George Atanasoski and the city of Prilep have done something that will be memorable—a grandiose monument to Alexander of Macedon.

The ancient Latins said that the name is a sign, I don't know why and I don't know when, but it was really said that the name is actually a sign for identification; it is a root and a trunk of one people. The name "Alexander of Macedon" is our



identification. This monument is of especially great significance in context of culture, tradition and tourism. The most outstanding figure of our history has finally earned his place in one of the most beautiful squares in Macedonia. The monument is higher than six metres, and the spear, which is 5.30 metres long, is made of bronze. The shield has a diameter of about one metre, and its relief is decorated with scenes from the Iliad.

I am highly delighted that this monument is a donation from our fellow citizen, George Atanasoski, the man who has demonstrated how we should love our native city, how we should invest in it, how we should recover the local economy, and what it means to be a patron of culture. It would have been difficult to realize this project without his generous support.

The future Macedonian cultural ambassadors - artists will emerge from this scene and our city is going to be proud of them. Because he was fascinated by the idea and the realization of this project, baritone Mr. Boris Trajanov, the world renowned opera singer, has accepted my invitation with great pleasure. And here, among us, are our old acquaintances of the musical group 'Synthesis'. Special appreciation to them all and to the man who has magic hands and who has cast and molded the monument, Mr. Zharko Basheski, as well as to all companies and workers who were actively involved in this project.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, if the city of Alexandria, which was founded by this man, had a huge library in the past which was burnt down later, then Prilep now, at this very place, is going to have an outdoor library where every visitor can get acquainted with the history of our city and the Prilep authors. We are going to honor this promise given on the great national holiday Ilinden and we are going to have the most beautiful park and square in Macedonia.

I would like to extend my regards to you, reiterating one great idea of this giant, standing here before you, said long ago, 'I didn't conquer the world, I have united the world,' underlined in his speech Mr. Marjan Risteski, Mayor of Prilep.

The monograph "George Atanasoski"

IN FRONT OF THE SARGOPHAGUS OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT IN ISTANBUL (6)

For many people in the world it is a great challenge to visit the fatherland of Kemal Ataturk, the land of the great contrasts recently taking place, the Republic that is different from Turkey of the past; the region that was conquered by Alexander of Macedon, and later the empire of which Macedonia was a part for entire five centuries.

Kemal Ataturk, the great reformer and greatest son of the Turkish state, was born in Macedonia, in Salonika, and he developed, was educated and became a strong soldier in Bitola. However, he originates from a Macedonian family from the village of Kodzadzik, near Debar. According to Turkish sources his father was from Macedonia, a Macedonian Muslim, while his mother was Turkish coming from Anadolia. He is the person who devoted his life to Turkey and its better future, the man who, amongst other things, unveiled the Turkish woman, separated religion from the state, and introduced the Latin alphabet into Turkish language. He is the man who is widely accepted by both the high classes and the masses. For this reason the journey to Istanbul, which was sponsored by the guest from Canada and lover of the Macedonian roots, Steve Pliakes was a challenge, and was accepted with great pleasure.

Usually trips take place on land or water, our trip was on air, by plane. Thus, when we started from Macedonia early in the morning during the summer when we reached the airport "*Alexander the Great*". There were a great number of passengers who rushed to the counters to hand luggage and heading towards the entrance to all destinations. And we made the necessary controls and headed towards the exit of the plane that was to fly the route Skopje-Istanbul. There are cozy feel to travel and the international space at the airport person feels as if a major world airport. This indicates that the Turkish company "TAF" make airport, and therefore Skopje and Macedonia to be known and recognized worldwide.

Takeoff from Skopje was comfortable and for about an hour we arrived in Istanbul. There, in the airport building, which resembles a closed city, stayed briefly, then went by taxi to the hotel where we were welcomed and accommodated. There, in Istanbul began our Tour with guest Steve Pliakes plan a longer period.



Istanbul is one of the oldest cities in the world. Divine glory has been with it from the moment when the Roman emperor Constantine decided to move the capital from Rome to Byzantium, as Istanbul was then called. Today it is a city with numerous heritage of the eternal cultural and historical past, with monuments from the Byzantine and Ottoman period. At the same time it is the biggest economic and cultural center of the culture of present-day Republic of Turkey.

In fact, Istanbul is a crossroads of Asian and European culture, civilization and religion, and it represents a corridor from the north to the south and from the east to the west. Turkish researchers claim that even its constant residents are not fully familiar with all of its beauties. Not even the exact number of its population is known. According to official documents, approximately 10 million people live in Istanbul. Experts on the Turkish situation, on the other hand, claim that this number is more than 12 million or more. In addition to this, the city is visited by thousands of travelers and tourists every day.

Another point of interest is the fact that this city collects 40 % of the funds collected as taxes throughout the whole country. This speaks enough of the power of Istanbul, the city on Bosphorous in present-day Turkey.

We came to the city of Istanbul which stretches along three coasts and over seven hills. It is the ancient Byzantinion, Roman Constantinopolis, and Turkish Istanbul. The Macedonians always called it Tsarigrad, or Stanbol. The change in names is a consequence of previous dramatic events related to this city, which many nations tried to grab. Thus, the Emperor Constantine declared it the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire in 330 AD and hence it got the name Constantinopolis, after the ruler. Nowever on May 29, 1453 it was conquered by the Turkish Sultan Mehmed II Faith (Conqueror) after which the city was named Istanbul.

The city spreads along the coasts of the Bosphorous, golden Horn, Sea of Marmara; Beyogly, between the Golden Horn and the western coast of the Bosphorous; Iskadar or Skutari on the eastern coast of the Bosphorous, where we were staying and from where the European part of Istanbul could be seen.

Stanbul is not only the oldest part of the city, but it is also the richest with cultural and historical monuments. Hence, it is the most important tourist quarter of Istanbul, and a great challenge for the numerous visitors to this metropolis. Some of its historical artistic monuments have been damaged or destroyed by time; some suffered natural catastrophes, mostly earthquakes, or we were informed that they disappeared in the frequent fires.

In Istanbul there are more than 50 king's palaces, more than 1,500 mosques, approximately 100 churches, numerous cultural and historical monuments, 10 universities, nu8mberless shops... The most famous among the cultural and historical monuments is, by all means, the Topkapi Palace with its magnificent



king's chambers and harems. At the museum of "Topkapi" we also saw the special plates which change their color at the contact with poison. They were intended for kings only. We were also astounded by the diamond known as "Kashichki elmaz" and by the dagger decorated with diamonds and other objects of priceless value.

Steve and myself it seems that one of the greatest challenges was the visit to the sarcophagus of Alexander of Macedon. This huge, and in many ways characteristic historical exhibit, has been the biggest attraction for visitors who come to the Archeological Museum of Istanbul ever since it was first discovered in 1887. Even though the sarcophagus is named after Alexander of Macedon, it does not belong to him, but most probably to King Abdolonumis, who was the last King of Sidon (Saida) in present-day Lebanon, a city which at that time was a part of the Ottoman Empire.

The sarcophagus is named after Alexander as a result of the hundreds of engraved figures which symbolize the conquests of Alexander. At the same time, because of the large decoration on the relief devoted to the great warrior, the sarcophagus was named not after the ruler, but after Alexander of Macedon.

According to the written documents the twenty two sarcophagi discovered in 1887 at Sidon represent the biggest discovery in classical archaeology. Among them, by all means, the sarcophagus of Alexander of Macedon deserves special attention, found by a villager from Sidon who was working on the field and discovered this important monument.

During our visit, the sarcophagus of the greatest general in the history of mankind – Alexander of Macedon – we found in one of the biggest museums in the world, the Archeological Museum of Istanbul. This significant, and in many ways characteristic work, was discovered by a peasant from Sidon, who discovered this important work while working in his field.

The realization of the sarcophagus of Alexander of Macedon was conducted by the Bey Osman Hambdi, who was director of the Osmanli Museum at that time. We remained in front of the sarcophagus of Alexander of Macedon for quite a long time. We watched, analyzed, wondered, admired and remembered the great accomplishments of Alexander of Macedon, who together with this army from Macedonia and from other places reached as far as the Indus River.

Filled with admiration and strong feelings towards the past of the Macedonian people, we left the museum with the sarcophagus of Alexander of Macedon and set out towards "St. Sophia" (Hagia Sophia).

This monument dominates over Istanbul as if built to be seen and felt from all parts of the city. It is difficult for the visitor, on the basis of its present appearance, to discover the varying fate of this building. Thus, written documents



claim that for 150 years St. Sophia was appreciated as a wonder of the world impressing everyone because it is a monument of the tremendous culture of mankind, as has never again been built.

The changing fate of St. Sophia, from the Christian church of all churches, to the Islamic mosque, and finally to today's museum, has left traces everywhere: in this form, the numerous additions, renovations, and changes. Only the magnificent cupola, whose dome stretches 56 meters above the nave of the church, has not lost any of its priceless value and beauty. It served as model to many eastern mosques. King Constantine the Great first built a church in the place of today's St. Sophia, when he proclaimed Byzantium, under the name of Constantinopolis, as capital of the eastern Roman Empire, and called this church "*Great Church*".

Two hundred years later this church, and a large part of Constantinopolis, was burnt in a fire during the rebellion against King Justinian. However, Justinian built another church, even bigger and more beautiful than the first. Antemie of Tral and Isidor of Milet, the most famous constructors of the Eastern Roman Empire made sketches for St. Sophia. But, the King constantly monitored the development of this project. It was whispered among the people that an angel had shown him the building plans in his dream. Construction work cost 360 centenarius (18 tons) of gold.

For six years tens of thousands of craftsmen collected all the valuables of the Eastern Empire, the shiniest marble, the most beautiful columns, and golden mosaics were made to decorate the walls. When it was completed St. Sophia became the major temple of Christianity. It remained so until the Turks conquered Constantinopolis in 1453, bearing the name of Istanbul since then. The church was turned into a mosque, and Kemal Atatürk declared St. Sophia a museum.

Otherwise Justinian I was born in the village of Taor, near Skopje, in Macedonia and was a Byzantine emperor, the emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire, Christian and Orthodox theologian. Endeavored to restore the power and size of the Roman Empire was weakened by incursions of barbarian tribes. Famous for the expansion of the empire, primarily with military campaigns and after his marriage to the controversial Empress Theodora. History remembers him as the most coders of classical Roman law. Justinian was one of the most important figures in late antiquity, and it ends the period of prosperity in the Byzantine Empire until the IX century. In addition to the legendary St. Sophia we also visited the Horse Square which is part of the Byzantine hippodrome with three magnificent monuments: the Theodosius obelisk, the Snake column, and Constantine's column. We visited these monuments in the afternoon hours, when the number of visitors is small, unlike the morning hours. Therefore, we had sufficient time to admire their size, construction and



transportation, especially the Theodoesius obelisk which arouses great interest in every visitor.

"*Sultan Ahmet*", or Blue Mosque, is situated not far from these monuments. We visited it in the afternoon hours, when the number of believers was insignificant. Here we found out that this mosque was built in the period 1609-1616 and represents a masterpiece of Turkish construction. Its interior is of blue and green marble; it has 260 windows, mostly of crystal glass; inside it has a king's box to which the sultan could come riding a horse. It is one of the most beautiful mosques in the world, which for a long time had the aim of symbolizing the power and strength of the Turkish sultans.

We visited the *St. Stefan* church, known as "*Iron Church*". We were informed that according to the ancestor's words about this church, which is under the jurisdiction of the Bulgarian patriarch, but built mainly with the money and donations of the Macedonians in Istanbul. Its construction began in 1849, when a migrant named Stefan bought a piece of land for the construction of a church where magnificent architectural edifice stands proudly today.

This church was first constructed of wood, but was set on fire several times. For this reason, the believers who were mainly Macedonians from Aegean Macedonia, ordered an iron church from Vienna in 1891. This was later transported by ship and constructed in the same place of the previous church. The church was consecrated in 1898 by an exarchate bishop and even today priests from the Bulgarian Orthodox Church exclusively come to satisfy the religious needs of the Macedonians.

We visited the "*Iron Church*" of *St. Stefan* in the afternoon, and later bowed at the *St. George* church, situated within the complex of the Universal (Vselenska) Patriarch. Here we were also informed that approximately 1,500 Orthodox Christians, amongst whom mostly Macedonians and Greeks, visit this picturesque church with numerous significant icons and ornaments.

That is the Istanbul Bosphorus which I visited with Steve Pliakes where we spent memorable moments and currently holds our memories remained in everything that we saw for us Macedonians, especially ancient Macedonia, which, for the Turks have a special respect. All these historical facts and the existence of Macedonia and the Macedonian people have support and a special place in the history of modern Turkey.

The Monograph "Steve Pliakes"

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF ALEXANDER'S KOINE LANGUAGE (7)

The historic period of what today we call the “Greek language” began with the migration of the first Hellenes into Pelazgia, south of Thessaly, estimated to have taken place around 1,600 B.C. Other sources however claim that it was between 1450 and 1400 B.C. after the catastrophic Teri Island earthquake.

Greek linguist Mpampionitis (1986, 73) has provided us with the following table listing the Greek language periods of development:

Prehistoric Hellenic period:	
Indo-European hellenic	3000 B.C.
1. Proto-Hellenic	3000 – 2000 B.C.
Historic	
2. Ancient hellenic	1400 – 300 B.C.
Period:	
3. Alexander's “Koine”	300 B.C. – 600 A.D.
4. Middle Age	
a) Early Byzantine	6th century – 12th century
b) Byzantine	12th century – 15th century
c) Post-Byzantine	15th century – 18th century
5. Modern Greek	19th century – to present

Sources for studying the Greek language include written documents, onomastics and recorded oral speech. The most important from the written documents are the epigraphs, particularly the Dipilski epigraph which is partially preserved on an amphora dating back to 720 B.C. This was considered to be one of the oldest epigraphs to exist. With the decipherment of Linear B however, by Ventris and Chadwick (1953), the time was shifted back to 1450-1420 B.C., but without further evidence of existence of more material there is a huge gap between the two occurrences.



The Achaeans were the first Elines to exist in the Balkans. The name "Achaeans" (**Achaioi**) is of unknown origin but is believed to mean "without joy", "distressed", "sad". There is no evidence to show what language the Achaeans spoke or what alphabet, if any, they used but because they were members of the Kurgan culture they spoke an Indo-European language.

The indigenous Pelazgians and Aeolians left no record of the Achaeans in their new fatherland, in the Thessalean Ftia. The Hittites in Asia Minor, however, did keep records of the Achaeans dating back to the 13th century B.C. and have left us the name Ahhieava. The Egyptians too have provided us with some evidence of their existence.

Based on historical and glossological reconstruction, the development of the Achaean language can be divided into three stages: 1. the pure Achaean, proto-Hellenic or katari stage, 2. the Achaeandialectal stage which belongs to the prehistoric period, 3. the Achaean-Doric stage which belongs to the historic period.

The Achaean or katari stage is a protodialectal stage that covers the period of separation of the Achaeans from other Indo-European peoples in Kurgan Euro-Asia which probably took place around 3000 B.C. As sheep breeders and farmers the Achaeans first migrated to the plains of Pannonia around 2000 B.C. Then they migrated to Thessaly around 1450 B.C. During the migration period the Achaeans formed their first autochthonous language without dialects, classified as proto-Hellenic and proto-Achaean respectively by Greek linguists.

While living in Pannonia the Achaeans met and mingled with much more civilized people, mainly with those of the Lepenski Vir culture and were exposed to their language and graphemes, to the Vinča script as well as to their cosmogony, theogony and Hyperborean mythology. When they arrived in Thessaly, they, along with the Macedonians and Aeolians from the Middle Danube Basin (Minieci, Lapiti, Tiroits and Flegreycite), accepted the Hyperborean Pantheon and placed it high up on Mount Olympus.

The dialectal or proto-Hellenic period contained substrates of the older Balkan languages belonging to the indigenous people, mainly to the Hyperborean Macedonians of the Danube Basin and later to the Pelazgians and Ionians. The Achaeans were never called Hellenes, not even by Homer in the 8th century B.C. Led by Pelop, they left from Ftya, Asia Minor during the 12th century B.C. and settled in the northwestern part of the Peloponnesus and later extended their settlements into Athens.

When Herodotus (I, 56-58), (484-424 B.C.) turned his attention to the genesis and pronunciation of the Athenian language, he underlined that the Athenians originated from the Pelazgians. He was unable to name the Pelazgian language but was of the opinion that it was a non-Hellenic barbarian language..



According to Herodotus, the Pelazgian Athenians in time abandoned parts of their own language in favour of the new Hellenic language. Herodotus also added that besides assimilating most of the Pelazgians, the Hellenes also assimilated other barbarian people because they needed the numbers to strengthen their own population.

We have already stated that there are many glossological substrates in the Greek language that belong to the Balkan Paleoglossology and to the Aeolian, Pelazgian and Ionian dialects found in Elada. These glossological substrates can be found in toponyms, oronyms, hydronyms, theonyms, fitonyms, anthroponyms and horonyms in the Aegean islands.

If the Achaeans as a state and culture reached their pinnacle in Mycenae in the Peloponnesus during the middle of the 12th century B.C., then the answer to the proto-Hellenic language question should be found here. Unfortunately only a few Mycenaean clay tablets with writing have been found and even less in Tiringa and Thebes, not enough to support our case, while many more have been unearthed in Pila and Crete.

The writing on these clay tablets is in Linear A and B and refers to the administrative positions of the staff in the king's court and to the functioning of some of the economic branches. Most often the writing is toponyms, anthroponyms, lists of goods, inventory of agricultural produce, numbers, etc. The names and words are written with syllabic symbols.

There are around 200 tablets found with people's names written on them. Most frequently deciphered words however, around 60%, are those of people's names written on Mycenaean tablets in Linear B. These are words like Eumenes (graceful, handsome), Opilmnios, Philowergos, Amphimedes, Europolemos, etc.

From these words we can determine that the Mycenaean spoke a dialect of the Achaean language, which contained old substrates of the Macedonian, Aeolian, Pelazgian and Ionian languages. With the migration of the Dorians at the end of the 12th century B.C., and the exodus of the Achaeans, more glossological substrates were added to the existing dialectal language in the region. These additions shaped the Hellenic language in what later came to be known as the classical or ancient (arhea) Hellenic language.

From what we have shown above, we can see that a number of dialects influenced the formation of the Greek language, including those of the Macedonians, Aeolians, Pelazgians, Ionians, Achaeans and Dorians. Influence of this ancient dialectology was the most significant chapter in the history of development of the Greek language.

According to Kretschmer (1924) the ancient Greek language consisted of three dialects, Ionian, Achaean and Dorian (Macedonian, Aeolian), while he omitted mentioning the Pelazgian dialect.



According to Kretschmer, the ancient Ionian dialect belonged to the autochthonous inhabitants of Attica, Euboea and northern Peloponnesus. With the arrival of the Dorians, around 1100 B.C., the Ionians and Arcadian Pelazgians migrated to Ionia in Asia Minor. Homer created his works in the Ionian language with Aeolian archaisms and ancient neoterisms. Hesiod also created his works in the Ionian language, with Aeolian and Doric elements added. The works of Tartey, Solon, Anakreon and others were written in pure Ionian.

The Achaean dialect with Aeolian and Ionian elements was used by the poets Sappho and Alkaios. This dialect prevailed in Boeotia, South Thessaly, continental Elada (excluding Attica), Peloponnesus, Crete, Cyprus and South Italy.

The **Doric dialect** was used by Pindar, Stesichoros, Bakchilides, etc. The Doric language, brought in by the third wave of migrants in Pelazgia, covered the region of Western Elada (Epirus, Etoloakarnania, Fokida and Lokrida), Western Thessaly, Peloponnesus (Arcadia excluded), Crete, Rhodes, Halicarnassus and other places.

This linguistic "Babylonian" calamity in the Greek City States, starting from Homer's period to the period of Demosthenes, was radically solved by Alexander the Great in the 4th century B.C., following the Macedonian conquest of Elada, thus marking the beginning of the third stage or the **period of Alexander's Koine**.

Despite its existence and wide use, controversy still surrounds the ancient Macedonian language. According to some it is a colloquial oral language derived from the "Dorian Koine" (Roberts, 1976, 114), while others call it "Macedonian Koine" (Ranovič, 1983, 78) or "proto-Macedonian".

In his work about Alexander, Plutarch (46-125 B.C.) also provides evidence that during ancient times the Macedonians spoke a different language incomprehensible to the Hellenes. For example, when Alexander was having a dispute with Kleitos he "called for his guards in his native Macedonian language", a language not understood by the Hellenes. The German historian Beloch (1886) also asserted that "the Macedonians spoke a different language in king Archelaos's (413-399 B.C.) presence, which the (Dorians) Hellenes didn't understand".

While the Dorian dialect in Elada served as an amalgam for the synthesis of the classical Greek language, the language in Macedonia was developing independently of the paleoglossology of the Balkans, as attested to by the Lepenski Vir culture and by the myths about the various Macedonian kings including Orpheus, etc.

A good source from which to study Alexander's Koine are the papyri of Alexandria in Egypt. Here one will find works written in Koine on a variety of subjects including letters, reports, plays, epigrams, Macedonian toponyms, etc., which cover a period from the 4th century B.C. to the 7th century A.D.



(Mpampiniotis, 1986, 113). Modern linguists have ample samples to work with and conduct comprehensive investigations of the language. Kostopoulos (1992, 15), for example, has discovered that about 6,000 epigrams have been found in Macedonia written in the Koine language. Koine was also used by Aristotle, Tukidid, Eshil, Evripid, Sophocles and many others.

There are texts of the Holy Scripture which also exist in Alexander's Koine language, translated from the Old Testament during the 3rd century B.C. The New Testament also has been written in Koine. Historians like Polibius (2nd century B.C.), Diodorus Seculus (1st century B.C.) and others as well as the philosopher Epikrit (1st/2nd century B.C.) have also written in the Koine language (Lampsas, 1980, 636).

As with all other languages, this language, with Indo-European origins from the paleoglossology of the Balkans, also had its own unique vocabulary, phonological system, syntax system of verbs and nouns, etc.

Without going into details, here are some morphological examples that belong to the Doric dialect: hipos > alogo (horse), hygor > nero (water), onos > gaiduri (donkey), oikos > spiti (house), odos > dromos (road), ihthis > psari (fish), oinos > krasi (wine), ofthalmos > mati (eye), ois > provaton (sheep), yshoiros > gourouni (pig), kyon > skylos (dog), mys > pondiki (mouse), oon > avgo (egg), ris > miti (nose), naus > plion (ship), etc.

It was possible to impose Alexander's Koine over the various dialects of the Greek language for many reasons. We will only mention a few here. In the so-called Hellenic dialects there were elements inherited from the Aeolian, Pelazgian, Karsian, Lelegian and Dorian languages in the form of dialecticons. Because of the dominant Dorians living in Elada, led by the militant Doric Spartans, the Doric language or dialect became the spoken language in the Peloponnesus.

The ancient Ionian dialect (Eolsian-Pelazgian-Ionian-Achaeon) was the written language monopolized by the oligarchs and philosophers, while ordinary people spoke in different dialects. Before the Persian Wars, the Ionian (Aeolian) dialect was used in Ionia in Asia Minor, later it filtered into Attica and as a multiethnic language it antagonized the Doric Spartans sparking the 30-year war.

The critical and major turning points for this language were reached when all conditions, political, military, economic and social, came to favour Macedonia. After the Persian Wars in 480 B.C. the Koine or common language began to replace the Ionian-Attic dialect, imposing itself not only as a Macedonian, but also as a Pan-Hellenic language (Dimitrakou, 1970, I).

As a result, a more modern language began to surface in the Aegean world and in the Balkans in general. This language entirely formulated from the paleoglossology of the Balkans has its roots in the Middle Danube Basin and in



Macedonia. It was popularized by the likes of Orpheus, Aristotle and others, creating a basis for a future world civilization.

Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.), one of the greatest military leaders the world has even known and one of Aristotle's disciples, spread this language not only in Elada but also throughout his entire Empire. Under these conditions the Koine language enriched itself with linguistic elements from the various languages in Asia and Africa, particularly by the Persians and Egyptians, gaining international status as the language of diplomacy (Dimitrakou, 1970).

In the same way that Alexander the Great created a world empire by his sword, so did his teacher Aristotle of Stagira create the creative spirit of the human race (Papastavrou, 1970, 416). However Aristotle was only an apex in this cultural pyramid. The founding father was another Macedonian, Orpheus, son of Oeagrus, greatnephew of Makedon (1315 B.C.) founder of the second Macedonian mythological dynasty.

Orpheus was not only a king in Macedonia and Thrace; he was also the most famous and unsurpassed mythological poet and musician from whom 87 hymns still remain preserved to this day. Orpheus was a dynamic personality, an adventurer and a traveler. His adventures took him on the Argonaut (1225 B.C.) expedition where he kept the spirits of the sailors high with his lyrics and songs on their long voyages along the Danube River and across the Black Sea. Legend has it that he received his first music lessons from Apollo the Hyperborean.

Orpheus was not only the creator of his famous mysteries, concepts about life, death and the human soul, well known in Macedonia and in Elada, but he was also credited for having created the alphabet (Apollonius Rh. I, 34). After Orpheus died his followers, calling themselves Orphists, formed a religious sect worshipping him and his beliefs in the original sin and in the divine nature of the human soul.

It is noteworthy to mention here that important annual musical competitions were held in Pieria, Macedonia, a place of high culture. Apollo, god of prophecy, and Pan, god of nature, participated in such competitions, as mentioned earlier, when king Midas was president of the jury. Midas was not only king of Bromia, a region in Macedonia, but also credited for having discovered lead and for having invented the anchor and the syringe.

Culture in Macedonia became even more prominent during the time of Perdiccas and Archelaus around 700 B.C., when Archelaus established Pella as the new capital of Macedonia. Pella soon became the administrative, military, economic and cultural centre of power in the region. Here Macedonian rulers hosted great events with such artists as poets, tragedy writers and performers, musicians and painters not just from Macedonia but also from Ionia, Elada and Sicily.

Among them the most famous tragedy artist was Euripides (485-406 B.C.) who stayed in Pella until his death. Euripides was a disciple of Anaxagoras and



a friend of Socrates, who through his artistic talent not only influenced the old and new European play but may have introduced the Phoenician-Ionian alphabet to the Macedonians. According to some sources he wrote 92 plays and 7 satires (Medea, Orestes, Iphigenia in Taurus, Heracles, Electra, Andromache, The Trojan Women, Helen, Cyclops, etc.).

During Philip II's (359-336 B.C.) reign, Pella, in terms of culture, became the second Athens. The Macedonian language continued to develop and entrenched itself in philosophy, history, mathematics, etc. Outside of Aristotle there were other famous academics including philosopher Aristobulus, historians Dinocrates and Kalistenes, mathematician Leodam, physician Nicomachus, Aristotle's father, icon painter Polignos, Pythagoras of Abdera, father of Sophists and others.

Archaeological discoveries by Andronicus in 1985 at the Vergina (Kutleš) locality alleged to be the tomb of Philip II, and those found in Pella are a testament to the highly developed culture that flourished in Macedonia during ancient times; an autochthonous culture that began from time immemorial. During Alexander III's (336-323) reign, Macedonia possessed a solid economy, a powerful army, skilled and capable personnel and a modern language, all preconditions for expansion and conquest.

After founding Alexandria in Egypt, in 331 B.C., the Macedonians established the largest library in the world, which in time possessed more than 7,000,000 monographs. The Macedonians established the greatest scientific and research centre that remained great not only during the Macedonian period but also during the Roman and later periods.

Through this accumulation of knowledge, Alexander's Koine became the language of the Macedonians, Greeks and other peoples in the Macedonian Empires, including the language of Jesus Christ and his apostles. Dionysius Thrax gave the first linguistic description of this language in 100 B.C. in the form of a publication entitled "The Art of Grammar". His work was the first European grammar and one of the most decisive steps in the development of grammar in general.

From a glossological aspect, compared to other influential languages such as Persian, Egyptian, Latin, Hebrew, Chinese and Indian, Alexander's Koine became the first modern and most influential language in the world. Its introduction made radical changes on all levels including phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicology and semasiology, evolving into a dialectal language with a huge substrate and eventually into modern Greek (Mpampiniois, 1986).

According to Hatzidakis (1967), creator of the modern Greek glossology, the modern Greek language today is a progression of the Byzantine language which originated from Alexander's Koine. This language, to a greater extent, is a simplified form containing ancient, Ionian, Dorian and Achaean elements.

"Macedonia in Ancient Times"



MEMORIAL PLAQUE IN ROME DEDICATED TO PERSEUS, KING OF MACEDONIA (8)

Businessman George Atanasoski has always been lover of Ancient Macedonia, especially about Philip II and Alexander of Macedon. Also he has been interested about the Macedonian king Perseus. It is thought that the monument which was put up to King Perseus was on the western city necropolis, 2.8 km west of Rome, beside the Via Valeria. Regretfully, it hasn't been excavated yet. That is what prompted businessman George Atanasoski to pay special tribute to King Perseus on behalf of the Macedonian people, on June 13 in 2008, while accompanied by a delegation of his party, the *Macedonian Alliance*.

In fact, on that day businessman Atanasoski put up a massive bronze memorial plaque decorated with the eternal sixteenray Macedonian sun. In that way it was confirmed that the tradition and respect for the great figures of one's past is something most sacred that always takes people to a happier future.

The delegation of the political party *Macedonian Alliance* consisted of six members. In addition to Mr. George Atanasoski, the following members also attended this official ceremony: his son Nicholas George Atanasoski; Slavko Mangovski, director of the television station "Sun"; archaeologist Victor Lilčić, Ph.D., from the Institute of Archaeology at the University "Ss. Cyril and Methodij" of Skopje; Kiril Dobrushevski, president of the Macedonian-Italian Association of Bitola; and Mirko Brdarovski, president of the company "Perseida" from Crnobuki (the city Perseida).

The delegation arrived in Alba through Rome on Friday June 13, 2008. The first meeting was held at the Alba Tourism and Cultural Service at Via Castello Orsini. The delegation was welcomed by Professor Dr. Vilma Pierfederichi and archaeologist Daniela Liberatore, as well as by representatives of local government from the town of Massa d'Albe. At noon the delegation arrived before the remains of the statue of Perseus on the Via Valeria.

According to George Atanasoski the monument was on publiclyowned land surrounded by private properties, just 30 metres north of the asphalt road. It is assumed that the roadbed of the Via Valeria ran right through this belt of



30 metres, very close to the monument. The geographic setting resembled the Macedonian landscape. The low, wavy hills extending to the southwest and south to the plain of Lake Fukinsk, which has dried out, and extending to the southeast. The fogged mountain peak of Velino was rising, almost abruptly, high in the clouds up to 2,487 m to the north, along with the surrounding peaks of Kafornia (2409 m) and Seviche (2331 m), just beyond the several kilometres plateau which was similar to that of Pelagonia. The surrounding scenery was typically Mediterranean, and it could be said that it was similar to those in the Balkans.

According to archaeologists, the object itself the monument - was modeled in solid mortar technique, with medium-sized limestone rocks. According to an old photograph the monument was in the form of a dominant tower, which regretfully was destroyed in the strong earthquake that occurred in 1915. Today some of the remains from the bottom are preserved that resemble a figure of an elephant to some extent, which was simply by chance. Part of a roof tiletegula of Corinthian type, dated back to a far later period, was seen in the ruins next to the monument. Rare fragments of pottery vessels, which probably originated from the necropolis, were noticed in the fields.

In addition, according to Atanasoski, the assumption was that the remains of this monument belonged to King Perseus and that they were a foundation of his monument. But, their attention was attracted to two contours of somehow smaller tombstones, near the west Maxima Gate. These monuments have not yet been excavated archaeologically, so a need emerges that studious archaeological excavations are to be carried out to accurately locate the monument and tomb of the Macedonian king Perseus.

"Today, after nearly 22 centuries, we remind ourselves about this man and his achievements with pride and piety. He was only 13 years old when, as a Macedonian prince, he was riding at the head of the Macedonian army to the Pelagonia straits, near the Prilep village of Barbaras, and stopped the breakthrough of the Dardanian hordes. Long is King Perseus's list of heroic deeds and those of the Macedonian army aimed at defending the Macedonian civilization and the Kingdom of Macedonia," says George Atanasoski.

As an explanation, according to historical documents, 20,000 Macedonian warriors were killed at the battle of Pydna exactly 2,175 years ago, on June 22, 168 BC. On that day the Royal Macedonia, born in the distant VII century BC, ceased to exist. And that Macedonia under Philip II of Macedon and Alexander III of Macedon (the Great) shone as a civilization with imperial, royal brilliance. Alexander conquered the world, but after his death everything plunged into chaos. His Macedonian Empire was strifetorn by the Celts - Skordiscs, Dardanians, Romans ... Five centuries later the Kingdom of Macedonia became a republic, more precisely a part - province of the Roman Republic. However, the name Macedonia has survived to this day.



What George Atanasoski contemplates is how to preserve the name Macedonia and to pass it down to be the same as it was long ago? He, among other things, says about the name: *"The Kingdom of the Macedonians? There is only one answer. We must truly respect the ancient Macedonian royal house and, of course, a structure of society ruled by a king that, as could be seen, brings order, peace and prosperity to many European countries today. But we must carry on the continuity. It is getting more obvious that it is necessary to restore the Kingdom of Macedonia. Exactly this was our motive to pay our genuine and profound respect to Perseus."*

But who was the man who must be remembered in history as the last Macedonian king?

According to historical data, Perseus was born in 213 BC as the elder son of Philip V and Polikratea of Argos. He came to the throne in the summer of 179 BC. He lived for 48 years. Three years after being captured, after a brief stay in the "Mamertin" Prison in Rome, and a slight longer stay in the Roman colony of Alba, by the Fukinsk Lake, he died in 165 BC. His grave is somewhere in Alba, and maybe his children were buried in it too.

The end of the Kingdom was dramatic. The third Macedonian-Roman war ended with the battle of Pydna, which lasted about an hour. Perseus was retreating to Amphipolis, then to Samothrace. But then he was robbed and left alone by the guard of 500 Cretenians, fleeing with the Macedonian treasury, with which he had planned to restore the kingdom.

Consul Emily Paul took the royal family in Amphipolis and then, together with the Illyrian king Genti, led them to Rome. During the triumphal ceremony, which lasted three days, the selected Macedonian treasures were publicly displayed on the streets, like in a parade. Plutarch mentioned statues, paintings, Macedonian arms, 750 earthenware pots with silver money - about 80 kg each, vessels for wine, bulls with gilded horns, gold and silver vessels, 77 pots with up to 80 kilograms of gold money in each, the sacred Macedonian gold urn weighing 270 kilograms, lined with precious stones. Finally the royal car of Perseus was shown in the parade, with his arms and royal diadems, his three children, Prince Philip VI, Prince Alexander and his daughter Larissa. Perseus, with his royal entourage, followed behind.

Today, after nearly 22 centuries, we recollect this man and his achievements with pride and piety. He was only 13 when as a Macedonian prince he rode at the head of the Macedonian army to the Pelagonia straits, near the Prilep village Barbaras, where he stopped the breakthrough of the Dardanian hordes. At the age of 43, as king, he again led the Macedonian army in countries around the mountain Skard (Shar Mountain) to curb and eject the Illyrian Penests and Dardanians.

Long is the list of heroic deeds of King Perseus and the army of the Macedonians aimed at defending the Macedonian civilization and the Kingdom of Macedonia"



**Благодарница од Свештеној синод на МПЦ
на Пајџа Јован II, 1981 година**
**Letter of thanks to Pope John II given by the Holy Synod of the
Macedonian Orthodox Church in 1981**

Because tradition and respect for the great characters of one's own past is something sacred and brings people to a happier future, several days before the dark anniversary, June 22 - Pydna, the *Macedonian Alliance*, led by George Atanasoski, on behalf of the entire Macedonian people paid fitting and heartfelt tribute to King Perseus in the place where he failed to overcome his grief, at the age of 48.

The inscription on the massive bronze memorial plaque, which George Atanasoski put up, is written in Macedonian, English and Italian.

According to George Atanasoski: *"This seemingly minor event should have another dimension today as well. Nowadays it raises the issue of continuity of the Macedonian kingdom, like Great Britain, Norway, Sweden and other progressive modern kingdoms in the European community of nations. During the 16-year independence of the Republic of Macedonia, the Macedonians in Macedonia and Macedonians all over the world have been divided into parties, that implies the words 'division' and 'annihilation' so clearly.*

Yes, it seems that we really need a unifying factor that may, as it seems, be guaranteed by a change in the structure from the republic into a kingdom of Macedonia, to be headed by a king and queen. Macedonians, let's renew the Kingdom of Macedonia. Only this is the right answer to all our enemies and the thieves of our identity, i.e. annihilators. Let's continue where Perseus stopped!" says George Atanasoski.

Businessman Atanasoski is the first Macedonian that has renovated the resting place of the Macedonian king Perseus and has resurrected his character and achievements. Macedonian people and Macedonia will always be grateful for his historical and philanthropic acts. Namely, the act of placing a memorial plaque actually set the foundation for the renewal and expansion of the Macedonian kingdom. This has also confirmed the spread of the roots of Ancient Macedonia to the eternal Rome, and deepening the good relations and contacts between the two countries - the present-day Italy and the Republic of Macedonia.

In addition, today these two countries and their Christian nations are linked by the eternal resting place of St. Cyril of Solun, the great Macedonian and Slavic educator. His tomb is located in the San Clemente basilica in Rome, not far from the resting place of Perseus. His votaries and admirers, and the fosterers of the all-Slavic and the Macedonian culture, language and Christian



faith respectively pay their reverence before the tomb of St. Cyril. In 1969, Macedonia began to celebrate the name and work of St. Cyril officially, when a memorial plaque was placed on his tomb in the San Clemente basilica. Since then senior officials of the Republic of Macedonia and of the Macedonian Orthodox Church visit the tomb of St. Clement.

Each year on May 24, the Day of the Macedonian and all-Slavic educators, Ss Cyril and Methodij, which in fact, is a Day of the Macedonian culture in Italy. In addition to the ceremony at the tomb of St. Cyril attended by numerous worshippers of the name and work of Ss Cyril and Methodij, numerous meetings at the state level are held in many cities throughout Italy, audiences with the Pope of the Roman Catholic church are organized, as well as concerts, exhibitions, theater performances, and other cultural events. All this confirms the achievements and relationships in the cultural, religious and socio-political life between Italy and Macedonia.

Monograph "George Atanasoski"



MAGEDONIANS IN PAKISTAN (9)

At the Himalayas, in the easternmost part of Pakistan, lives a tribe that differs from all those around. They are tall and have blond hair. They have their own autonomous country called Hansa or Najza-Kut and speak Burushasky language and considered themselves Macedonians, descendants of Alexander. The Macedonian public first learned about them in 1992 through contact show on MTV. Macedonians from Australia, America and Canada have long manifested interest in them and this summer an exploration team was sent to collect initial data on the spot.

According to the book by Canadian John Tobin "People of Hansa" in the constitution of this Himalayan country it is written that they are descendants of Alexander of Macedon and his generals. Their flag is red, with golden eight-ray sun. More recently they've adopted Islamic religion, but they keep their old traditions.

The book "*The Macedonians in Pakistan*" "*Diary of Colonel Lorimer*" published in Norway in 1934 contains a fund of words of this people. German Sanskrit expert Dr. Hermann Berger published a study in 1935 in which he says that the language of the Hansa, burushasky language, resembles Basque by its melody.

On the other hand, the Basque language has its emphasis on the third syllable from right to left, just like the Macedonian has, and Dr. Olga Lukovic-Pjanovic, after thirty years working at the Sorbonne, wrote that the Basques 'speak Serbian', referring to the Cvijic's thesis from 1937 according to which the "Serbian" language from the region of Veles has most archaic words. Dr. Herman Berger rejected the possibility of similarity of that language with the Greek language.

Recently, Mr. Ilija Casule of Australia has started to study the words contained in "The Diary of Colonel Lorimer." In doing that he has selected about 200 words that he groups as mainly Macedonian, Vlach to some extent, little Albanian and rarely Greek. Dr. Lydia Slaveska has established more similarities of a multitude of these words based on etymological analysis. Ilija Casule, for example, indicates that there are words preserved only in the current Macedonian language with the same meaning: 'rmbam, baram (working, looking)...

According to the statements of our Macedonians in Toronto, John Tobin picked nearly 1,000 words that the Macedonians understood. However, when he tried to present his findings in Athens fifteen years ago as a new proof of the origin of Alexander of Macedon pursuant to his tongue preserved in the



offspring at the Himalayas, he didn't return from Greece where he died suddenly the day he was to present his work.

Among the Macedonians at the Himalayas stayed a TV crew from Sweden that broadcast a show in 1982 in which the Macedonians of Sweden recognized the Macedonian dance, music, instruments and costumes. In 1988 the Swedish TV presented a new film (with comparisons) titled "Folk From the Balkans" which recorded a parallel between the show recorded in Himalayas and a show recorded in Macedonia, in Istibanja, in the region of Kocani, with the local folklore club. The similarities were striking.

The first Macedonian team went among people who consider themselves descendants of the Macedonians of Alexander of Macedon in July 1995, at its own expense. The collected footage is yet to be explored by folklorists, linguists and other experts and then eventually a specialized expedition is to be sent. The first impression of the travels of Steve Pliakes causes interest.

For example, blue-eyed and blue-haired (blondes) at the Himalayas are compared with the original written materials. Macedonians in ancient times were described as blond and tall in original written material (Plutarch, Quintus, Curtius Ruf). Alexander himself had blond hair, even golden, and he had blue eye, while his military commander Erigey had almost white hair. In the description of Curtius Ruf of the Macedonians before entering India, they are described as being tall so that several of nations there couldn't reach their shoulders, which is a relative notion. Anthropological measurements of the bones of Peonies in the Republic of Macedonia speak of relatively tall people for that time (161-171 cm or even more).

Steve Pliakes and Michael A Dimitri encountered an interesting symbolism – sun and a rosette of flowers of Geranium. The Geranium flower is placed in the circle, in the middle of the sun on the golden Casella containing the bones of Philip of Macedon in Kutlesh (Vergina), and it is an accompanying element almost everywhere in Macedonia together with the suns. This flower, in the shape of a typical Macedonian rosette, is also a solar symbol.

With various stylizations it could be seen in the closed and inaccessible to the public warehouses of the Museums of Macedonia in Skopje, on at least 130 stone steles. Dances that the two visitors saw, according to the description of Pliakes, resemble the Macedonian folk-dance "Teskoto" or other dances recorded by the Swedish TV.

According to the written documents, the Kalasha or Kalash, are an Indo – Arian indigenous people residing in the Chitra District of the Khyber – Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan.

They are considered unique among the people of Pakistan. They are also considered to be Pakistan's smallest ethnoreligious group, and traditionally practice what authors characterise as a form of Animism During the mid-20th



century an attempt was made to force a few Kalasha villages in Pakistan to convert to Islam, but the people fought the conversion and, once official pressure was removed, the vast majority resumed the practice of their own religion. Nevertheless, some Kalasha have since converted to Islam religion, despite being shunned afterward by their community for having done so.

The term is used to refer to many distinct people including the Văi, the Čimanišei, the Vântă, plus the Ashcun - and Tregami -speakers. The Kalash are considered to be an indigenous people of Asia, with their ancestors migrating to Chitral valley from another location possibly further south, which the Kalash call "Tsiyam" in their folk songs and epics.

They claim to descend from the armies of Alexander III of Macedon (Alexander the Great) who were left behind from his armed campaign, though no evidence exists for him to have passed the area. They are also considered by some to have been descendants of Gandhari people.

Alexander III of Macedon (the Great) is the great one for his successors, the present day Macedonians, and the great one for every nation in the world. He created and left as heritage the philosophy of bringing together nations, cultures, religions...Hence, Alexander is a great challenge for numerous researchers, scientists, travel-writers, translators, journalists and ordinary mortal beings, who treat him with respect, love, and strong faith in the past, the presence, and the future. The neighbouring Nuristani people of the adjacent Nuristani (historically known as Kafiristan) province of Avganistan once had the same culture and practised a faith very similar to that of the Kalash, differing in a few minor particulars.

The first historically recorded Islamic invasions of their lands were by the Ghaznavids in the 11th century while they themselves are first attested in 1339 during Timur's invasions. Nuristan had been forcibly converted to Islam in 1895-96, although some evidence has shown the people continued to practice their customs. The Kalash of Chitral have maintained their own separate cultural traditions

The Monograph "Steve Pliakes"

THE SUN OF KUTLESH - A SYMBOL OF LIFE AND ACTIVITY OF BUSINESSMAN GEORGE ATANASOSKI (10)

Only the Sun is older than Macedonia, say George Atanasoski. Therefore, the symbol from Kutlesh (Palatica) of the ancient Macedonians, Philip and Alexander, whose descendants are we the Macedonians, was a symbol on the official flag of the Republic of Macedonia since its independence on Sept. 8, 1991. Regretfully, under pressure from the Greek chauvinists and a year-long blockade of Greece, the sixteen-ray flag was changed on October 5, 1995. The new flag of the Republic of Macedonia is an eight-ray sun, which means "a new sun of liberty". As of September 19, 2004, however, the ancient symbol – the sixteen-ray sun - has been also flying on the flag before the municipal building of Pustec, Mala Prespa.

The World Macedonian Congress and the twin-municipality of Gazi Baba of Skopje have certainly deserved credit for this ancient symbol being on the municipal flag. The decision for the Macedonian symbol adopted by the Municipal Council of Pustec and approved by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Albania has made it a unique municipality, having the Macedonian sixteen-ray sun as its official symbol.

The official ceremony of displaying the symbol of the municipality symbolically marked the introduction of the Macedonian language and its Cyrillic alphabet in administrative use in the Republic of Albania as well, because the name of the municipality is written in both Macedonian and Albanian on the coat of arms of this municipality.

However, the greatest custodian and defender of the symbol of Kutlesh is, of course, businessmen George Atanasoski. That sun has been constantly leading him all his life, and he has confirmed this through the newspaper *The Macedonian Sun* whose historic development is closely connected with the ideas of a number of Macedonians in the diaspora.

Motivated by their patriotic feeling to prove to the world that the ancient Macedonian civilization would revive in parallel to the independence of the Republic of Macedonia, a few Macedonians patriots living in Germany, led by Mr.



George Atanasoski, decided, in autumn of 1993, to issue a Macedonian weekly. It was decided that the magazine would have global significance because it would be distributed worldwide where Macedonians live.

Atanasoski's idea for issuing a newsletter occurred to him 25 years before the first publication of *"The Macedonian Sun"*. He felt the need for an independent newspaper which would inform, as objectively as possible, not only the readers and the public in the Republic of Macedonia, but also Macedonian immigrants.

Working in his private business abroad more than in his homeland, he had frequent meetings with Macedonians in America where they used to exchange and convey news and information orally, thus misinforming each other more than informing. However, after several meetings with Macedonians in Germany in 1993, the idea of having a Macedonian national weekly was finally realized. It would also have a lobbying role in the recognition of our century-old existence and continuation through its well-argued historical contributions.

A year of preparations followed after which Atanasoski finally founded the global Macedonian weekly, *"The Macedonian Sun"*, whose first issue came out on June 24, 1994. Although the newspaper's editorial office is located in Skopje, part of the Macedonian public believed that *"The Macedonian Sun"* was a magazine intended only for Macedonian emigrants. This incorrect conclusion persisted until readers actually read the paper.

After the first edition of this weekly was published, Atanasoski stated with satisfaction that the efforts of he and his associates, along with the desire of Macedonians to raise their patriotic spirit, not only among Macedonians emigrants but also in their homeland, were finally rewarded. From a modest circulation of 2,000 copies, the paper reached 7,000 to 8,000 copies, and several times this figure was even above 10,000 copies. As a founder of this global weekly, Atanasoski is trying to make it fully independent, non-partisan and without his influence over the editorial policy. It should be known that *"The Macedonian Sun"* is an independent, national magazine, which "tells the truth flat out", poking fun at negative matters, but at the same time it is also full of humanity and brotherly love towards its favorites – the Macedonians.

At the same time the magazine accords respect to other minorities living in Macedonia. It is not by chance that it keeps on publishing the heading titled "Our Christian Faith". It is a result of the fact that Mr. Atanasoski believes in God, believes in himself, and believes both in his people and his country. To him Florida is beautiful, but Macedonia – it's a God's paradise! Therefore Atanasoski says that it is humane and moral to respect all people in the world, but it is even better to love your own nation first, and then the others.

The first issue of the weekly *"The Macedonian Sun"* was published on June 24, 1994 and from then until today it has been published continuously, with





some fluctuations. On two occasions its format was changed. Thus, from number 493 on December 12, 2003 to number 763 on February 13 in 2009 it was published in color, with 64 pages. The newspaper "The Macedonian Sun" was distributed and marketed in printed form in the Republic of Macedonia and around the world where Macedonians live – in Europe, America, Canada, and Australia.

Since 2003 - Director: Elizabeta Hadji-Stojanova Kosturska, Aleksandar Keltanoski, editor in chief; Editorial staff: Kokan Stojchev, Zhaklina Mitevska, Mileva Lazova, Mishko Taleski, Miroslav Georgievski; Associates: Frosina Tashevska-Remenski, Dejan Savovski, Aleksandar Vuchevski, Zhivanka Filipovska; Sinisha Karic; Technical Editor: Vladimir Stojkovski, Silvana Blazheva; Proofreader: Zorica Kmetovska; Typist: Suzana Josifovska, and secretary of the editor's office.

As of 2008 the editor in chief is Aleksandar Keltanoski, while the editorial staff consists of: Kokan Stojchev, Zhaklina Mitevska, Mileva Lazova, Mishko Taleski, Miroslav Georgievski; Associates: Frosina Tashevska-Remenski, Dejan Savovski, Aleksandar Vuchevski, Zhivanka Filipovska; Sinisha Karic, technical editor; Vladimir Stojkovski, technical editor; Silvana Blazheva, proofreader; Zorica Kmetovska, typist; Suzana Josifovska, secretary of the editor's office, and Mile Ocevski, distributor.

New horizons have opened up in the information activity of the Republic of Macedonia with the publishing of the weekly "The Macedonian Sun". Its first edition was actually a holiday for journalism in Macedonia. Therefore, on the occasion of the release of the first edition and the promotion of "The Macedonian Sun", the President of the World Macedonian Congress of North America, Mr. George Atanasoski, founder and owner of the magazine, addressed the newspaper readers and the entire Macedonian public in the Republic Macedonia and in the Macedonian diaspora. He gave more details about the mission and goals of "The Macedonian Sun" and, among other things, he said: *My dear readership,*

The launching ceremony of 'The Macedonian Sun' on June 24, 1994 in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia, is an exceptional act in the Macedonian national, spiritual, cultural and economic unity. The emergence of the first Macedonian global weekly marks the beginning of an authentic, long awaited forum for information and communication for Macedonians from all continents. 'The Macedonian Sun' is now an integral part of the written Macedonian thoughts, but, at the same time, it is a leading impetus in the promotion of Macedonian journalism.

The Macedonian Sun' belongs to the Macedonian people completely. Your participation in the pages of this newspaper is its strongest qualitative trait, its greatest asset. Therefore I'm especially glad that you have accepted 'The Macedonian Sun' with great enthusiasm and that you have started to actively involve yourselves in the processes of communication with other Macedonians around the world.



The pages of this newspaper are wide open for all Macedonians from all political options to communicate their information, suggestions and opinions, their analytical reviews and creative ideas relevant to the democratic development of the Macedonian nalt seems that the sun ('sonce' in Macedonian) of Kutlesh is a symbol of the life and work of the American businessman George Atanasoski and his investments in the Republic of Macedonia: the magazine "The Macedonian Sun" (Makedonsko sonce), TV-station "Sonce" and Hotel "Sonce GA".

In addition, there is a large number of organizations, institutions clubs, associations and other institutions in Macedonia and throughout the world whose symbol is the sixteen-ray sun, including the name of the restaurant of businessman Risto Gushterov in Naples, Florida, named "Palatica" (Kutlesh). tion and culture. We use this opportunity to encourage the Macedonians in the Republic and abroad, regardless of their political and religious affiliation, to actively join in global communication in all fields of interest to our fatherland Macedonia. Since only a tolerant dialogue among us, the Macedonians - which in its essence is an open discussion of ideas for specific solutions to problems that Macedonia faces - is a guarantee of its long-term economic and educational development.

Before a large audience, founder Atanasoski said that he was deeply convinced that conditions were ripe for something which had been discussed in Macedonian history so much, but was poorly implemented in practice. He spoke with conviction that *The Macedonian Sun* was born for the Macedonian people with the vision of becoming a leading forum which would replace the bland quarrels from the every day life of the Macedonian politics and journalism. It would put forward tolerance and concrete proposals on how best to achieve Macedonian national interests.

Continuing, Atanasoski stressed that, *"We categorically reject the current separation and schisms that are a shadow over Macedonian unity, as the sword of Damocles. In parting, we offer that "The Macedonian Sun": will multiply the rich potential of ideas from the Macedonian people with whose assistance, it is widely known, answers to all challenges will be found; even in the toughest moments of stubbornness; to establish continuity of long-term efforts of Macedonians to create their own authentic newspapers throughout history immortalizing the existence of their nation; and to raise the level of civilization in Macedonia.*

Our mission is to use, to the maximum, the enormously rich and diverse intellectual and spiritual potential that has made the Macedonian people a distinctive nation in history, in order to open up new horizons in their existence and continuation. 'The Macedonian Sun' has guaranteed that opportunity far into the future. "On the occasion of the 5th anniversary of publishing *The Macedonian Sun*, in July 1999, the founder of this weekly, George Atanasoski, expressed his satisfaction and addressed in writing the readership and the public in Macedonia in general, saying:



My dear readership! Five years have passed since June 24, 1994 when the weekly "The Macedonian Sun" first threw light on Macedonians at home and abroad. The need for "The Sun" existed then as it exists today because we still cannot say that our news outlets are completely free, as is the case with "The Sun" which does not depend on any party and is therefore a unique, totally independent newspaper. As a result, it could be freely called "a newspaper of truth.

The development of the newspaper is one of the few things of which we can be extremely proud. This newspaper is the first voice in defense of Macedonian interests at home and abroad. We are among the first in Macedonia to publish it on the Internet, and we have about 65,000 internet visitors per month. From today's issue onwards we will continue with this new format. Soon we will expand our Internet coverage to better inform the world about Macedonia and to promote Macedonian culture and national interests. For several months thus far "The Sun" has been providing its Media-Monitor, pieces of information and articles for Macedonia and about Macedonia published in the international media to inform all those interested in Macedonia through e-mail on a daily basis.

As founder of the newspaper, I would like to thank all readers worldwide who have supported and are supporting us now. I'm sending a message to all of them that we will tirelessly continue to fight until Macedonia fulfills the dreams of our ancestors," wrote George Atanasoski.

On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the weekly "The Macedonian Sun", however, its edition number 548/549 dated December 30, 2004, which was published in color, presented extensive material on the work and staff of the newspaper. In his special address Mr. George Atanasoski, founder of "The Macedonian Sun", stated that he had been following the idea of the great Macedonian who did not enslave but rather united nations - Alexander III of Macedon (the Great).

The Monograph "George Atanasoski"



***PART TWO -
THE MACEDONIANS IN
THE DIASPORA***



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MACEDONIA IS ETERNAL (I)

The business George Atanasoski lives and works in the U.S., however, with his soul and heart he is in Macedonia. His preoccupation is his homeland. During his forty years of commuting between the U.S. and Macedonia he has showed and proved himself as a real businessman and patriot to his two homelands.

George Atanasoski particularly respects and rejoices in the historical development of Macedonia. Thus, on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the independence of Macedonia in 2003, he wrote the following text:

„On Mechkin Kamen in glorious Krushevo the song of Macedonian insubordination shall echo around once again. We proudly celebrate 60 years of the Republic of Macedonia, 101 years of the Ilinden Uprising, 2342 years of the decisive historical battle of Chaeronea when Macedonian hegemony over the Hellenic world was established, and 2360 years since the birth of Alexander of Macedon.

Many significant anniversaries; an occasion for great celebration. The Agreement on the Territorial division of Macedonia has recreated ghosts of anxiety. It has alarmed the Macedonian people and they have raised their voice. We are a nation of insubordination, it has been confirmed by history itself.“

In the following text George Atanasoski said that over the course of the century that passed, the Ilinden Uprising and Krushevo Republic took place, but also the Balkan Wars marking the time when we as people were partitioned.

“That partition was confirmed after the First World War by the same protagonists who had partitioned Macedonia in the first place, and this situation has remained in place until today.

The Macedonian people experienced the bloody clashes that occurred in the 20's and 30's of the last century, when the greatest sons of Macedonia were killed.

The greatest disaster of the 20th century, the Second World War, brought to Macedonia. Its second Ilinden and ASNOM, along with the decisions to achieve the age-old aspirations of thousands of Macedonian sons - creation of a Macedonian state for the first time in its century-old history.

Finally, in this century we have also experienced our third Ilinden, i.e. an independent and selfgoverned Republic of Macedonia that exists despite many obstacles preventing its independent democratic development.“

George Atanasoski says that the crossroads of the world is Macedonia, and continues: *“No matter where you go, you'll go back to its arms, to its roots. And the Macedonian roots are deep and mysterious. They belong to the Macedonians only!*



To those who made their first steps on it, to those who were first to give literacy and spirituality to the European peoples!"

We have existed and we will continue to exist – it is written in our genes. We have a rich spiritual, historical and political heritage that made the Balkan countries and the major European powers worry. The Macedonian cultural heritage is priceless. Macedonia is a magical land of archeology.

Since it is insufficiently explored thus far, it is a challenge for the future. Macedonia is the country of origin of both the Glagolitic and the Cyrillic alphabets, which in the 9th century was devised by Macedonians from Solun, the brothers Cyril and Methodij, whose disciples, led by Clement and Naum, spread it and educated the illiterate population in the Balkans and beyond.

Nowadays, several world languages have been created on the basis of the Old Church Slavonic Macedonian language. Hundreds of monasteries and churches painted with colorful frescos depicting everyday life in Macedonia came precisely from this period. An old proverb says: *"Whenever you go through Macedonia, neither sing nor play, because they will sing and play better than you."* Macedonia has an invaluable musical heritage.

Therefore, it can be said that George Atanasoski's fatherland Macedonia is a Holy and Biblical land. With its ancient and millennia-long history, Macedonia is the pride, joy and sorrow, dream and reality of every Macedonian. Its geographic location makes it the crossroads of various civilizations, religions, traditions, and customs. It is no coincidence that the paths of many traders and caravans passed here, and for many military expeditions, armies, winners and losers it was the battleground for many centuries. It means that every stone, every lump of black earth, every river and mountain speak of the turbulent history of Macedonia. Even today, Macedonia continues hiding in itself many secrets from the past, which will probably be a challenge for future generations.

In the rich history of Europe, it is hard to find a people like the Macedonians who suffered so much upheaval during their national establishment. It is hard to find another people in the world who had such a turbulent history, as well. Every single storm struck them. There was no war that failed to strike them. Each misfortune that took place in those areas put Macedonia in the very center, while the Macedonians received the first blows. Following their destiny in the last thirteen centuries, it could be said that destiny was history to many people, while for the Macedonians, history was their destiny.

The Monograph "George Atanasoski"

THE EMIGRATION FROM MACEDONIA (2)

Macedonia is traditionally an emigrational region from which emigrational movement of the Macedonian people and movement to the transoceanic and other countries took place toward the mid 19th century. Such movements were especially emphasized during the second half of the 19th century and were known as “pechalba” (going abroad for economic reasons). With a ranging scale and intensity they have continued till the present day. Thus, according to some data, the first group of “pechalbari” (people who went to work abroad) reached the North American continent in 1885, and Australia in the 1920's. However, individuals who had joined groups of *pechalbari* from the neighboring and other countries had crossed the ocean even before that.

The wave of emigration from Macedonia, mainly from the traditionally emigrational regions: Florina, Bitola, Prespa, Castoria, Edessa, Tetovo, Ohrid, Thessalonica, Struga, Prilep, and other parts of Macedonia, intensified following the Ilinden Uprising in 1903. Nevertheless, emigration of the Macedonians from their country gained greater dimensions during the period that followed the partitioning of Macedonia, throughout the Balkan and First World Wars. This was above all, the result of the unbearable political, economic, social, and security position of the Macedonian population.

Therefore, according to some data during this period from all three parts of the partitioned Macedonia, about 60% of the emigrated Macedonians came from the Aegean part; 30 % came from the Vardar part; and 10 % from the Pirin part. According to the Special Commission of the UN for the Balkans, in its report of 13 May, 1949, a total of 232,000 Macedonians emigrated from Aegean Macedonia. In their place the Greek authorities brought Greek refugees (*prosvigi*) from Asia Minor and colonized the Aegean part of Macedonia.

Emigration to the Transatlantic countries intensified perceptibly following the Second World War, especially after the defeat of the Democratic Army in the Civil War in Greece, on whose side the Macedonian population from Aegean Macedonia had participated massively finally hoping to get its national and social rights. At the same time, the liberalization of the former SFRY policy on going abroad to work in other countries lead to emigration of a large number of citizens of what was then the Socialist Republic of Macedonia.



However, the scale, dynamics, and character of the migratory movements from the beginning till the present day, vary in form and content and correspond to the phases of the social, economic, and political development of Macedonia, as well as to the changes in the migration policies of the countries to which they migrated.

The number of Macedonian migrants increases from year to year as a result of the migration movements, the growing birthrate, and other factors. There is no complete and more precise information regarding the number of Macedonians in the Balkans and the Macedonian emigrants in the transatlantic countries, the European Union, and other countries. Official statistical data, on the other hand, regarding the number of Macedonian emigrants throughout the world, are unrealistic for many reasons.

Thus, according to them, in the USA there are 20,365 Macedonians (US Census Bureau, 1990,) in Canada there are approximately 54,000 Macedonians; in Australia there are 42,199 Macedonians (according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia); in the Federal Republic of Germany there are 49,400 legal residents (according to the central Statistics Bureau of SRG, 1999); in Switzerland 53,907 are legal residents; in Belgium 2,059 are legal residents; in the Netherlands there are 577 (according to the Dutch Bureau of Statistics;) in the Great Dukedom of Luxembourg there are 358; in Italy there are 21,988 (according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia;) in Austria there are 21 ("Statistic Austria"); in Poland there are 150 Macedonian families (according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia;) and in the Former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia there are 47,200 according to the official census.

On the other hand, according to an Austrian source, approximately seven million people lived in ethnic Macedonia at the beginning of the last, the twentieth, century. However, some more realistic estimates show that, in addition to the Macedonian population in the Republic of Macedonia (1,378,687 – according to the 1994 census) more than 300,000 live in Bulgaria, approximately 250,000 live in Greece, more than 150,000 live in Albania, and approximately 70,000 live in Serbia and Monte Negro. It has also been estimated that since the 19th century about 600 – 700, 000 Macedonians from every part of Macedonia migrated to various countries around the world. Without complete statistical and other information it is quite difficult to determine the exact number realistically. Nevertheless, there are estimates that approximately 500,000 Macedonian immigrants live in the USA, Canada, and Australia. Of these, about 150,000 live in the USA, close to 150,000 are in Canada, and over 200,000 are in Australia and New Zealand. The majority of these come from Aegean Macedonia, and the Republic of Macedonia, while a small number come from the Macedonian part in Bulgaria and Albania. On the other hand, according to an



Austrian source, approximately seven million people lived in ethnic Macedonia at the beginning of the last century.

It has been estimated that approximately 150,000 residents of Macedonian origin live in the European Union alone (Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, Italy, Great Britain, followed by Slovenia, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, the Ukraine, and Russia,) and other countries. There are also a large number of ethnic Albanians from Macedonia in the European Union. There is also a certain number of settlers of Macedonian origin who live in South America, Egypt, Israel, South Africa, Uzbekistan, and Turkey where there is a large number of Macedonian Muslims and ethnic Turks from Macedonia.

There are Macedonians who live in Pakistan that refer to themselves as descendents of the army of Alexander the Great. Namely, on the Himalayas in the easternmost part of Pakistan, there is a tribe that differs from every other tribe around it. They are tall and blond. They have their own autonomous country which they call *Hanza*, or *Hanzakut*, and speak a *burushaski* language and consider themselves Macedonians, descendents of Alexander. The Constitution of this Himalayan country states that they are descendents of Alexander the Great and his generals. Their flag is red and has a golden eight-ray Sun. In recent times they adopted the Islamic religion, but have retained their old traditions.

Modern economic emigration gained great intensity in the nineties of the previous century (XX) when more than 100, 000 of the residents of Macedonia (including Macedonians, ethnic Albanians, and others) left the country. This can be seen from available data from the last census of the population of the Republic of Macedonia. According to it, in 1994 173,611 persons were abroad, of which approximately 50,000 left in the period 1989 – 1994. There are a number of indications that show that these migratory movements continue with the same intensity even today. This is evident from the high level of negative net migration of 7,438 persons annually in the period 1994 – 1996, and the available data from foreign sources. For instance, according to data of the European Council, only in Germany, Italy, and Switzerland in the period 1996-1999 the number of Macedonian residents increased by approximately 41,000 people.

As regards the social and qualification structure of the Macedonian emigrants in the transatlantic countries we need emphasize that in the past the majority of them came from the villages, were of a difficult economic state, had a low level of education, and little skilled qualifications, unlike today's emigrants who mainly have completed tertiary education and are professionally skilled. Hence, in the past the main reason for emigrating was to provide for a living and save material reserves for the family. A small number of emigrants





left their native country due to political reasons, as well as the tradition of going abroad.

However, with the last several generations, as well as the more recent emigrants, especially those from the Republic of Macedonia, there is an emphasized emigration of people with completed tertiary education and a higher cultural and social level, which in turn results in a new structural level of Macedonian emigration. Thus, among them we find intellectuals from various fields, affirmed not only in Macedonia, but throughout the world.

Changes in the economic, political, social, educational, and qualification structure, and the accomplished material potential, also bring about a partial transformation of the living habits of the Macedonian emigrants in the Diaspora. Thus, many of them, especially the second and third generation, have made their way through to the higher classes in the societies in which they live.

However, in the political life of their new environments and societies, the Macedonian emigrants are far behind the other ethnic groups, which is also the case with the other emigrants from the Balkan countries. Nevertheless, their achievements in an economic, spiritual, educational, cultural, and sports scale increasingly contribute to their not being treated as second class citizens, but instead, as an integral and important factor in their new environments in the Diaspora, especially in the multi-ethnic societies.

Despite the differences in social structure which the emigrants of Macedonian origin in the Diaspora possess, and which are the result of the different levels of education and material status, they still have joint mutual characteristics in their everyday life. Thus, many of the emigrants from Macedonia are in a way assimilated or "melted in the assimilation pot." On the other hand, the majority of the Macedonian emigrants only seemingly accept integration in those societies while in fact they remained faithful to their traditional way of life.

They continue to maintain close family ties, essentially based and nurtured in a traditional patriarchal spirit, keeping the folklore, language, customs, and traditions brought with them from Macedonia. Providing for and completing the family is one of the priority aims in the life of the Macedonian emigrants in their new environment. For this reason the most part of their social life takes place mainly within the Macedonian ethnic communities. At the same time, some of them resist the demands of the new environment and find it difficult to adapt to the new way of life, afraid of losing their personal and national identity. Therefore, the majority of Macedonian emigrants continue staying close and gathering into the Macedonian ethnic communities located mainly in the larger industrial centers, where they initially began their organized life.

The first forms of meeting among the Macedonian emigrants date back to the time of their massive arrival in the new environments, when they brought



with them their culture, traditions, religion, customs... As a result of this at the very beginning they established groups from the same village for helping each other, and later cultural, church associations, and other forms of meetings in all of the major centers, such as Detroit, Gary, Chicago and Cleveland in the USA; Toronto, Hamilton, and Windsor in Canada; Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney in Australia; Goteborg and Malme in Sweden; in Copenhagen in Denmark; in Paris, France; Munich, Berlin and Hanover in Germany; Zurich in Switzerland, and other industrial cities.

The aim of these associations was to maintain the Macedonian culture, customs, and religious traditions, and to provide material aid to those Macedonians in need. At the same time they collected funds for construction of churches and other buildings in their new environments and in their native places in Macedonia. Thus, as early as 1919 they built the first church in Toronto, the Macedonian – Bulgarian church of *St. Cyril and Methodius*. Here also, in 1912 the first bank of the Macedonian emigrants from Aegean Macedonia was established. In those early years they also established a number of village societies of emigrants from the whole of Macedonia.

Macedonians in the Diaspora began more widespread organization as late as after the First World War. In the period between the two world Wars there was a noticeable movement and activity on a national scale. In the beginning many Macedonian emigrants, especially from Aegean Macedonia, had joined the Macedonian Patriot Organization (*“Makedonska patrioticheska organizacija”*) known as MPO. However, after the change in its political orientation, and its shift toward the Great Bulgaria assimilatory policy, a certain number of Macedonians began establishing independent progressive groups in a number of cities in the USA and Canada.

They basically supported the affirmation of the realistic ways and paths which could be followed by the Macedonian revolutionary ideological struggle, which was an inseparable part of the struggles of the other progressive forces in the Balkans. After the first conference in 1930 these progressive groups united into one Soyuz, or association, i.e. the Macedonian People's Association (*Makedonskiot naroden sojuz, MNS.*) The main objective of the MNS was to fight for the freedom of Macedonia with the desire of establishing a Balkan federation which would guarantee wide national, political, and social rights and freedom of the Balkan peoples, including the Macedonian people of the three parts of Macedonia. In realizing this political platform the MNS had counted on the support and mutual action of every progressive force and everyone in the world, especially those of the Balkans.

There is a lot of data which clearly shows that during the Second World War the MNS, together with the other progressive organizations in USA and Canada, directed its forces toward an active antifascist battle. The members of this organization struggled to liquidate fascism, and were also supporters



of the establishment of a life that promises greater democratic freedom and permanent peace. Their assistance was also huge during the period of the establishment and renewal of what was then the People's Republic of Macedonia until they were stopped in the 1950's as a consequence of the Inform bureau.

At the same time, the Macedonian emigrants in the Transatlantic and other countries manifested a positive attitude and great loyalty toward the National Liberation War in Macedonia and offered organized assistance in the renovation and construction of the country after the war. Nevertheless, the campaign for construction of part of the hospital in Skopje was by far the greatest and most valuable in its effect and significance. Activities began in 1946, and in 1948 the hospital was officially opened. This was at the same time both pride and encouragement for the connections with Macedonia.

During those stormy times the liberal national and social development and penetration of the truth about the People's Republic of Macedonia, strongly induced the organized life of the emigrants on a national basis. At the same time this was a most effective protection against every foreign propaganda and enemy activity in the communities of the Macedonian emigrants.

On the other hand, when speaking of the organized activities in the Transatlantic countries, we need mention that it includes the majority of Macedonian emigrants. Furthermore, an important component in this kind of organization is the fact that they have joined into independent associations, churches and church communities above all, where the members are Macedonians regardless of the part of Macedonia they come from.

At the same time the religious and national structures, emigrant organizations, and their memberships continued to grow constantly, while their activities spread and improved in quality. Hence, in this period evident results were achieved in the spiritual and cultural and educational life. Numerous Macedonian churches and societies were established, as well as sports clubs and other forms of activity in which Macedonian emigrants gathered massively.

However, the establishment of Macedonian Orthodox churches and church communities are of special significance for the activities of the Macedonian emigrants.

The Macedonian Orthodox Churches - Ohrid Archbishopric (MOC-OA) and communities in Australia, Canada, and the USA, and recently in the countries of the European Union, are the most significant and most massive gathering places of the Macedonians from every part of Macedonia. In addition to the church services, the Macedonian language, the authentic mother tongue brought from the native land can be heard freely at these Macedonian shrines. At these cultural, educational, and spiritual centers there are Macedonian schools, and the Macedonian mother tongue, national history and geography are studied. Scripture is also taught at many churches.



Thus, there is an open process of establishing cultural and arts societies, entertainment, literature, and sports associations, publishing of newspapers, bulletins, and magazines, and opening of Macedonian radio and TV shows. Therefore, the Macedonian Orthodox churches survive among the emigration as an invincible reality and important factor in the emigrant communities. The churches exist as a permanent trace, acknowledged by the domestic factor, and they act freely in the environment in which Macedonians live and work.

Macedonian Orthodox churches and church communities in the Diaspora are quite appreciated by those societies above all because of the results that the Macedonians achieve in their work, and because of their attitude and high level of loyalty toward their new fatherland. Nevertheless, it is most significant that through their church communities the Macedonian emigrants affirm their native fatherland, thus contributing to international relations. In fact, they are the bridge of collaboration between the Republic of Macedonia and Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada, countries of the European Union, and other countries throughout the world. Many times it has been stressed that the Macedonian emigrants and their associations, with special emphasis on the Macedonian Orthodox churches and church communities, have grown into a quite significant positive factor in the establishment of good mutual relations between the countries in which they live and the Republic of Macedonia.

Unlike the USA, Canada, and Australia, Macedonian emigration toward countries of the European Union intensified after the Second World War and have continued till the present day. Initially Macedonians began emigrating to find temporary work and as the years passed it gained a permanent character.

This is especially true of the 1970's when pressure increased regarding the organized demands for workers in various European agencies and companies. Such demands were also accepted by the employment bureaus, which even made lists of workers who were interested. There were also various agencies and agents who referred our people directly to the Western European countries, especially to Germany, Switzerland, France, Denmark, and Sweden.

It is characteristic that in the beginning of the temporary work in these countries the people who left in an organized manner were mainly single young people.

They practically all left with a signed agreement in their pocket. This meant that they would remain there for one to five years to earn some money and return to their fatherland. It later turned out that only a small number of the Macedonian citizens who had left at the end of the 1960's and beginning of the 1970's had actually returned to the country. The majority of them had adapted to their new working and living environments.

They took their families with them, and thus began the new wave of emigrational movement from Macedonia toward Europe. Hence, Macedonians



who had come to Europe, especially to Germany and Sweden in the seventies to what was then referred to as temporary work, began organizing themselves at the very beginning of their massive arrival. Macedonian clubs and associations established as a need to alleviate nostalgia, grief for their families from which many had been separated a long time, as well as the need for mutual socialization and communication, and easier realization of their specific mutual needs. Thus, gradually new forms of activity in sport, folklore, culture, and other fields began appearing. In time these grew into a rich mosaic of activities in many fields depending on the conditions, needs and opportunities of the Macedonians in their new environments.

Similarly, a certain number of Macedonians in the Diaspora attend churches such as the Catholic Church, the Anglican, Russian, Ukrainian, Serbian, Greek, and Bulgarian, especially the Bulgarian – Macedonian, and several Protestant churches. Such is the case with those churches that are under the jurisdiction of the Eastern Orthodox Church in North America (Toronto, Detroit, Fort Wayne, Indianapolis, and other cities); with the Greek Orthodox Church in Canada (Toronto, Hamilton, Windsor); and Australia (Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, and Sydney); the Serbian church in USA (Detroit) and Canada (Toronto); of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church (Melbourne); the Evangelist – Methodist church, and the Seventh Day Adventists' Church in Australia, as well as other churches.

At the same time, in Melbourne there is a Macedonian Evangelist – Methodist Church whose members are mostly Macedonians from the Strumica area. On the other hand, in USA there are churches named *Macedonian Baptist Church* whose members are the Afro-American population.

This church adopted the Biblical name of Macedonia and has no connection with Macedonia or the Macedonian people. Among the clergy of these churches, especially the Catholic, the Anglican, and the Evangelist – Methodist Church, there are Macedonians who represent respectfully the name and the truth about the Macedonian people and Macedonia.

The issue regarding the Macedonians of Muslim religion is a significant chapter in the historical development of the Macedonians in the Diaspora. There are several hundred thousand of them in Istanbul, Ismir, Bursa, and other cities in Turkey, as well the countries of the European Union.

These people mainly came from the areas of Debar, Reka, the village of Gorno Vranovci, Skopje, Tetovo, Gora (Former Federal Republic Yugoslavia) and other areas. Characteristically, this Macedonian population adopted the Islamic religion but retained the Macedonian language, culture, customs, and traditions brought with them from Macedonia.

As a result of the desires and efforts of the Macedonians of Muslim religion to maintain their origins in the new environment, there they established



cultural and artistic, and other clubs and associations of Macedonian character. Their love of Macedonia and the links with their ancestors' hearths are truly great. It is also a similar or perhaps identical case with the ethnic Turks from Macedonia who are nostalgically connected to the birth places of their ancestors. This contributes to the strengthening of relations between the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Macedonia on a spiritual, cultural, and especially economic scale.

Since the 1970's the number of newly established churches and church communities, clubs and other associative forms of gathering, has continued to grow constantly in the Transatlantic countries and countries of the European Union. The majority of Macedonians are members of, or regular visitors to these numerous associations, where they organize religious, national, folk, sports, cultural, and other manifestations.

This was in fact where initial gathering and socialization took place. Initiators emphasized the obvious needs and intentions that the Macedonians open their own places for mutual correlation in widespread agreement and to activate all of their potentials in collaboration with their fatherland.

There they had the chance and opportunities to develop various activities and in a most respectful manner to affirm the Macedonian name, the Macedonian state, and the Macedonian Orthodox Church–Ohrid Archbishopric.

Through the establishment of above all the Macedonian Orthodox churches and church communities, as well as other kinds of associations, conditions were also created for the nurturing of the native cultural heritage, religion, tradition, and customs, all with the aim of maintaining the Macedonian identity and Macedonian truth.

The "Macedonian Digest"



MIGRATION AS A DESTINY (3)

In the publication "The Macedonians in USA and Canada", "Makedonska iskra", Skopje, 2002, 1-380 (in Macedonian and English) by the author of this text, it is said that the Macedonian migration basically coincided with developments in the Balkans and it depended, even more, on the developments in Macedonia. As a result, the rate of moving away and going abroad to earn a living was conditioned, above all, by difficult economic hardships, and in very few cases of national and political character.

The miserable, difficult, and often impossible conditions of living and the constant struggle for survival forced many Macedonians to opt, among other things, for leaving their own country in order to settle somewhere else.

The process of going abroad to earn a living and moving away from Macedonia to the United States and Canada respectively was characteristic of the traditional migration areas: regions of Lerin, Bitola, Prespa, Kostur, Ohrid, Voden, Prilep, Struga, Solun, Tetovo and other parts of Macedonia.

The immigration waves from these parts increased after the 1903 Ilinden Uprising, but they became more intense after the Balkan Wars and the First World War, which, instead of bringing liberation from the five-century old slavery, led to the triple partition, oppression, assimilation, denationalization and physical destruction of the Macedonian identity and culture. All this was done by Macedonia's just liberated neighbours: Bulgaria, Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Greece and Albania.

What happened in the previous period during several centuries and what happened after the First World War led, for a relatively short period, to great migration movements and ethnic changes in certain parts of Macedonia that had disastrous consequences for the Macedonian population.

Consequently, according to a report dated May 13, 1949 of the UN Special Committee for the Balkans, 232,000 Macedonians from Aegean Macedonia, including the families of Steve and Lilly Pliakes moved away, and the Greek authorities populated and colonized Aegean Macedonia with refugees from Asia Minor in their place.

The period after 1960 was also specific. As a result of the opening of SFR Yugoslavia to the world and its inclusion in the international division of labor, along with the creation of an urban population in cities and liberalization of the policy of going to work abroad, many workers and intellectuals from the former SR Macedonia moved away and settled in North America. Immigration waves from Macedonia to all corners of the world continue even today, but the intensity varies depending on the economic and political moments in Macedonia, the Balkans, and globally.



Some more realistic estimates indicate that, from the mid 19th century to the present, more than one million Macedonians from all parts of Macedonia have moved to different countries. In the absence of complete statistical and other data, it is very difficult to accurately determine the exact number, but it is estimated that about 500 thousand Macedonian immigrants live in the U.S., Canada and Australia, out of whom about 150,000 live in the U.S., approximately 150,000 in Canada, and more than 200,000 in Australia and New Zealand. It is estimated that more than 150,000 Macedonians live in Europe and other countries.

It is also estimated that about 50,000 immigrants of Macedonian origin live in South America, Egypt, Great Britain, South Africa and Eastern European countries, as well as in Turkey, where there are more than 300,000 Macedonian-Muslims and ethnic Turks from Macedonia.

The main purpose of immigration was to provide a basic livelihood and earn money for their family. The number of immigrant workers who left their homeland for political reasons and just for the sake of tradition to go abroad to earn a living was very small.

However, among recent generations, as well as among the newcomers from more recent times, especially from the Republic of Macedonia, there are more and more highly educated immigrants with a higher cultural and social status that has set a new structural level in the Macedonian Diaspora.

Thus, there are intellectuals among them from different areas of activity that have established themselves not only in Macedonia but also worldwide.

The lifestyle of Macedonian emigrants in the Diaspora has gone through a partial transformation due to changes in their economic, social, education, qualifications and increased monetary potential. Moreover, many of them, especially from the Aegean part of Macedonia made their way into higher society where they live. But in regard to political life in their new environments and societies, the Macedonian settlers lag way behind other ethnic groups, as is the case with immigrants from other Balkan countries.

However, their achievements on an economic, spiritual, educational, cultural and sports level contribute more and more so they are not treated as second-class citizens, but as an integral and important factor in the new communities in the Diaspora, especially in multiethnic societies as it is Canada.

The earliest forms of gathering of Macedonian expatriates date back to the time of their massive arrival in new environments when they brought with them their culture, traditions, religion and customs. As a result of that they formed their religious and cultural associations, as well as associations for mutual assistance.

Their goal was to preserve Macedonian culture, customs and religious traditions, to provide money to socially disadvantaged Macedonians, and to raise funds to construct churches, schools and other facilities in their new environments and in their birth places in Macedonia as well.



The largest population of Macedonians came to the former Soviet Union during the Civil War in Greece, and settled in the Caucasus regions. The number of Macedonians from Belomorska Macedonia was about 7-8,000 in only Tashkent and surrounding areas from 1949 onwards. That number later dropped rapidly due to the large number of returnees to Greece, Macedonia and other countries.

Today several thousand Macedonians, mostly from Aegean Macedonia, live in the former Eastern European countries: Romania, Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia, Poland, Ukraine, Russia and other countries. In addition, there are numerous immigrants coming from mixed marriages of Macedonians from all parts of Macedonia.

In addition to the overseas countries, European Union and other countries, the Republics of Croatia and Slovenia, are countries where all rights are guaranteed to Macedonians as a national minority.

They are countries where their governments, through material and financial assistance, help the development of minorities to promote their national, cultural and linguistic values.

Thus, the Macedonians serve as a bridge for developing friendly relations among Croatia, Slovenia and Macedonia, promoting these two countries as democratic and civil society countries.

The destiny of Macedonians in Serbia and Montenegro is similar if not identical to that of Macedonians living in Croatia and Slovenia. But here, due to the problem with the Serbian Orthodox Church, Macedonians don't have their own religious temples; but they are organized in cultural and artistic societies and other associations.

There are Macedonians who live in Pakistan as well and who consider themselves descendants of the soldiers and generals of Alexander of Macedon (the Great)". This we stated with Michle Kitli. "In the Himalayas, in the eastern part of Pakistan, there is a tribe which differs from the others.

They are tall with a white complexion. They have their own autonomous territory which they call Hunza or Hunzacad, they speak Burushaski, and identify as Macedonians. The sun on their red flag has eight gold rays. Recently they accepted Islam, but retained the old Macedonian traditions.

In addition, there are Macedonians in Israel whose fate is similar to that of the Jews. Their hard life, overall conditions, strong love for their religion, nation, country, past and future have made Macedonians and Jews establish their sovereign and independent states.

One of them is me who has learned from the Jews how painstakingly difficult is and how much sacrifice is needed to establish a state: how it is even more difficult to achieve freedom, and how the newly established state, Republic of Macedonia, is to be defended, built, protected and developed loftily, with strong faith, great love and best hope.

The "Macedonian Digest"

THE MACEDONIANS IN THE DIASPORA (4)

Our friend Gojko Jakovleski, alias Gojko Delchev Rafkin – Goce Makedonski is a part of Macedonia, which is traditionally an emigrational region from which emigrational movements of the Macedonian people and movements to the transoceanic and other countries took place toward the mid 19th century. Such movements were especially emphasized during the second half of the 19th century and were known as “pechalba” (going abroad for economic reasons). With a ranging scale and intensity they have continued till the present day.

Thus, according to some data, the first group of “pechalbari” (people who went to work abroad) reached the North American continent in 1885 and Australia in the 1920’s. However, individuals who had joined groups of pechalbari from the neighboring and other countries had crossed the ocean even before that.

The wave of emigration from Macedonia, mainly from the traditionally emigrational regions: Lerin, Bitola, Prespa, Kostur, Voden, Tetovo, Ohrid, Solun, Struga, Prilep, and other parts of Macedonia, intensified following the Ilinden Uprising in 1903. Nevertheless, emigration of the Macedonians from their country gained greater dimensions during the period that followed the partitioning of Macedonia, throughout the Balkan and First World Wars.

This was above all, the result of the unbearable political, economic, social, and security position of the Macedonian population. Therefore, according to some data during this period from all three parts of the partitioned Macedonia, about 60% of the emigrated Macedonians came from the Aegean part; 30% came from the Vardar part; and 10% from the Pirin part. According to the Special Commission of the UN for the Balkans, in its report of 13 May, 1949, a total of 232,000 Macedonians emigrated from Aegean Macedonia. In their place the Greek authorities brought Greek refugees (prosvigi) from Asia Minor and colonized the Aegean part of Macedonia.

Emigration to the Transatlantic countries intensified perceptibly following the Second World War, especially after the defeat of the Democratic Army in the Civil War in Greece, on whose side the Macedonian population from Aegean Macedonia had participated massively finally hoping to get its national and social rights.



The number of Macedonian migrants increases from year to year as a result of the migration movements, the growing birthrate, and other factors. There is no complete and more precise information regarding the number of Macedonians in the Balkans and the Macedonian emigrants in the transatlantic countries, the European Union, and other countries. Official statistical data, on the other hand, regarding the number of Macedonian emigrants throughout the world, are unrealistic for many reasons.

Thus, according to them, in the USA there are 20,365 Macedonians (US Census Bureau, 1990,) in Canada there are approximately 54,000 Macedonians; in Australia there are 42,199 Macedonians (according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia); in the Federal Republic of Germany there are 49,400 legal residents (according to the central Statistics Bureau of SRG, 1999); in Switzerland 53,907 are legal residents; in Belgium 2,059 are legal residents; in the Netherlands there are 577 (according to the Dutch Bureau of Statistics;) in the Great Dukedom of Luxembourg there are 358; in Italy there are 21,988 (according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia;) in Austria there are 21 ("Statistic Austria"); in Poland there are 150 Macedonian families (according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia;) and in the Former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia there are 47,200 according to the official census. On the other hand, according to an Austrian source, approximately seven million people lived in ethnic Macedonia at the beginning of the last, the twentieth, century.

However, some more realistic estimates show that, in addition to the Macedonian population in the Republic of Macedonia (1,378,687 – according to the 1994 census) more than 300,000 live in Bulgaria, approximately 250,000 live in Greece, more than 150,000 live in Albania, and approximately 100,000 live in Serbia and Monte Negro. It has also been estimated that since the 19th century about 600 – 700, 000 Macedonians from every part of Macedonia migrated to various countries around the world.

Without complete statistical and other information it is quite difficult to determine the exact number realistically. Nevertheless, there are estimates that approximately 500,000 Macedonian immigrants live in the USA, Canada, and Australia.

Of these, about 150,000 live in the USA, close to 150,000 are in Canada, and over 200,000 are in Australia and New Zealand. The majority of these come from Aegean Macedonia, and the Republic of Macedonia, while a small number come from the Macedonian part in Bulgaria and Albania.

It has been estimated that approximately 150,000 residents of Macedonian origin live in the European Union alone (Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, Italy, Great Britain, followed by Slovenia, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, the Ukraine, and Russia,) and other countries.



There are also a large number of ethnic Albanians from Macedonia in the European Union. There is also a certain number of settlers of Macedonian origin who live in South America, Egypt, Israel, South Africa, Uzbekistan, and Turkey where there is a large number of Macedonian Muslims and ethnic Turks from Macedonia.

There are Macedonians who live in Pakistan that refer to themselves as descendents of the army of Alexander the Great. Namely, on the Himalayas in the easternmost part of Pakistan, there is a tribe that differs from every other tribe around it. They are tall and blond. They have their own autonomous country which they call Hanza, or Hanzakut, and speak a burushaski language and consider themselves Macedonians, descendents of Alexander.

The Constitution of this Himalayan country states that they are descendents of Alexander the Great and his generals. Their flag is red and has a golden eight-ray Sun. In recent times they adopted the Islamic religion, but have retained their old traditions.

According to Gojko Jakovleski, alias Gojko Delchev Rafkin –Goce Makedonski the issue regarding the Macedonians of Muslim religion is a significant chapter in the historical development of the Macedonians in the Diaspora.

There are several hundred thousand of them in Istanbul, Ismir, Bursa, and other cities in Turkey, as well the countries of the European Union. These people mainly came from the areas of Debar, Reka, the village of Gorno Vranovci, Skopje, Tetovo, Gora in Kosovo and Метохија, and other areas. Characteristically, this Macedonian population adopted the Islamic religion but retained the Macedonian language, culture, customs, and traditions brought with them from Macedonia.

Their love of Macedonia and the links with their ancestors' hearths are truly great. It is also a similar or perhaps identical case with the ethnic Turks from Macedonia who are nostalgically connected to the birth places of their ancestors. This contributes on a spiritual, cultural, and especially economic scale to the strengthening of relations between the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Macedonia.

The Monograph "Gojko Jakovlevski"

ETHNIC ORGANIZATIONS OF THE MACEDONIANS IN USA AND CANADA BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS (5)

Like the other ethnic groups in the USA and Canada, the Macedonian emigrants also established a number of ethnic organizations. These provided them the feeling of security and became a place for ethnic organization on a national scale, developing in them patriotic faith, love, and hope for their fatherland, Macedonia.

Prior to the Second World War the associations of the Macedonian emigrants had been under strong foreign influence, especially the Bulgarian propaganda. Regardless of this they nevertheless retained their Macedonian ethnic belonging because their societies and associations created opportunities for regular mutual contacts and faster integration in the new society.

In USA and Canada the Macedonians were connected through numerous charitable, social and cultural, religious, political, informative, and other organizations and associations. In the period between the First and Second World Wars the Macedonian emigrants, among other things, were also organized in the following ethnic associations:

“MACEDONIAN PATRIOTIC ORGANIZATION” (MPO)

The first political organization to gather the Macedonian emigrants in USA and Canada was MPO – the Macedonian Political Organization. However, due to the attitude of the American government which did not allow political organization of the emigrants it changed its name from “political” to patriotic (“patrioticheska) organization (MPO) and as such continues to function today.

The MPO was established on 30 September, 1922 in Fort Wayne, Indiana, where they held the First Congress of the Macedonian Political Organizations, that is, the village and regional societies. This organization emerged as a result of the Macedonian emigrants’ desire to have their own ethnic organization.

At first it had a correct attitude towards the Macedonian issue. It fought before the world, the Macedonian public, and the emigrants, for national and



social freedom of the population in Macedonia. Thus, the MPO approached the governments and other institutions in Bulgaria, Serbia, and Greece whenever there were pressures or killings of Macedonians.

They reacted by sending their resolutions and other documents and articles. The MPO also frequently appeared as a donator at charities organized by Macedonian emigrants providing various kinds of aid for Macedonia. At the beginning for MPO Macedonia was equal among the equal countries in the Balkans.

However, in the period 1927 – 1929 the organization fell under strong Bulgarian influence when a process of disorientation and disorganization appeared among the Macedonian emigrants.

The MPO then began to negate the national originality of the Macedonian people, supporting the thesis on some kind of Bulgarian character of Macedonia.

During the period after the Second World War, i.e. 1945 till the independence of the Republic of Macedonia in 1991; it also negated the Macedonian state, nation, language, and the Macedonian Orthodox Church. For this reason, in the Macedonian state the MPO was presented as a pro-Bulgarian organization which was mainly active among the Macedonian emigrants in USA and Canada, and so it was devoted only modest scientific and social attention.

On the other hand, Bulgarian science devoted special attention to the MPO using it as a Bulgarian emigrant organization of the "*Macedonian Bulgarians*" supporting the interests of the Bulgarian propaganda among the Macedonians in USA and Canada. This was particularly emphasized through the MPO newspaper "*Macedonian Tribune*" which continues to be published nowadays as a monthly. However, due to the decreased number of members who mainly belong to the elderly generation from the Aegean part of Macedonia, the organization is slowly dieing out.

However, after the declaration of independence and sovereignty of the Macedonian state in 1991, especially since 1991, a new process began in the MPO's attitudes toward Macedonia.

Namely, a number of moves were made toward recognition of Macedonia's independence, and numerous visits and meetings with politicians and Macedonian government officials, and other activities were conducted.

Despite the fact that the MPO continues to follow its previous determinations, nevertheless there are certain noticeable positive changes in MPO's management and in relation to the attitude toward the Macedonian national issue, the Macedonian Orthodox Church, and towards the Macedonian people in general. Nowadays, the generations of the older members of MPO, who feel as Americans and Canadians, look favorably upon the progress of the Republic of Macedonia.



MACEDONIAN – NATIONAL SOYUZ (MNS) (MAKEDONSKI-NARODEN SOJUZ)

The first Macedonian independent progressive group whose number later increased to six in USA and Canada was established in Pontiac, Michigan, in 1929. The organization of the collaboration and general coordination of activities among the progressive groups was entrusted to the Initiative Committee which organized the First Conference held in Toledo, Ohio, on 22 and 23 March, 1930.

A Resolution was adopted at the conference which obligated every Macedonian independent progressive group to coordinate their activities among themselves and to provide conditions for a most successful expansion of their ideas among the Macedonian emigrants. This Resolution speaks of the battle that was to be fought against the MPO organization which, as it was stated, was a weapon of the Great Bulgarian state policy.

Other documents of the conference also treated the MPO as one of the biggest opponents to the progressive movement of the Macedonian emigrants. The progressive groups accepted only the workers class as their allies with whom they were prepared to fight against fascism and imperialism through the unique revolutionary front.

The aim of the Macedonian independent progressive groups was to unite the Macedonians misled by the MPO, and to develop political activity among the Macedonian emigrants. One of the greatest desires and demands of these groups was to make a Balkan federation which would guarantee wide national, political, social rights and freedoms for the Balkan peoples, including the Macedonian people of all three parts of Macedonia.

In their realization of this policy the new Macedonian National Soyuz (MNS) counted on the joint action and support of every progressive power and person in the world, especially those of the Balkans. The MNS organization began publishing and affirming its activities in numerous newspapers, including the "Narodna Volja" (People's Will).

Otherwise, the Macedonian National Soyuz (MNS) got its name with the uniting of the progressive groups into a "Soyuz" at the First Congress held in Garry, Indiana during 24 – 26 April, 1931. Later, after the Fourth Congress of the MNS held in Detroit, Michigan, in 1934, two organizations were made from the one Macedonian National Soyuz (MNS). These were: the Macedonian American National Soyuz (MANS) in USA, and the Macedonian – Canadian National Soyuz (MKNS) in Canada.

The members of MANS and MKNS supported greater togetherness among the progressive powers of all the Balkan peoples. They felt especially strong about supporting the National Liberation movement of the Macedonian people



together with the other nations, Thus, one of the more remarkable activities of the MANS and MKNS was the "Memorandum for Resolution of the Macedonian issue," which on 11 February, 1945 the National Committee addressed to the American Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the international community, numerous institutes and institutions, and to the Macedonian emigrant population.

However, a campaign against the progressive organizations and supporters of the left wing at the beginning of the cold war began in USA after 1947. Many organizations at the time were declared subversive.

MANS was also labeled as such and was declared a transformational organization. Later, in 1949 the decision of the State Attorney of the USA took effect, thus forbidding any further activities of the Macedonian - American National Soyuz. In the period between the two World Wars the MPO and MNS organizations proved to be most active.

The majority of members in their branches were Macedonians from the Aegean and Vardar parts of Macedonia. The MPO was particularly present through its branches in every community where Macedonian emigrants lived. Hence, the following are organizations and associations of the Macedonian emigrants from their arrival till the Second World War, individually by state:

NEW YORK STATE

The first ethnic organization of Macedonian emigrants was registered in New York State, USA. Thus, earliest information dates back to 1899 when the "Levski" society was established in the city of Nord Adams, and had both Bulgarian and Macedonian members. The society had its own constitution which was sent to Sofia the same year for the approval of the Supreme Macedonian Committee.

In 1903 the "Levski" society had 16 branches in various cities throughout USA. IT was of social character whose basic aim was to help its members in case of illness or unemployment, to organize English language courses, to acquaint the newcomers with the characteristics of American living, etc. The society also raised funds to help Macedonia and Audrain. After 1904 the "Levski" society broke up. On 27 March of the same year, a Bulgarian - American - Macedonian committee was established, i.e. a Macedonian Soyuz which discontinued its activities in 1905.

A Bulgarian mutual aid society by the name of "Drugar" ("Friend") was also founded in 1902 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The aim of this society is obvious from its name and it mainly concentrated on providing material aid to newcomers, acquainting them with the habits and customs of their new fatherland, helping them learn the English language, finding employment, etc.



Gradually other societies of a social nature began emerging on the American Continent. Thus, on 4 November, 1906 a Bulgarian – Macedonian society by the name of “*Priselec*” (“*Dojdenec*” – “*Newcomer*”) was organized in New York. Later, in 1912, emigrants from Bitola living in the city of Syracuse organized a Bitola charitable society.

Also in Syracuse in 1917 emigrants from the village of Gornichevo, near Florina founded the charity association named “*Orel*” (“*Eagle*”) which had a branch in the neighboring city of Rochester. In 1932 emigrants from the village of Bapchor in Rochester founded their own branch of the “*Vich*” society in Fort Wayne. At the beginning of 1922 a group of Macedonian emigrants from the city of New York founded the “*Ilinden*” organization. This organization adopted a resolution regarding the signing of the agreement for friendly relations between Serbia and Bulgaria.

One of the oldest members of the MPO organization was the Macedonian organization known as “*Independent Macedonia*” from the city of Syracuse, founded in 1923. Initially it was named “*Autonomous Macedonia*” but was later renamed into “*Independent Macedonia*.”

In 1928 a mutual aid society named “*Prespa*” was established as one of the biggest Macedonian societies of the MPO in USA. It was based in Lackawanna, in the immediate vicinity of Buffalo. In addition to its significant social activities, this society also developed numerous cultural activities among the Macedonian emigrants, thus organizing its own drama club which performed several dramas of which one of the first was “*Macedonian Bloodshed Wedding*.”

The “*Jordan Gyurkov*” organization was founded by the Macedonian emigrants in the city of Lackawanna on 26 April, 1931. On 2 August, 1932 a women’s association was established, and as part of this organization a Macedonian – Bulgarian school was opened, too. The “*Simeon Eftimov*” organization was founded on 11 October, 1933 in the city of Rochester. Later, on 30 January, 1938 the “*Argir Manasiev*” organization was founded in the city of Albany. Members of this small organization were mainly Macedonian emigrants from the Gevgelija region.

OHIO

The Macedonians in Ohio were among the first to organize themselves ethnically. Thus, in 1917 in Springfield the emigrants from Gumendga united into a charitable organization known as “*Gumendga*.” In 1918 emigrants in Cleveland who came from the village of Aitos, near Florina united in the Macedonian – Bulgarian society known as “*Saint Dimitrija*.”



On 1 March, 1922 there was a Macedonian fraternity in the city of Dayton. In 1929 this fraternity changed its name to the "*Macedonian Political Organization – Pirin*." Later, women's and youth clubs were established as part of the organization, and a school was opened.

On 22 April, 1922 the Macedonian emigrants in Springfield founded the "*Solun*" (Thessalonica) organization. Initially it was named "Machenik" (Martyr) but later changed its name to "*Solun*." A women's club was established within this organization. On 21 November, 1923 the Macedonian emigrants in the city of Kenton founded the "*Boris Sarafov*" organization. The foundation assembly of the "*Pelister*" organization in the city of Akron was also held in 1923.

A women's and youth clubs were established. In May, 1939 members of the "*Pelister*" organization built their own building. The majority of Macedonian emigrants living in Akron came from the areas of Florina, Bitola, Prilep, and a somewhat smaller number from Ohrid and Gevgelija.

The "*Todor Aleksandrov*" organization was founded in 1923 in Kingstown following the break up of the Macedonian – Bulgarian society known as "*Prilep*." This organization had developed many humanitarian activities so that from many of its members it collected and sent a large amount of money for the Macedonian refugees in Bulgaria. The majority of Macedonian emigrants living in this city came mostly from the areas of Prilep, Kriva Palanka, Bitola, Prespa, and Florina.

The Macedonian organization of "*Alexander the Great*" was founded in the city of Loraine in 1924. Later in Loraine, in March, a public assembly was held, and in June 1924 the "*Alexander the Great*" organization had been founded. The majority of members of this organization came from Dolna Prespa and the area of Resen. At the same time, on 13 May, 1924 one of the biggest societies, the Bulgaro-Macedonian mutual charity organization of "*Pelister*" was organized in Loraine.

On 10 February, 1926 the "*Vardar*" organization had been founded in Cleveland. A women's club and a youth club also functioned as part of the organization. Later, on 6 August, 1926 the Macedonian emigrants in Mansfield established the "*Ohrid*" organization which also contained a women's club. In 1928 the "*Bistrica*" organization was founded in Cincinnati. It had its own school and drama club which performed the drama titled "*Macedonian Bloodshed Wedding*."

The "*Hristo Matov*" organization was founded in the city of Maslon on 2 June, 1931 as a branch of the MPO. The majority of the members of the organization in Maslon came from the regions of Prespa, Florina, and Castoria. The Macedonian political organization "*Sloboda*" (Freedom) was founded on 18 July, 1939 in Columbus.



The "*Vasil Cekalarov*" organization from Toledo was also a constituent member of the Macedonian Political Organization and was one of the members of the 34 Macedonian ethnic organizations in USA, two in Canada, and three in Australia.

INDIANA

The industrial centers in the state of Indiana were places to which a large number of Macedonians from the Aegean part of Macedonia had migrated and organized themselves into their own ethnic organizations. Thus, in 1911 in Granite City the emigrants from Patellae, near Florina had united in the "*Orel*" (Eagle) society which also had branches in Indianapolis, Indiana, and Dayton, Ohio. In the same year the emigrants from the village of Visheni, near Castoria, who lived in Fort Wayne, established the "*Napredok*" (Progress) charity organization.

Here too in 1912 the emigrants from the village of Chereshnitsa, near Castoria, established the "*Sveti Gyorgi*" (St. George) charity organization. At the same time in Fort Wayne the emigrants from the village of Bapchor united in the "*Vitch*" charity organization, as one of the most powerful Macedonian village societies in USA.

In 1917 a number of charity organizations were established - the educational and relief society by the name of "*Napredok*" (Progress) in the city of Gary established by the emigrants from the village of Kuratica, near Ohrid. Later, in 1918 in Gary the emigrants from the village of Velgoshti, near Ohrid organized the mutual aid society named "*Progress*." In 1918 the emigrants from the village of Tiolishta, near Castoria established the relief society named "*Zashtita*" (Protection) in Fort Wayne.

In 1924 a Bulgarian - Macedonian educational course of an emphasized social and educational character was established in Indianapolis. Initially, this society was named "*Leon Club*" but in 1930 its name was changed.

The "*Alexander the Great*" society in Gary was founded in 1927. It united the Macedonian emigrants in this city and the neighboring suburbs in the state of Indiana. According to the constitution of the "*Alexander the Great*" society its members were only persons of Macedonian origin and their sons and daughters in USA.

One of the more powerful Macedonian organizations within the Macedonian Political Organization was the "*Kostur*" (Kastoria) organization in the city of Fort Wayne, founded on 21 November, 1921. The first congress of the MPO held on 1 October, 1922 was organized by the "*Kostur*" branch. A women's and



youth club was established as part of this branch. Presently the Central Committee of the MPO for USA and Canada is located in Fort Wayne.

The Macedonian organization named "*Dame Gruev*" in the city of Indianapolis was one of the oldest members of the MPO. It was established in 1922 and until 1923 it was known by the name of "*Lerinsko Bratstvo*" (Lerin (Florina) Brotherhood.) This organization had a women's and youth club as well. Every member of the "*Dame Gruev*" organization was also a member of the church community and maintained the St. Stefan Church. The organization had their own hall which held about 300 people, and it too, had a women's and youth club. One other ethnic organization in the state of Indiana was also "*Rodina*" (Fatherland) which the Macedonian emigrants in the city of Gary founded on 14 December, 1930.

MICHIGAN

Michigan was and is one of the most significant states for the Macedonian emigrants. Here, the Macedonians began organizing themselves as soon as they had arrived. Thus, among the village societies in 1918 in Jackson, the emigrants from the village of Armensko, near Florina had organized the charity and educational society named "*Napredok*" (Progress.).

Later, in 1924 one of the largest Macedonian societies, "*Buff*" whose members were the emigrants from the village of Buff, near Florina, was established in Detroit. This society expanded its activities in Windsor, Canada where many emigrants from Buff lived. The "*Buff*" society continues to exist in both cities even today.

The Bulgarian - Macedonian women's relief society of "*Soedinenie*" (Unity) was established in Detroit in 1923. By 1939 it no longer existed and the women's mutual aid society of "*Milosrdie*" (Charity) emerged as its successor. In 1926 the Macedonian emigrants living in Battle Creek founded the mutual aid and educational society known as "*St. Cyril and Methodius*." Later, in 1932 they established their own mutual aid neutral society once again.

In 1927 emigrants from Tetovo living in Detroit founded a charity organization named "*Shar Planina*" (Mt. Shar). Nowadays the emigrants who come from the Tetovo area are organized within the "*Polog*" society whose activities also spread to Windsor.

The "*Tatkovina*" (Fatherland) organization was founded in Detroit toward the end of May and beginning of June 1922. It helped the St. Clement of Ohrid church community in Detroit financially and developed wide educational and



cultural activities. This organization had a youth and women's clubs, which were especially active in organizing cultural activities and entertainment.

The Macedonian organization named "*Balkanski mir*" (Balkan Peace) was founded in the city of Lansing in 1923. Later, on 1 June, 1934 the Macedonian organization named "3rd August" was founded in the city of Jackson as part of the MPO.

ILLINOIS

One of the first Macedonian village societies ever organized on the American continent in 1906 was the "*Lazo Pop Trajkov*" society whose members came from the village of D'mbeni, near Castoria. This society had two seats: in Madison, Illinois, and Himond, (Indiana), i.e. places where the majority of emigrants from this village lived. This society expanded its activities among the D'mbeni residents in Canada as well.

This same year residents from the village of Kosinets, near Castoria organized their own village society seated in the city of Madison. In 1906 emigrants from the village of Smrdesh, near Castoria established the "*Pando Klyashev*" educational charitable society. One year later, in 1907 in Madison the emigrants from the village of Oshchima also established their own charitable society named "*Sv. Nikola*" (St. Nikola).

Similarly, in 1909 emigrants from the village of Breznitsa, near Castoria established their own charitable society in Madison. Emigrants from the village of Aposkep, near Castoria founded the "*Uspeh*" (Success) charitable society.

On the basis of their village belonging the emigrants from the village of Ekshi-Su, near Florina, who lived in Indianapolis, also established their own charitable society. Later, in 1913 emigrants from the Bitola area who had moved to part of Granite City founded the Bitola charitable organization named "*Zora*."

In 1917 emigrants from the village of Setoma, near Castoria founded the charitable organization named "Sonce" (Sun). Later, in 1926 the "*Potkrepa*" (Support) mutual aid society emerged in Granite City and the city of Madison in Argon. The mutual aid women's society named "*Makedonskata Bugarka vo Amerika*" (The Macedonian Bulgarian Woman in America) was also established in these cities.

This society is believed to have been one of the biggest in this part of America. One of the more significant Macedonian emigrant organizations within the MPO was the "*Bashtin kraj*" or "*Tatkov kraj*" (Father's Country) organization. It was founded in Granite City in 1924. A women's club, and later a theatre group were established within this organization.



The MPO also had its organizations in other states of the US, two in Canada, and three in Australia. On 27 January, 1935 the Macedonian emigrants living in Los Angeles, California founded the "*Brakja Miladinovci*" (Miladinov Brothers) organization which continues to be active today. Later, on 13 September, 1934 the Macedonian emigrants in the city of St. Luis, Missouri held the inaugural assembly for the "*Belica*" organization. The "*Makedonija*" (Macedonia) organization was founded on 2 May, 1930 in Seattle, Washington.

ONTARIO

MPO in Canada was active in Toronto and Windsor which engaged the majority of Macedonian emigrants most of whom had come from Aegean Macedonia. On 14 May, 1922 the "*Pravda*" (Justice) branch of MPO was founded in Toronto consisting of members the majority of which were emigrants from the village of Gabresh, near Castoria, and other places.

A women's club was established and it developed wide cultural and educational activities. At the same time, members of the "*Pravda*" organization were active in the church field and were at first members of the Bulgarian – Macedonian Orthodox Church of St. Cyril and Methodius in Toronto, and later in the *St. George Church*.

The MPO branch in Windsor was named "*Vlado Chernozemski*" and was established on 1 November, 1934. A people's school and women's club functioned within this organization.

The "Macedonian Digest"



ORTHODOX CHURCHES OF THE MACEDONIANS UNDER FOREIGN JURISDICTION (6)

Macedonians have always been subject to various kinds of foreign religious, national, and influence, wherever there were conditions for such activity. The most active of all in this respect were the Bulgarian, Greek, and Serbian propaganda, which fulfilled their goals successfully. This was enhanced by the lack of organization of the Macedonian emigrants, who unfortunately had neither a state of their own nor Macedonian Orthodox churches.

For this reason during the period from their arrival to USA, Canada, Australia, and other countries till the constitution of the Macedonian state the Macedonians were subject to Bulgarian, Greek, and Serbian propaganda. The Catholic, Anglican, and certain Protestant Churches also imposed their propaganda and influence upon the Macedonian emigrants, especially from Aegean Macedonia. Thus, many of them joined these churches.

During the period between the two World Wars when the MOC had not yet been established as an institution, the Macedonian emigrants in USA and Canada not only participated in the organization and construction of the so-called Macedonian-Bulgarian Orthodox churches, but they also supported, financed and attended them.

These churches were initiated, built, and controlled by MPO. A small number of Macedonians, especially the elderly generations, continue to satisfy their religious needs at some of these Christian churches. Since the 1990's most of the churches of Macedonian-Bulgarian character which had been controlled by the MPO were handed over and are now under full control and jurisdiction of the Eastern Orthodox Church of USA and Canada, which is in no way related to the Macedonian people and Macedonia.

Similarly, prior to the constitution of the MOC as part of the Ohrid Archbishopate, a large number of Macedonian emigrants attended, and offered financial and spiritual support in the construction and existence of Serbian Orthodox Churches. Even today a certain number of Macedonian emigrants continue to attend Serbian, Russian, Ukrainian, Romanian, and other Christian churches in USA and Canada.



ST. GYRIL AND METHODIUS IN GRANITE CITY (SV. KIRIL I METODIJ)

The first Macedonian – Bulgarian church in USA was established and built in Granite City, Illinois in the summer of 1909. It was built in what was then the suburb of “*Lincoln*” which had a large Macedonian emigrant population, the majority of which had come from Aegean Macedonia, and some from Bulgaria. The church

As early as June 1908 he had been sent by the administration of the Holy Synod in Sofia to serve the Bulgarians. However, his aim was to “gather” the Macedonians around to the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, which had a strong influence over the Macedonians at the time, particularly over those who had come from the Aegean part of Macedonia.

During the period 1913 – 1922 the church was practically closed since it did not have a permanent priest. After 1933 it became more active. However, after World War II its activities declined. Thus, in 1954 it was sold to the Armenian Apostle Church.

ST. HOLY TRINITY IN MADISON (SV. TROJCA)

The Bulgarian Orthodox Church of *St. Holy Trinity* in Madison, Illinois was founded in 1910. It was built using the funds of Macedonians from the Aegean part of Macedonia and some Bulgarians. As was the case with the other Macedonian Bulgarian Orthodox Churches, the Bulgarian archimandrite managed this, too. In 1919 the church was set on fire and was extremely damaged.

Ten years later the church was reconstructed and restored. It consisted of the church premises and a small hall. In 1975 the church was expanded and services were conducted in English. This was the only church built mostly by Macedonians, which was not controlled by the MPO till 1938. Till about ten years ago every other Macedonian Bulgarian or Bulgarian Orthodox Church had been controlled by the Macedonian Political Organization.

ST. ANNUNCIATION IN STILTON (SV. BLAGOVESHTENIE)

The second Macedonian Bulgarian Orthodox Church in USA is the *St. Annunciation Church* in Stilton, Pennsylvania. It was established in 1909 several months after the foundation of the *St. Cyril and Methodius Church* in Granite City. The same Bulgarian archimandrite, who was also elected to be the first



enoric priest of the church, too devoted this. Mostly MPO members of the "Prilep" branch attended it. This branch was established in 1921, and in fact owned the house which had a hall immediately next to the church. The church, on the other hand, had been built in 1927 using the funds of Macedonian emigrants who came mostly from Prilep, and the region. The church was completed in 1949. However, at the beginning of 1975 the church was set on fire and was largely damaged. This church continues its activities now and belongs to the Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church in USA, Canada, and Australia.

ST. STEFAN IN INDIANAPOLIS (SV. STEFAN)

One of the larger Macedonian colonies in USA after the Ilinden Uprising was in Indianapolis. Hence, about a thousand people from the areas of Florina, Edessa, and other places in Western Macedonia, and about a hundred Bulgarians joined in organizations known as: "Ekshisu," "Ostrovsko," and "Patelsko." They had decided to establish a Christian church in Indiana. At the time the same Bulgarian archimandrite had come to their community and continued his mission "helping" them establish the Bulgarian Church of *St. Stefan* on 1 January 1915. Funds raised mostly by the Macedonians were used to purchase the building, which was renovated and adapted into a church. 1918 had already paid off the church premises.

This church still stands today. It is attended by a certain number of families who originally came from Aegean Macedonia and Bulgaria. The integration process in the new environment had its effects on them, too. Church services are conducted only in English at this church as well.

ST. RESURRECTION IN TOLEDO (SV. VOSKRESENIE)

The Macedonian - Bulgarian *St. Resurrection Church* served the Macedonian and small number of Bulgarian emigrants in Toledo, Loraine, Mansfield, and Cleveland. The church was built and opened on 18 June 1923. The MPO had a strong influence in this church.

ST. PETER AND PAUL (SV. PETAR I PAVLE)

The *St. Peter and Paul* Macedonian Bulgarian Church was founded in Mason City, Iowa. It was built and opened in May 1928, and was attended by emigrants from Iowa and Minnesota.



ST. CLEMENT OF OHRID IN GARY (SV. KLIMENT OHRIDSKI)

The *St. Clement of Ohrid* Macedonian – Bulgarian Orthodox Church was founded in July 1929 in Gary, Indiana. Initially a Serbian Orthodox Church had been purchased which engaged and was attended by a large number of Macedonians and Bulgarians. The church had problems with the property owner, and was therefore closed down. Later a new church was built on new premises but its activities decreased until it stopped functioning.

ST. NIKOLA IN FORT WAYNE (SV. NIKOLA)

The seat of the MPO is found in Fort Wayne. It was here that church life began at first in private houses and stores, and in Butler's Hall between 1940 and 1948. Church services were conducted in Bulgarian. A decision was brought to raise funds for a new *St. Nikola' Church* in 1946. Two years later, the newly constructed church was devoted in November 1948. It is one of the most beautiful Macedonian Bulgarian Orthodox churches on the North American continent. As was the case with other Macedonian Bulgarian Orthodox churches in USA and Canada, this church was also a place for conducting religious instruction, and it helped many newcomers of various nationality and denomination. It was also a place from which the Orthodox religion spread and it maintained the Bulgarian – Macedonian heritage. Throughout the period of about forty years priests conducted services in Bulgarian, but recently services are conducted in English.

Macedonian – Bulgarian and Bulgarian churches in which the majority of members were Macedonians were also built in USA in the period before and after World War II. This was the case with the following churches: *St. George* in Toledo; *St. Prophet Ilija* in Akron, Ohio; *St. Sofia* in Chicago, Illinois; *St. Spirit (Sv. Duh)* in Youngstown, Ohio; *St. Nikola* in Flint, Michigan; *St. Clement of Ohrid* and *St. George*, both in Los Angeles, California; *St. Spirit* in Cincinnati, Ohio; *St. Dimitrija* in Cleveland, Ohio; *St. Nikola* in Buffalo, New York; *St. Andrej* in New York City; and *St. Spas* in Bottle Creek, Michigan, founded in 1947.

After World War II till the restoration of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, the Macedonian emigrants built, supported, and attended Macedonian-Bulgarian, Serbian, Greek, Russian, Romanian, and other churches, including the following:



ST. CLEMENT OF OHRID IN DETROIT (SV. KLIMENT OHRIDSKI)

By all means the largest Macedonian colony in USA is Detroit, where the majority of Macedonian emigrants arrived at the beginning of the XX century. They came for various reasons and with various national, political, and religious beliefs. Hence, they began various forms of organization and connection both culturally and spiritually. Thus, a certain number of Macedonians together with the small number of Bulgarian emigrants joined on a religious scale. Till 1927 they satisfied their religious needs at various Christian churches. After this year they got together in the Macedonian Bulgarian Orthodox Church which today bears the name of *St. Clement of Ohrid*.

In 1928 in Dearborn two houses were bought using funds from the Macedonians, the majority of which came from the Aegean part of Macedonia. On 17 February 1929 on these premises the foundation stone was placed for the new St. Trinity Church.

The church was soon built although not finished, and on 2 May the same year the first church service was held. This marked the beginning of joint church attendance of the Macedonians and Bulgarians led by the Bulgarian priest – “missionary” who had been sent for this purpose directly from Sofia.

However, during the crisis (1930 – 1934) problems of a financial character emerged so the church was closed and put up for sale. This forced the members of the “*Tatkovina*” branch of the Macedonian Patriotic Organization (MPO) in Detroit to pull down the *St. Trinity Church* in Dearborn, and invest in a new church. Thus, in March 1935 foundations were placed to a new church community that was named *St. Clement of Ohrid*. The new church was ready in three years and served till 1964 when a division among the members appeared. One fraction remained at *St. Clement of Ohrid*, built in 1964 and blessed in June 1966 by the Bulgarian metropolitan Andrej. It was a three-section church attended nowadays by a large number of Macedonians from every part of Macedonia as well as a small number of Bulgarians and other Christians. The other fraction built a new church in Dearborn Heights named *St. Paul (Sv. Pavle)*.

This state came as a consequence to the division of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, the effects of which were seen on the emigrants, too. For this reason, since 1963 in USA and Canada there are two administrations. One consists of those loyal to the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, joint with the Eastern Orthodox Church Eparchy for North and South America, and Australia, having seat in New York City, and controlling eight churches. The other consists of the Eparchy of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church for USA and Canada with seat in Toledo, Ohio, which controls and has under its jurisdiction nine churches.



ST. LAZAR , “RAVANICA” IN DETROIT

A certain number of Macedonians in Detroit, who came from the Tetovo area attended the Serbian Orthodox Cathedral Church of St. Lazar “*Ravanica*.” They helped it financially, and are presently among its most numerous and active members. They came from the villages of Vratnica, Belovishte, Rogachevo, Odri, and others. Since the building of the new church in the 1970’s a large part of the Macedonian emigrants participated in the cultural, educational, church and sports activities. Otherwise, the old or original church began its activities on 20 May 1917 when the land was purchased.

Ten years later, in 1927, construction of the church began. It was registered with the authorities in Lansing, Michigan on 27 September 1932 as a church corporation. The church was blessed on 17 June 1934. Throughout the next few decades the church was built three times. The foundation stone of the present day building of “*Ravanica*” was placed on 27 June 1965. The church was blessed on 25 and 26 November 1967. The *St. Lazar Ravanica Church* has collaborated with the former Yugoslav authorities since 1963 when the shizma emerged in the Serbian Orthodox Church. This gave the Macedonian emigrants reason and motive to attend this church.

At the same time, a certain number of Macedonian emigrants used to attend both Macedonian and Serbian churches, while a small number continue to do this even today. This is the case with the Serbian Orthodox Churches of *St. Stefan* in Lackawanna, *St. Mary* in Windsor, *St. Sava* in Toronto, and other cities.

ST. PETKA – VRATNITSA MEMORIAL HALL IN DETROIT

(SV. PETKA – VRATNIGHKA)

According to some evidence the majority of Macedonian emigrants in Detroit come from Vratnica, near Tetovo. They also attend the following churches: Macedonian Orthodox Church of *St. Mary*; Serbian Orthodox Church of *St. Lazar Ravanica*; and *St. Petka* of Vratnica. This village community which owns a large hall used for organization of various manifestations also has a small church. The building was constructed in 1979 and includes the church which is under the jurisdiction of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Presently, the emigrants from Vratnica are raising funds for construction of a new church.



ST. GYRIL AND METHODIUS IN LORAINÉ (SV. KIRIL I METODIJ)

The city of Loraine, Ohio was also center of the Macedonian emigration in the beginning years. It also had a church community, but it was founded in 1932, one year after the closure of the church in Mount Union, Pennsylvania, which was attended by Russian and Macedonian emigrants. Thus, on 24 September 1933 an assembly was held at a Slovak community center. At this assembly a committee was formed which began collecting funds for construction of a church. On 29 October 1933 foundations were placed to the *St. Cyril and Methodius* community. This church became the center of a large number of activities of the emigrants from the Balkans. Nowadays it is still active although attended by very few.

ST. THOMAS IN AKRON (SV. TOMA)

St. Thomas' Church, like the *St. Clement of Ohrid Church* on Detroit, is also registered as an Eastern European Orthodox Church. It was founded in 1959 after a certain number of believers of what was then the *St. Prophet Ilija Church* in Akron refused to acknowledge control of the MPO. On 8 November 1959 they decided to found a new church which would be served by the Bulgarian priest from the *St. Prophet Ilija Church*. The part of the name that stated "*Macedonian - Bulgarian*" was removed and the name "*St. Thomas - Eastern Orthodox Church*" was accepted. Land for construction of a church was bought and blessed on 20 February 1960 by the Bulgarian bishop, Andrej Velicki. A certain number of Macedonian emigrants from Akron, Kenton, and Maslon, attended the Serbian Orthodox Church of *St. George* in Kenton, as well as the Romanian and Syrian churches. At the same time a large number of Macedonians from the Florina and Castoria areas support and attend the Greek Orthodox Church.

ST. GYRIL AND METHODIUS IN TORONTO (SV. KIRIL I METODIJ)

The first organized community of the Macedonian emigrants in Canada is by all means the Macedonian - Bulgarian Orthodox Church of *St. Cyril and Methodius* in Toronto. Initiatives for establishment of this community began in 1910. A group of Macedonians from Aegean Macedonia gathered at the



“*Nevolska kukya*” (Nevoljani House) of the villagers from Nevoljani, near Florina, and decided to establish their own church community. A committee was formed comprising of about twenty members, all from Aegean Macedonia. The second half of August 1910 is in fact the beginning of the establishment of the church community and the time when they began raising funds for construction of the church. On 24 November of the same year they purchased a property which they adapted into a church. This was a meeting place for members of the “Pravda” branch of the MPO in Toronto and other emigrants from the Balkans.

The foundation stone of the present day church was placed on 24 May 1948. It was completed in 1949 and on 19 June of the same year the Bulgarian metropolitan Andrej Velicki devoted it. The church was completely finished in 1954.

Despite the fact that this church was built mainly from the funds of Macedonian emigrants, it nevertheless found itself under jurisdiction of the Bulgarian church and served Bulgarian propaganda the whole time. Even now the majority of believers who attend it are Macedonians. Most of them feel as Macedonians, but the tradition nurtured for several generations is quite an important factor that links the Macedonian emigrants with this church. This is also the case with the other Macedonian-Bulgarian Orthodox Churches in USA and Canada. Today it is a monument to the past, which has no believers, no young generations, but instead it is rented to people of other nations and religions in order to survive.

ST. GEORGE IN TORONTO (SV. GYORGI)

The *St. George Church* in Toronto is the second Macedonian-Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church. It was established following the separations within the first Macedonian-Bulgarian Church of *St. Cyril and Methodius* in 1940. As a consequence of this a group of Macedonian emigrants the majority of which had come from the Castoria area, who had been under the influence of Bulgarian propaganda, founded the *St. George Church* on 1 June 1941. On 26 October of the same year the foundation stone was placed, and the church was blessed on 14 November 1943. This church continues to be active presently and its members belong to the elderly Macedonian generations. It is under the jurisdiction of the Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church – USA and Canada Eparchy.



HOLY TRINITY IN TORONTO (SV. TROJCA)

A certain kind of division among the members of the MPO at the church of *St. George* emerged in the 1970's. Some Macedonian families who mainly came from the Castoria area withdrew and established the *Holy Trinity Church*. In 1971 they purchased an Anglican church and adapted it into a Christian home. In 1986 the Bulgarian bishop blessed the church and it came under jurisdiction of the Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Eparchy for USA, Canada, and Australia. This church continues to be active.

The following are Macedonian – Bulgarian Orthodox Churches under jurisdiction of the Eastern Orthodox Church which are attended by Americans and Canadians of Macedonian descent: *Holy Trinity (Sv. Trojca)* in St. Luis; *St. Cyril and Methodius* in New York; *St. George* in Los Angeles; as well as *St. Cyril and Methodius* in Melbourne; and *St. Petka* in Adelaide, Australia.

ST. DIMITRIJA IN TORONTO (ST. DIMITRIJA)

This is a Greek Orthodox Church whose construction was helped financially by Macedonians from Aegean Macedonia. It is located in the immediate vicinity to the Macedonian Orthodox Church of *St. Clement of Ohrid* in Thorncliff Park.

The purpose for building this church in 1967 was to win over the believers from *St. Clement of Ohrid* especially those from the Aegean part of Macedonia. Despite the fact that the Macedonians did not understand the Greek tongue, there are still a large number of those who got trapped in the web of the Greek propaganda of the so-called "Pan Makedoniki" (All Macedonian) organization, and left their herd.

A similar or identical history, faith, and intention are shared by the following Greek Orthodox churches in Toronto: *St. George* built in 1938, *St. Nikola* built in 1970; *St. Nikola* in Cincinnati; the Greek Church in Windsor, and others. Their members are mainly emigrants of Macedonian origin but under strong influence of the Greek propaganda and the so-called "Pan Makedoniki" organization.

This period of construction and support of Macedonian – Bulgarian Orthodox churches throughout the world has ended now since the Macedonian Orthodox Church is growing strong and numerous churches were and continue being built under its jurisdiction.

These are spiritual centers to the majority of Macedonians from every part of Macedonia including the young generations of families which belonged to the MPO, the Macedonian – Bulgarian, and Serbian churches in USA and Canada.

The "Macedonian Digest"

MACEDONIAN EMIGRANT MEDIA BEFORE WORLD WAR II (7)

Newspapers of the Macedonian emigrants in USA and Canada are of special interest and are of great significance. Their history and development are quite turbulent and very interesting. They were of special importance and played a huge role in the information activities of the Macedonians in their new environment.

The development of the newspapers before the Second World War coincides with the development of the Macedonian emigrants in USA and Canada. Basically it overlapped with the development of events in the Balkans, but even more so, it depended on the development of events surrounding Macedonia.

The majority of emigrants had been forced, for economic and political reasons, to leave their native hearth in search of peace, tranquility, and material security. However, even there they were followed by the unscrupulous Bulgarian, Greek, and Serbian, propaganda, misleading them and causing division and discord among them. This can be seen regarding their newspapers, where due to the deficiency of their own newspapers they read Bulgarian, Serbian, Greek, English, and other newspapers.

Printing of the newspapers as papers of the Bulgarians and Macedonians in America was for the reason that prior to the Second World War, according to American laws, clubs, societies, and other forms of organization and activity could only be based on, and developed by those nationalities that were constituted as states.

To the American administration at the time it was much more important what country the people came from rather than what nationality they belonged to. To them information in passports regarding national belonging was decisive. In this context we need add the large and extremely unscrupulous Greek, Serbian, and especially Bulgarian propaganda.

It was very wisely spread not going without consequences among the Macedonian emigrants by misleading them and causing division, discord, and other negative consequences among the Macedonians on the North American Continent and beyond that. Even today the Bulgarian, Greek, and Serbian propaganda are still strong. However, they are only supported by a certain number of Macedonians which unfortunately are good servants, but bad masters.



The newspapers of the Macedonian emigrants in USA and Canada prior to the Second World War were shared with the Bulgarian emigrants, which included the following:

BORBA (Battle)

The first newspaper in USA that treated the Macedonian issue was the "*Borba*" newspaper which began to be published in January 1902. This was the first newspaper of the Macedonian and Bulgarian emigrants in America.

Till its eighth edition it was a means of the Macedonian - Odrin society, but was later taken into the hands of the Bulgarians. In fact, until the eighth edition the "*Borba*" newspaper treats the Macedonian issue with its essential thesis being the autonomy of Macedonia. After this edition there was a dominance of topics relating to Bulgaria. It came out in 15 editions of which the last is dated 15 October 1902.

MAKEDONIJA (Macedonia)

The first edition of this newspaper was published on 7 December 1907, and the last in August 1910 in Granite City as an organ of the emigrants in America. It was published by the "Makedonija" society.

NARODEN GLAS (People's Voice)

The "*Naroden glas*" daily newspaper (1907 - 1944) is one of the largest joint newspapers of the Macedonian and Bulgarian emigrants in USA. Till 1913, i.e. till its sixth Anniversary, it came out once, and then twice a week, until it became a daily newspaper published in Granite City and printed in its own printing office.

MAKEDONSKA TRIBUNA (Macedonian Tribune)

After the First World War there was more intensive emigration from Macedonia throughout the world, and so national organizations and societies were established. As a result of this in 1922 these societies united into the *Soyuz of the Macedonian Political (Patriotic) Organizations* in USA and Canada known as MPO.

The "*Makedonska Tribuna*" newspaper was an organ of the *Soyuz of the Macedonian Political Organizations* in USA and Canada and appeared in Indianapolis. At first it served the interests of the revolutionary movement of the Macedonian people, but later supported the Bulgarian assimilatory and denationalizing policy in Macedonia and throughout the world.

"*Makedonska tribuna*" as an organ of the MPO came out continually, once a month, starting 10 February 1927. From its beginning till the 1990's it was



published in Bulgarian, whereas presently it is published in English with a certain number of articles in Bulgarian, and Macedonian from time to time.

This newspaper has the longest history of publishing in the Diaspora. During its history of 75 years it has played a significant role in the affirmation of the aims and interests of the MPO organization and of the Bulgarian propaganda.

Despite the fact that the paper carries the attribute "*Macedonian*" it is nevertheless a far cry from the Macedonian truth. Because of this only a certain category read this newspaper and it is not popular among the Macedonian emigrants who came to USA and Canada after the Second World War.

MAKEDONIJA (Macedonia)

This newspaper was devoted to the Macedonian liberation and independence movement. Its first edition was published in 1923; it came out once a month in English, and was published by the Central Committee of the Macedonian political organizations in USA and Canada.

MAKEDONSKI BJULETIN (Macedonian Bulletin)

The first and only edition of this paper was issued on 1 March 1930 in the city of Pontiac, Michigan, published by the Macedonian initiative committee. Its motto was: For a free Macedonia within a Balkan Federation.

MAKEDONSKI BILTEN (Macedonian Bulletin)

"Makedonski bilten" appeared in USA in March 1930 and only three issues were published. The newspaper was an organ of the Initiative Committee of the VMRO (united) organizations. The aim of *"Makedonski bilten"* was to inform the emigrants of the Macedonian issue from VMRO's point of view.

This attitude was particularly stressed in the appeal to the Macedonian emigrants which appealed that they fight against the supremacists and called upon the Macedonians for an uncompromising struggle against the fratricides and their servants.

BALKANSKO ZDRUZENIE (Balkan Association)

After establishing the Initiative Committee of the independent progressive groups, in April 1931 they held the First Congress of all the progressive Macedonian groups that united in the Macedonian People's Soyuz.

As a result of the awakening of the Macedonian consciousness, on 1 June 1931 the *"Balkansko zdruzenie"* newspaper appeared as an organ of the Macedonian People's Soyuz in America whose seat was in Detroit, as a continuation of *"Makedonski bilten."* It was published till 1934.

**SOZNAНИЕ** (Realization / knowledge)

The first Macedonian independent progressive groups in Canada and USA, and later in Australia, began forming between the two World Wars as part of the Macedonian national *soyuz* whose long lasting and fruitful progress was expressed through the "*Soznanie*" newspaper.

This newspaper was an organ of the Bulgarian branch of the Communist party in USA, and it also included Macedonian progressive emigrants. It appeared in Detroit on 15 December 1932 and came out every Friday in 2,000 copies. Printing stopped on 29 October 1937, and it was replaced by the "*Narodna Volja*" (People's Will) newspaper as an expression of the progressive Bulgarian and Macedonian emigrants in USA and Canada.

NARODNA VOLJA (People's Will)

The first edition of this newspaper was published in Detroit in 1938. It was published once a week in the Cyrillic alphabet with a large part of the materials being published in the regular articles in English. After the constitution of the People's Republic of Macedonia numerous texts were published in the Macedonian literary tongue. The "*Narodna Volja*" newspaper was published as an organ of the MANS till 1944, usually consisting of six pages and a total of 127 editions.

NOVO VREME (New Age)

The "*Novo vreme*" newspaper was published in Toronto at the time of the foundation of the Macedonian – Canadian People's Soyuz (Makedon-skokanadski naroden sojuz – MKNS) as its organ. The contents of this newspaper were identical to the contents of the "*Narodna volja*" newspaper. The aims and objectives of the MANS in USA were also identical to the aims and objectives of MKNS in Canada.

The "Macedonian Digest"

MACEDONIAN VILLAGE AND REGIONAL SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FRATERNITIES AND SPORTS ASSOCIATIONS (8)

The earliest organized charitable fraternities in Canada were fraternities of the following villages: Oshchima, Banitsa, Smrdesh, D'mbeni, Buff, and Trsje. These fraternities were established during the period 1905-1907. After 1910 there was massive organization of Macedonian village charitable societies. Till the Second World War these Macedonian village societies were basically fraternities from Aegean Macedonia, whereas after the 1960's they were basically from the Republic of Macedonia.

Activities of the Macedonian village and regional cultural and social societies in the past were initially of a clearly social character and gradually transformed to cultural and educational societies. They organized independent school activities in order to help the children, especially the new generation, study their mother tongue.

After the Second World War the children studied their Macedonian mother tongue, history, geography, and religion within church school in an organized manner.

In their activities these village cultural and social societies devoted special attention to the cultural development of their members through organized cultural living and entertainment. This was conducted through the establishment of drama clubs, choirs, and orchestras within the societies. The activities of the village and regional cultural, village and social societies also included organization of the youth on a sports level.

Some of these societies had their own cultural and artistic groups in the past, too. Several of the societies participated in the days of the caravan of the nations in Toronto. This is a cultural activity organized by every ethnicity living in multicultural Canada, whereas they present the cultural characteristics of their nation. These societies also included women's and youth clubs which organized the sports and cultural life of its members.

Some cultural and social societies published monographs of their villages. These include the monographs of the following villages: Zhelevo, Bapchor, Banitsa, Oshchima, and others. These publications were generally published upon certain anniversaries. They contain a range of papers on the history of



the villages with special emphasis on the emigrants from these villages, accompanied by photographs and appropriate advertisements.

Recently, telephone books containing addresses of every resident of a certain village, regardless of their present place of living, have become very popular. The villages of Buff, Oshchima, Brajchino, and others have such telephone books.

"OSHCIMA" CHARITABLE SOCIETY, from the village of Oshchima, near Florina, was established in 1905. It is one of the oldest societies organized by the Macedonians from Aegean Macedonia living in Canada. The main reason why this society was established at the time was for its members to help each other, especially to receive the newcomers from their village.

In the past and the present the "*Oshchima*" society has always been closely related to those residents who remained and continued living in the village, especially during the period between the two World Wars and after the Civil War in Greece when the village suffered the greatest tragedies. It also developed publishing activities and published a monograph of the village and a telephone book that includes telephone numbers and addresses of every Oshchima resident regardless of their present place of living.

THE RELIEF FRATERNITY OF "ZHELEVO", near Florina, was established in 1907, whereas the present "Zhelevo" charitable fraternity was established on 1 October 1921. It developed a wide range of activities among which in 1928 they initiated the construction of the well known "*Zhelevski dom*" (Zhelevo Hall). In 1929 they founded the "Rodina" youth society. The Zhelevo Hall was once again initiated in 1946.

On 26 August of the same year they purchased the land. The home was officially opened on 10 July 1948. The home owns weekend house lots, golf terrains, and other properties. The meeting regarding the construction of the Macedonian Orthodox Church of *St. Clement of Ohrid* in Toronto was held at the Zhelevo Hall.

THE "GABRESH" CHARITABLE ASSOCIATION was founded on 1 March 1911 in Toronto. The original society was of a charitable character. Its main aim was to help newly arrived emigrants from the village, and to help those who wished to return to their native village in Macedonia.

The society was officially registered and had its own Statute. It has approximately 250 members who organize a picnic every year together with the society from the village of Drenoveni.



“OTEC GERASIM” (Father Gerasim) CHARITABLE SOCIETY FROM TRSJE was most probably the oldest society of the Macedonians in Toronto. Unofficially it began functioning in 1890, but was officially registered in 1933 when the number of emigrants from the village of Trsje, near Florina, increased significantly. It was well known for its cultural activities among its members and the entire Macedonian emigrant population in Toronto. The society has its own park in which they have built a small monastery named *“Otec Gerasim.”*

“BUFF” CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY

The first *“Buff”* charitable society from the village of Buff, near Florina, was founded in 1959 in Detroit, USA. In 1959 a society bearing the same name was established in Toronto, too. Initially the Buff residents in Toronto were members of the society in Windsor, which was well known for its activities. Members of the *“Buff”* society took active participation in the construction of the Macedonian Orthodox Churches.

The *“Buff”* societies maintained good relations with their native village of Buff, and at the same time the three societies continue to maintain mutual friendly relations. They invite each other to their picnics, dances, and festivities.

THE “BANITSA” CHARITABLE SOCIETY from the village of Banitsa, near Lerin (Florina), was founded on 26 June 1911 in Toronto. Presently there are two societies that bring together Banitsa residents. The first *“Banitsa”* society, which is the biggest in number, is of clearly Macedonian orientation. The second society was established in 1929. Its name is *“Vevi”* after the Greek name of the village and it is pro-Greek oriented.

THE “BESVINA” CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION from the village of Besvina, near Castoria, is one of the earliest Macedonian village societies founded in Canada. It was organized in 1916. Its original name was *“Dva vrvovi”* (Two Peaks) Charitable Society, and later changed this to its present name. The society was registered and functions according to the regulations of its statute.

THE “D'MBENI” CHARITABLE SOCIETY

The original *“D'mbeni”* society from the village of D'mbeni, near Castoria, was founded in the city of Gary, Indiana, USA. It brought together D'mbeni village residents living in USA and Canada. The society was then named after Lazar Pop Trajkov, the famous fighter against Turkish slavery who came from this village. In 1940 members of the society who lived in Toronto broke



away and organized their own society naming it *"D'mbensko selsko spomagatelno drustvo Lazar Pop Trajkov"* (D'mbeni Village Charitable Society – Lazar Pop Trajkov.)

The *"D'mbeni"* society is registered and functions according to a statute. Among the emigrants this society is known for its humanitarian activities. It has its own farm known as *"D'mbensko selo"* (D'mbeni village.)

THE "V'MBEL" CHARITABLE SOCIETY from the village of V'mbel, near Castoria was founded in 1940. However, from an originally active society in its beginnings, in the 1980's it gradually turned passive with a tendency of disappearing.

THE "SKOPJA" (Nevoljani) CHARITABLE SOCIETY from the village of Nevoljani, near Florina was founded on 5 February 1956. With the aim of retaining unity among the residents of the village of Nevoljani, they named the society by the two names: the Macedonian and the Greek.

THE "DRENOVENI - KRANIONA" CHARITABLE SOCIETY from the village of Drenoveni, near Castoria, was founded in 1940 and consisted of two wings: of Macedonian and pro-Greek orientation.

THE "PELISTER" CHARITABLE AND CULTURAL SOCIETY OF THE BITOLA REGION was founded in 1960. It brought together the residents of the Bitola region. Its original name was *"Bitola" Charitable and Cultural Society*.

It conducted a wide range of activities including the first picnic organized in June 1960. In 1969 they founded the *"Bitola"* football club, which existed till 1985. Since then the club has played under the name of *"Makedonija"* and has been a member of the Macedonian-Canadian football league.

In 1979 this society divided into four different societies from the following villages: Velusina, Lazec, Graesnica, and Dragos. Presently these four societies function independently. Each has its own management and statute, but they act jointly.

THE "PRESPA" CHARITABLE SOCIETY OF PRESPA AND RESEN from Prespa was founded in 1961 when the number of immigrants from Prespa in Toronto increased. In 1983 the society was registered before the Canadian authorities under the name *"Macedonian Prespa Charitable Society"* with its own statute. In the statute itself on the other hand, the name of the society is *"Prespa"* Charitable Society of Prespa and Resen.

The *"Prespa"* charitable society brings together the Macedonians who come from the Prespa region regardless of what part of Prespa they belong to.



THE "ZDRUZHENI BRANOVI" (JOINT WAVES) CULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL CHARITABLE SOCIETY

In November 1980 a temporary executive board was formed who was to take steps toward establishing a society that would bring together the residents from the regions of Ohrid, Struga, Debar, and Kichevo. On 7 February 1981 a member's assembly was held at which a decision was reached to elect an official management and chose a name for the society.

The "*Zdruzheni branovi*" cultural, educational and social society took active participation in the life of the emigrants in Toronto. In 1992 it participated in activities for collecting medicines for Macedonia.

THE CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL SOCIETY OF PRILEP

This society was founded in 1990. It collaborated closely with several societies in Toronto, especially the Mariovo and Bitola societies. There are other societies in Toronto including the following: "*Polog*", "*Graesnica*", "*Obedineta mariovci (United residents of Mariovo)*", "*Skopskoto*", "*Brajcino*", "*Ljubojno*", "*Evla*", "*Velushina*", "*Dragosh*", "*Gornichevo*", "*Lazhec*", "*Bolno*", "*Armensko*", "*Trnava-Prasino*", "*Statitsa*", and others.

MACEDONIAN FOUNDATION FOR HELPING CHILDREN

This humanitarian organization was registered on 6 March 2002 in Toronto. It helps all the children especially the children in Macedonia who were victims of the war.

MACEDONIAN MUSIC GROUPS

In Toronto there are a large number of Macedonian music groups. Better known orchestras include: "*Decata od Buf*" (The Children of Buff), "*Ilinden*", "*Izgreve*", "*Biser*", and others. The majority of dance groups also have their own orchestras.

CANADIAN-MACEDONIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE

In Canada there have been and continue to be a number of Macedonian football clubs. Some of these belong to the village charitable societies, and some to the Macedonian church parishes. In most cases these football clubs mainly play at picnics or other festivities.

In 1984 a Canadian-Macedonian football league was established in Toronto. It included the following Macedonian football clubs: "*Solun*", "*Vardar*", "*Mariovo*", "*Skopje*", "*Pobeda*", "*Ohrid*", "*Partizani*", "*Brajcino*", "*Zdruzeni branovi*", and "*Makedonija*". In 1987 two new clubs, "*Buff*" and "*Prespa*" joined the Canadian-Macedonian football league.



In recent years the "Skopje", "Vardar", "Solun", and "Makedonija" football teams achieved good results in the leagues, and were winners of many tournaments organized in Ontario and New York State. This tradition was continued by the newly established club, "Makedonski zvezdi" (Macedonian Stars), which had the best players in the Macedonian football league. The "Makedonski zvezdi" club won first places in the league, and the league cup, and was winner of the traditional tournament in Buffalo, USA.

During the Ilinden celebrations the "Obedineti Makedonci" organized the so-called Ilinden Football Cup in which all of the Macedonian football clubs competed to win the Ilinden trophy. These Macedonian football teams also participated in competitions held during the Macedonian church assemblies, and during the picnics of the village and regional societies in Toronto.

Football is quite traditional among the Macedonians in Canada and is one of the most popular games.

CANADIAN-MACEDONIAN HOCKEY LEAGUE

One of the favorite sports among the young Macedonians in Canada is by all means ice-hockey. This was most probably influenced by the position that ice-hockey as a sport takes up in the life of the Canadians.

For a long time there used to be a "Canadian-Macedonian Hockey League" which included: "Obedineti Makedonci" (United Macedonians), "Makedonsko sirenje" (Macedonian Cheese), "Makedonska restoranska kooperacija" (Macedonian Restaurant Cooperation), "Canadian feed screws MFG" ("Kanadski federaciji MFG"), "Nub Hill Farms", "Kristalen mraz" (Crystal Ice), and others. At the same time Macedonian hockey players play in the best teams in Canada.

MACEDONIAN OPEN GOLF TOURNAMENT

This tournament has existed in Toronto since 1942 and was founded by a well known Macedonian emigrant and businessman. Main participants in this sports and recreational manifestation are Canadian businessmen of Macedonian descent whose families came to Canada before the Second World War.

Participants in the tournament receive from the organizer prizes such as caps, shirts with the Macedonian flag, and other things. The winner of the tournament receives a special cup. The tournament takes place in June every year.

The "Macedonian Digest"

THE PROGRESSIVE MACEDONIAN ORGANIZATION "MANS" (9)

Since their first arrival in the U.S. the Macedonian expatriates began to get together, associate and organize on a massive scale in North America, where they brought with themselves their culture, traditions and customs. As a result, in all major emigration centers such as Detroit, Pontiac, Gary, Chicago, Toledo, New York, and others friendly societies were immediately set up whose goal was to preserve the Macedonian culture, customs and religious traditions, to provide material assistance to socially vulnerable Macedonians, as well as to raise funds for construction of churches, schools and other facilities in their birthplaces all over Macedonia.

However, larger and more active gathering of the Macedonians in North America took place after the Balkan wars and during the two world wars. In that period, the first Macedonian emigrant organizations, clubs and societies were established that, in certain way, were involved in the crucial events that took place in their enslaved homeland, in the fight which the Macedonian people started for their liberation and social rights.

Moreover, a larger number of progressive migrant workers came to the realization that the liberation of Macedonia can only be materialized by a war waged jointly with other nations in the Balkans. The progressive Macedonian migrant workers in the U.S. and Canada realized that without connecting the aspirations for national liberation with the aspirations for social reform of the society, the desired freedom could be hardly achieved.

The migrant workers have advocated for greater unity among the progressive forces within and among the all Balkan peoples.

One of the progressive Macedonians in the U.S. was, of course, Atanas Bliznakov who believed in a new society for his entire life, and he even cherished firm belief in the ideas of the Soviet Union.

The political activity of Atanas Bliznakov was closely connected with MANS (*Macedonian-American People's Alliance*). He lived and evolved along with this Macedonian organization to which he devoted considerable time in order to get rich and confirm his belief as a progressive citizen of the United States of America.

As an explanation, a new orientation was conceived within the national and political activities of the Macedonian emigrants in the U.S. after the end of the



First World War. It was completely different from the orientation of the right, whose activity was causing various shocks and destabilizations. This course received even greater momentum after the establishment of VMRO (United) in Vienna in 1924, when the restoration of the shattered unity of the Macedonian national revolutionary movement commenced.

Thus, with the help of VMRO (United) and after the meeting between Dimitar Vlahov and Georgi Pirinski a connection and unification of the Macedonian progressive emigration was achieved and, consequently, the first independent Macedonian progressive group in the U.S. and Canada was established in Pontiac (Michigan), at the house of Smile Viojdanov, in 1929.

The organization of the cooperation and coordination in general of the actions among the Macedonian independent groups in the U.S. and Canada was entrusted to the Executive Committee which was elected as a provisional authority. Thus, it convened the first conference of the Macedonian independent groups of Toledo (Ohio). This conference was held on 22 and 23 March 1930. It was attended by the representatives of all six independent Macedonian progressive groups in the U.S. and Canada established earlier.

A central management body was unanimously elected at the conference. It consisted of five persons from the united Macedonian independent progressive groups in the U.S. and Canada who adopted a resolution.

They pledged to coordinate their activity among each other and create conditions for successful spreading of their ideas in compliance with this document. The Resolution also mentioned the struggle which was to be taken against the organization of MPO (Macedonian Patriotic Organization) said to be an instrument of the nationalism of the Bulgarian state.

Thus, in all documents of the conference the MPO was treated as one of the biggest opponents against the progressive movement of the Macedonian emigration. The progressive groups accepted only the working class as their ally with whom they were ready to fight against fascism and imperialism through a joint revolutionary front.

The aim of the Macedonian groups, especially after the conference, was to unite the progressive Macedonians induced by MPO, which had already been established, and to develop a political activity among the Macedonians in general. This was demonstrated in particular by the publishing of the '*Macedonian Bulletin*' through which they expressed their views and aspirations related to the Macedonian revolutionary movement and the liberation of Macedonia.

In the first issue of the '*Macedonian Bulletin*' an appeal was published requesting from the Macedonian emigration to organize itself and prepare for the fight against the enemies of the Macedonian people. This appeal, inter alia, read:



Brother Macedonians! The reasons for today's tearful position of our homeland are numerous. But the main and fundamental reason is that the fight today is not developing in the way in which our revolutionary apostles started it...

It has completely lost its national form and purpose, and from a revolutionary and national fight it has transformed itself into a fight of ambitious defectors that have sold themselves to the chauvinist governments of the neighboring Balkan countries. The national-progressive movement – reads the appeal further down – calls, in the name of the newly organized independent groups, the all Macedonians to wage an uncompromising fight against fratricides and their servants.

Following the conference in Toledo, the number of the membership in the Macedonian independent progressive groups increased significantly. Shortly afterwards, the activity was also increased related to finding more appropriate organizational forms aimed at more successful action.

These and some other organizational issues, as well as the need to summarize the results, gave rise to adoption of a decision to convene another meeting of the representatives of the Macedonian independent progressive groups.

Thus, only a year and a month later the First Regular Congress of these groups was convened. It was held in Gary, from 24 to 26 April 1931. At this Congress the Macedonian independent progressive groups got united in a Union.

A special place in the history of the Macedonian expatriates was marked when the Macedonian expatriates held their First Congress in Gary in which 36 regular delegates and 26 delegates from various organizations and societies of the Balkan emigrations, as well as delegates from other progressive organizations all over the globe, participated.

At the First Congress, the Macedonian independent progressive groups created a union named the Macedonian National Union (MNS, i.e. MNU). This name was given to the already established groups without making any significant changes in their political conceptions. The main goal of MNS still remained to be the struggle for freedom of Macedonia, the Macedonian people and the nationalities with whom they have lived together for centuries.

In addition, one of their major requirements and great desires was to create a Balkan federation which would guarantee broad national political and social rights and freedoms for the Balkan nations, including the Macedonian people from the three parts of Macedonia. For the realization of this political platform, MNS relied on the synergies and leverage from all progressive forces and people in the world, especially from those in the Balkans.

The decision of the First Congress of the MNS was welcomed by the migrant workers from Macedonia and from other Balkan countries that, being far from their hearths, were dreaming of national and social freedom for their



fatherland. At the same time, the membership began to increase significantly, and new organizations were set up as an integral part of the Union.

"The Macedonian National Union in the U.S.," reads the political platform *"will fight for liberation and unification of Macedonia into an independent people's republic, which, as an equal member, will be included in the forthcoming Balkan federation of free Balkan peoples."* To achieve this goal, MNS pledged to establish close links not only with the Macedonian organizations that have had the same goals and ideals as those of MNS's, but also with other immigrant organizations *"that have accepted the principle of national self-determination in their programs and that have fought for a fraternal alliance of the Balkan peoples within the framework of a free Balkan republic."*

Building their political concept on the platform and principles of the VMO-RO (Unt.), the advanced Macedonian immigrants, organized in MNS, definitely committed themselves to a fight that would lead to creation of a Balkan federation. They strengthened this commitment with the already established federation in which the Macedonian people got all the rights and freedoms that were denied to them before.

Based on the commitments, defined in this way, the MNS in the U.S. began uncompromising struggle against both the external enemies of Macedonia, embodied in the fascist and assimilating regimes of the Balkan states, and against domestic traitors of the most sacred ideals of the Macedonian people embodied in the extreme right of the state.

The Second Congress of MNS was held in May in 1932 when the political attitudes were reinforced. It furthermore affirmed the organization for its efforts for more efficient assistance to the efforts aimed at achieving national freedom of the Macedonian people.

The third Congress was held in Cleveland (Ohio) in May 1933. The congressional reports, papers, decisions and resolutions mostly reiterated the directions of the previous Congresses and of the plenum. The Congress sent an appeal to all groups and organizations of the Macedonian immigrants in the U.S. and Canada, including the misled members of MPO, to agree on uniting all progressive forces in the joint fight against the terror in the three parts of Macedonia and on supporting the Macedonian political action.

This appeal, as well as all other documents from Congress, was given wide coverage and publicity in the press abroad.

The Fourth Congress of MNS was held in Detroit (Michigan) in 1934. At this congress more precise ways of solving the Macedonian national issue were traced in compliance with the submitted papers, adopted resolutions and other documents. Hence, the holding of this Congress was of particular importance for future activity of MNS in the U.S. and Canada.



The Fourth Congress was among the most important congresses of MNS. Countless congratulatory letters were sent to this Congress, but the letter sent by Georgi Dimitrov is of special interest. Dimitrov, among other things, wrote that the Macedonian movement got many enemies, but the most malicious was its internal enemy represented by the agents of the Bulgarian imperialism and fascism, especially the gang of Mihailoff.

Through their agents, the Bulgarian bourgeoisie exploited the Macedonian movement for their egoistic interests and for strengthening their bloody dictatorship over the people in Bulgaria, read the letter of this great fighter for human freedoms.

The Fourth Congress adopted a resolution proclaiming a new motto for the liberation activity of the Macedonian people - for the freedom of Macedonia.

What is of particular importance was that the number of the members of the Union was gradually increasing, so that the Fourth Congress launched a serious attack against the Macedonia... rhovizam... in America. In fact, this Congress of MNS was a turning-point for the political activity of the Macedonian newsettlers in the U.S. and Canada, because the adopted attitudes regarding the Macedonian national distinctiveness and statehood were redefined at the Congress. It was the result of the changed attitudes of VMRO (Utd.) that as of 1934 took a more correct position on the Macedonian issue.

Such attitudes were reflected among the Macedonian migrant workers, and their positions and beliefs were presented at the Fourth Congress of MNS publicly. The Congress accepted the concept of the Macedonian national and political independence, and the request for recognition of the Macedonian national individuality was openly submitted.

As a result, the former motto, according to which the freedom and independence of Macedonia should be realized within the framework of the Balkan Federation, now they talked about Macedonia which was to get the right on self-determination and become an independent political unit the Fourth congress it was decided that an article be published titled "Why are we, the Macedonians, distinctive nation".

It was presented and read as a paper under the pseudonym 'Bistriski'. It read, inter alia, that according to Bulgarians, the Macedonians were the best part of the Bulgarian nation; according to Serbs, the Macedonians were the oldest Serbs, while according to Greeks the Macedonians were slaviced Hellene...

In addition, this article read that the assimilatory policy of the enemies was to be prevented and that the right on self-determination of the Macedonian people and their separation from the Bulgarian, Serbian and Greek states would be achieved so that they could be united in an independent republic. The Macedonians were to decisively underline that they were neither Greeks,



nor Serbs, nor Bulgarians, but that they were a distinctive Macedonian nation fighting for its national liberation and its Macedonian state.

In that period, the Macedonian progressive immigration also set up a Committee for protection of the Macedonian rights and freedoms in the three Balkan states. A chairman of this Committee was the writer Stojan Hristov, while Sonja Rizova, a regular student at Columbia University in New York, was a secretary.

As an explanation, Stojan Hristov gained popularity after he published his novels "*Mara*" and "*Heroes and Murderers*" related to the revolutionary past of the Macedonian people

Taking into consideration the all choices, directions, tasks and assessments of the Fourth Congress, MNS made a step forward to the future with much more differentiated views on the Macedonian national independence.

And this clearing of the attitudes didn't happen by pure chance, but as a result of the positions of VMRO (Unt.) that were wholeheartedly embraced by MNS and improved for years in compliance with the positions adopted at the Fourth Congress. At the same time, MNS also developed significant anti-fascist activity.

Thus, when the Civil War began in Spain in 1936, MNS immediately stood on the side of the legal Republican government. The members of MNS, together with other progressive forces in the United States, participated in overwhelming number in many demonstrations against the interference of fascist Italy and Germany in the internal affairs of Spain, and protested against the policy of genocide led by the Spanish and German fascists against the Basques, Catalans and the progressive Spanish people.

At the same time, MNS also took measures to help the Spanish democratic government in a concrete way. To this end, all organizations within MNS took action for recruiting volunteers to defend the Spanish people from the fascist invasion

Therefore, the MNS in the U.S. and Canada not only supported the struggle of their brothers and sisters in Macedonia for national liberation, but at the same time, it fought against all injustices and restraints that existed in their new homeland.

But regardless of all that, it was difficult to achieve an anti-fascist orientation in the U.S. The policy of the reactionary forces in the U.S. even went well with the policy of Hitler and Mussolini who were on their way to enslave the world.

During this period, MNS also experienced hard times, though its activity was most desirable at that time. As a result of these difficulties, the leadership of MNS decided to stop publishing *The Awareness* ("*Soznanie*"). Instead, MNS began issuing *The People's Will* ("*Narodna volja*"). However, except for the new



title, there was nothing new in the conceptual context in the new newspaper. Parallel with this change, the name of the MNS was changed and the Macedonian National Union became Macedonian-American National Union in the U.S. (MANS).

Meanwhile, the MNS organizations in Canada established an independent Macedonian-Canadian National Union (MKNS) in Canada. In other words, two organizations were created from the MNS: MANS in the U.S. and MKNS in Canada.

During the Second World War, MANS, together with the progressive European and Balkan organizations, as well as other organizations in the United States, directed its forces to actively support the anti-fascist fight. In those turbulent times, upon the initiative of MANS, local committees were set up in all parts in the U.S. where Macedonian progressive groups were active and whose aim was to support this antifascist fight.

The attack of fascist Germany against Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, sent out a very painful echo among the Macedonian progressive emigrants. They could not reconcile with the monstrous theories of the fascists for higher and lower races within the whole of humankind and for spurious inferior psychophysical values of the Slavic peoples.

What was crucial for the vast majority of Macedonian emigrants to join the united anti-Hitler coalition was exactly the fact that these feelings were hurt.

As a result, a considerable number of the members of MANS joined the anti-Munich demonstrations in Chicago, in which two hundred thousand protesters of Slavic origin took part. Also, in December 1938 around 400 delegates of Slavic origin gathered in order to agree on how to continue their struggle against those people in the U.S. that obviously took the side of Nazi Germany.

After the attack of the fascists against Yugoslavia and the USSR in 1941, a large number of Americans of Slavic descent joined the American common people in the struggle against the fascist aggression.

During the Second World War, MNS, along with other progressive organizations in the United States, directed its forces to actively support the antifascist fight. The Members of MANS fought for eliminating fascism, and they were advocates for building life which would promise greater democratic freedoms and lasting peace. To this aim local committees were set up to help the anti-fascist fight, on an initiative of MANS.

The main task of these committees was to raise money mainly for purchasing drugs and various ambulance materials as assistance for the fighters who fought against fascism. The funds for such needs were collected from the entrance tickets for organized concerts and other entertainments, as well as from benefactions, i.e. financial contributions from many Macedonians living in the three parts of Macedonia.



The local committees, organized by MANS, specifically canvassed among its membership to purchase the so-called war coupons that was a kind of specific loan for financing military needs that were increasing. Therefore, in that period a real competition dominated among the Macedonians in the United States for buying war coupons. Many of them made efforts that each saved dollar be used for charitable causes.

In addition, it should be underlined that MANS invested great efforts to establish contacts with their relatives in Macedonia and all over Yugoslavia, where Macedonian people, shoulder to shoulder with other nations, led a fierce fight against German invaders and their faithful servants.

The members of MANS committed to a greater unity among the progressive forces of all Balkan peoples. A particular flame was kindled among them to support the national liberation fight of the Macedonian people together with the other Yugoslav nations.

Each day they followed the course and latest developments of the war in their homelands and they were completely on the side of the Yugoslav people. The holding of the Second Session of AVNOJ, on 29 November 1943, was of paramount importance for the Macedonians and for the Yugoslav immigrants in general. It was a great day because a federal principle was adopted that recognized fully the equality of the peoples of Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

For Macedonians, this historic decision on equality, equality and federative character within Yugoslavia meant much more because it was for the first time, during a five-century period, that they have got the right on self-determination and national independence, on their own state within Federative Yugoslavia.

One of the more distinctive actions of MANS certainly was the *Memorandum on solving the Macedonian issue* that the National Committee of MANS forwarded to the U.S. Department of States and to the international public on 11 February 1945, stating and concluding that Macedonia is a geographic and economic unity where a Slavic nation lives in majority, that it is a country with rich historical and bloody history.

The National Committee of MANS believed that the sole solution to this issue, which is historically righteous, is the unification of the three parts of Macedonia in one free Macedonian state within a federation of democratic South Slavic and all-Balkan nations.

Immediately after the end of the Second World War, the tasks of MANS were, from understandable reasons, formulated differently. Hence, the national committees were renamed into aid committees whose goal was to financially support the renewal and reconstruction of the destroyed country.

MANS in the United States had the task not only to assist the fight against the injustices that were committed to the enslaved Macedonians in their



homeland, but also to be active in the fight directed against injustices experienced in the U.S. Therefore, the MANS was a progressive national organization whose focus was directed both on the events in their old homeland and on the situation in their new homeland.

However, the campaign against progressive organizations and supporters of the left became more vigorous in 1947, when the Cold War started. At that time the work of the Committee for examination of anti-American activity, which was a part of the so-called Truman doctrine, came to the fore in the U.S.

Strong torture was also inflicted on thousands of Americans. It was enough to criticize the Truman doctrine or to criticize the U.S. policy for a man to be tortured, interrogated, imprisoned, etc. Many organizations were declared subversive in this period. Such a label was also attached to MANS which was declared to be a shifty organization.

Amid such a climate, MANS convened its 19th regular congress in Gary (Indiana), for September 1949. And, regardless the difficulties, the 19th regular congress took place. After that, the decision of the State Attorney entered into force and in compliance with it the activity of the Macedonian-American National Union stopped forever.

As a result, the long-time efforts of the most progressive part of the Macedonian emigrants in the U.S. ended tragically, the efforts went dead of those people who were the first and the only one outside the homeland who understood and fought for the righteous solution to the Macedonian national issue, for brotherly love and harmony among all Balkan nations and other nations all over the world.

In the postwar period, when Macedonians won their freedom, a Committee was established, on an initiative of MANS, to support the reconstruction of Macedonia. Such a committee was also established within the MNKS in Canada. Their tasks were not different from the tasks of the Committee to support Yugoslavia. A large part of these funds were earmarked for the Macedonians in South Macedonia and in the Aegean part of Macedonia respectively, where the Civil War was raging in Greece.

The Macedonians in the Aegean part were exposed to unprecedented violence by the Greek authorities who carried out assimilation. Thousands of Macedonians were killed, imprisoned, deported and forced to leave their burning villages and seek shelter in other countries.

One of the most substantial assistance from the Macedonian immigrants in the U.S. and Canada to Macedonia was their financial support for construction of a hospital in Skopje.

The "Macedonian Digest"



MACEDONIAN-AMERICAN COMMITTEE FOR BUILDING A HOSPITAL IN MACEDONIA (10)

The national-liberation fight of the Macedonian people, the creation of the Macedonian state, and the autocephaly of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, made a radical change in the national and political orientation of the Macedonian emigrants.

These facts represented a turning point for the part of the Macedonians deluded by propagandas; they managed to find the right path and started to establish pure Macedonian cultural, educational and national organizations in order to help the Macedonian people, but, above all, to cherish Macedonian traditions, religion, customs, folklore ...

One of these organizations was the *Macedonian-American National Alliance* (MANS), which supported the fight of the Macedonian people during the WWII morally and financially. At that time, committees were set up in all cities to provide aid that ships carried to Yugoslavia and Macedonia. MANS and some other Macedonian mutual aid associations sent economic aid for the victims-refugees from the Aegean Macedonian.

However, the most effective and successful campaign according to efficiency and importance was the campaign for construction of an American hospital in Macedonia.

In their deep desire to help the Macedonian people to eliminate the consequences from the four-year war and backwardness as soon as possible, a group of prominent Macedonian emigrants launched an initiative for construction of a hospital in Skopje.

This campaign to raise assistance for a hospital began in February 1946 at an official banquet held in New York organized by the Hospital Initiative Committee.

They decided that a conference was to be convened in the city of Cleveland to be attended by representatives of the all Macedonian organizations in the U.S. and Canada regardless of their political beliefs and religion affiliation because the organization which was to undertake such a campaign wouldn't have any political character since its goal was purely patriotic and humanitarian.

Due to the successful agitation in the summer of 1946 the scheduled conference was held in Cleveland, and it was attended by delegates from a large number of Macedonian associations, country and religious associations, as well as mutualaid societies from the United States and Canada.

A national committee was unanimously elected for the construction and equipping a modern hospital in Skopje, the capital of the then People's Republic of Macedonia. Dr. Zivko Angelusev, an otorhinolaryngologist by profession, was unanimously elected as president of the National Committee. He was a distinguished social and cultural worker in America.

The National Hospital Committee issued an appeal by which the Committee addressed the emigrants, with impassioned patriotic and philanthropic words, asking for financial assistance aimed at realizing this noble and lofty goal. Because of its historical importance, a part of this appeal is given bellow:

"Brothers and sisters," reads the appeal, "finally the century-old dream of all of us has been reached. After epic fights and huge sacrifices, a part of Macedonia is liberated today. But, the great legacy of the past still weighs over our mother land. In addition to many other epidemics, malaria, stomach disorders and tuberculosis still undermine the health of our heroic people...

Our holy debt is to assist our brothers and sister in Macedonia in this moment of greatest need. They didn't spare their blood and their lives for achieving freedom. Let's help them! Let they rejoice at that freedom as human beings. Who is that Macedonian worthy of this name that is going to give up their assistance? We appeal to all Macedonians in the U.S. and Canada to unite around this National Committee and to support the campaign for raising 250,000 dollars for a hospital in Macedonia."

Appeal concludes with these words: *"At work, Macedonian brothers and sisters! Let each of us sacrifice whatever is possible. Let us do whatever we can to help a happy Macedonia which is going on the way of its success."*

Soon, hospital committees were set up in many cities all over the U.S. and Canada, including in Gary, Indiana. The main goal of these committees was to organize activities (folk dance manifestations, banquets and similar) in order to raise funds for the hospital in Macedonia.

This wave of campaigning also reached South America, Argentina, and the fifth continent, Australia, where the Macedonian emigrants have developed a number of activities to provide aid for the construction of the hospital.

The Hospital Committee in Gary was one of the more active in the U.S. It included many prominent immigrants, among whom Atanas Bliznakov was one of the central figures. He gave his own funds and with his humanitarian and donor activity served as an example and incentive for the other emigrants to join this affirmative and efficient action.



For Atanas Bliznakov, in fact, the activities at the Hospital Committee meant a turning point in his donor considerations. At that time, a strong desire was conceived in him – that he would dedicate more time to charity and that, on the other hand maybe led him to another thought and plan - that he would make a kind of donation, perhaps a foundation.

Through the campaign for raising money for the hospital, even stronger desire was born in him - to help his Macedonian people in his own way.

The Hospital Committees in the U.S. achieved extraordinary results because the expatriates demonstrated great loyalty and humanistic impulses. They raised a sum of around 150,000 dollars, which enabled purchasing equipment, including instruments, apparatus, medicines, medical literature and other necessary resources that were necessary for the new hospital.

With the funds from the Macedonian emigrants, along with the large sum of money provided by the then government of People's Republic of Macedonia, a hospital block was built and equipped within the National Hospital in Skopje.

The effective action of the Macedonian emigrants was crowned on July 8, 1958 when the hospital block was put into operation. The memorial plaque, however, on one of the walls of the block, which was unveiled during a solemn ceremony, will remind future generations of the deep love and endless patriotism of these sons of Macedonia. It shall stand there nowadays as well as in the future, as a lasting monument and will teach people how a motherland and its people should be loved.

Atanas and Slavka Bliznakov were living witnesses of the activities related to the official opening of the hospital in Skopje because at that time they came to Skopje, to the People's Republic of Macedonia, for the first time in their lives.

On that occasion, for the first time they tasted the freedom among their Macedonian people. Therefore, those moments were important for the Bliznakovs because that official opening of the hospital, in fact, enriched them additionally with a strong love for their people and the liberated part of Macedonia.

The Author



***PART THREE -
IMMIGRATION AS A
DESTINY***



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MACEDONIA EXISTED, EXISTS, AND WILL EXIST FOREVER TILL THE END OF TIME (1)

It is an irrefutable fact that the Macedonian people have managed to ensure their continuation despite all forms of pressure for their assimilation. This is yet another proof that this people, being a Biblical one, has managed to confront and endure all conquests, oppressions, and denials. Macedonia is the only country in the world that has such a long and ancient history. Its roots could be traced back to the Ancient Macedonians and to their leaders Philip II and Alexander of Macedon.

Since the time of Philip and Alexander, and during the rule of Rome and Byzantium and the Slav migrations to the south, followed by the domination of the Ottoman Empire and others, Macedonia has always been the landmark and crossroads of various civilizations, cultures, languages, and religions.

Again, it is an irrefutable fact that when Europe was going through the dark ages it was enlightened only by the torch of Macedonian culture. Among other things, St. Clement's University of Ohrid was shining as a symbol of one of the oldest civilizations on the continent.

Starting from the 4th century onwards, Christianity has prevailed in these areas. This is confirmed by the archeological findings and by the great number of Christian churches, episcopal cathedrals, basilicas, baptisteries and other sacral facilities of huge dimensions that prove that Christianity has been rooted deeply and organized well in Macedonia since its very beginning up to the present time.

One of the historic episodes that took place in Macedonia at that time was the creation of the first alphabet by Saint Cyril of Solun (Thessalonica) that had a historically significant role for all Slavic speaking peoples.

As a result, the first translations of religious books to Old-Slavic, i.e. to the Old-Macedonian language, marked the period when the Macedonian language, with its alphabet, was ranked among the dominant languages of that time - Latin, Hellenic, and Jewish - on equal footing. Ever since that episode, the word of God began spreading in Macedonian as well, and people began writing and reading books written in Old Church Slavonic, as it is called today.



Undoubtedly, this event was of epochal significance for the Macedonian people. First, because the brothers Saints Cyril and Methodij came from Solun, Macedonia, and second, because the first books written in Old Church Slavonic were written in the language spoken by the Macedonians. Obviously, Saints Cyril and Methodij could not use any other language but the language that the Macedonians from Solun and suburbs spoke.

Another episode which was epochal for the Macedonians took place at the beginning of the 11th century AD when Macedonian Tsar Samoil located his capital first to Prespa and then to Ohrid. Witness to this are the remnants of his fortresses that we still see today as a permanent mark of our glorious past. Ohrid was also a center of the Ohrid Archbishopric until it was abolished in 1767. Namely, along with the declaration of the Patriarchate it was no coincidence that Tsar Samoil was declared Emperor by the first Ohrid patriarch.

Until the arrival of the Ottomans to the Balkans in the 14th century AD, Macedonia experienced great progress in the area of construction. Witnesses to this are the numerous medieval churches and monasteries, which are now a part of the treasury of the European and world culture. It was no coincidence that the Ottomans did not abolish the autocephalous status of the Ohrid Archbishopric immediately, instead they also showed tolerance towards the Christian faith.

After their occupation of Ohrid in 1408, Macedonia found itself occupied by the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, the Ottomans not only didn't limit the independence of the Ohrid Archbishopric, but they also increased its power in order to weaken the Patriarchate in Constantinople. In spite of this, however, the expansion of the feudal system in the Ottoman Empire objectively meant weakening of the Ohrid Archbishopric.

In the midst of the difficult situation in which they found themselves, the Macedonian people and their church were under the constant pressure of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Catholic propaganda of Rome. The Patriarchate used various methods to Hellenise the Macedonian people and destroy their church which was embodied in the Ohrid Archbishopric.

To achieve this, the Patriarchate did not choose means or methods to impose itself upon the church authorities of that time. As a result the Patriarchate convinced the Ottoman Sultan to abolish the Ohrid Archbishopric in 1767, inflicting, in that way, great harm upon the Macedonian Christian population.

Even though the Balkan Wars (1912-1913) meant some form of freedom for Macedonia from Ottoman slavery, they in fact brought the country a new subjugation. Macedonia was tragically partitioned by Greece, Bulgaria, and Serbia, and later by Albania, followed by even worse conditions and discrimination for the Macedonian people. Not only was the Macedonian nation denied, but also the use of the Macedonian language was forbidden, especially



in Aegean Macedonia where strict penalties were imposed upon those who dared to speak Macedonian.

Macedonia was colonized within Serbia which was later to grow into the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes under the Yugoslav monarchy. Once again, the Macedonians were denied their national identity and their language was repressed. Macedonians who live in Bulgaria, in Pirin Macedonia, shared a similar fate as well.

The age-old fight of the Macedonian people for their national and social freedom, for justice and truth, especially their active involvement in the anti-fascist coalition, enabled them to acquire, after WWII, their sovereign state that had its own national institutions and an array of cultural communication with the world.

Macedonian language became an official language of the Republic of Macedonia that is well-known and acknowledged in the world. It is studied at many universities on several continents, and it contributes to the spreading of the values of Macedonian culture and their inclusion in the common treasury of culture.

Unfortunately in the parts of Macedonia that are still under Greece and Bulgaria the well-known attitudes to deny the Macedonian identity and truth are still in effect.

After its liberation, the Republic of Macedonia, as a whole, has experienced a substantial rise in the fields of education, culture and construction, as well as social life in general. Even as a child, George Atanasoski gained and enjoyed all those great advantages and benefits of life in that period. He aroused his interest in the future of his life, in education, in books...

He started to read books at the not so well-stocked school library and he grew into a progressive young man who was loved and respected by his fellow-students, teachers and countrymen.

In addition, George Atanasoski also witnessed a complex phenomenon of immigration – many men from his village and beyond used to leave their fatherland and go abroad to earn a living. He was not immune to it.

He felt all those emigrational waves that fell all over Pelagonija and the entire Macedonia. He still has vivid memories of the partings of the migrant workers, of their escape across the border, and of those turbulent times.

When he left his heart and home for the first time, his first destination was Prilep. There, his interest expanded and grew paving his way to the United States of America, the land of opportunity. All that he had experienced in his homeland was a solid basis for him to open up and expand his horizons.

Therefore, by leaving Macedonia and settling down in the U.S. he has, above all, enriched his life on an economic level which, undoubtedly, was a



good basis for his further development and his integration into the new setting. But, simultaneously with the improvement of his economic situation, he began to live, work and create in a completely new way.

George Atanasoski's homeland was proclaimed as the People's Republic of Macedonia in 1944 within the boundaries of the former Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia. Not many years afterwards, it was renamed Socialist Republic of Macedonia. However, when the socialist block collapsed in 1989, the Yugoslav republics opted for their independence.

As a result, Macedonia was constituted as a separate, independent and sovereign state - Republic of Macedonia following the referendum held on September 8th, 1991. In those starry moments, Macedonia became a member of the United Nations and a permanent member of many other international organizations.

For the Republic of Macedonia the period since the achievement of independence - September 8th, 1991 - thus far has been fulfilled with construction of a great number of monuments from the history of the Macedonian people and Macedonia since ancient times. The 8th of September is one of the most significant dates for the continuation, progress and future of Macedonians and of the Republic of Macedonia as a whole.

The Monograph "George Atanasoski"



EMIGRATION WAVES FROM MACEDONIAN (2)

Macedonia is traditionally an emigrational region from which emigrational movement of the Macedonian people and movement to the transoceanic and other countries took place toward the mid 19th century. Such movements were especially emphasized during the second half of the 19th century and were known as “pechalba” (going abroad for economic reasons). With a ranging scale and intensity they have continued till the present day. Thus, according to some data, the first group of “pechalbari” (people who went to work abroad) reached the North American continent in 1885, and Australia in the 1920's. However, individuals who had joined groups of *pechalbari* from the neighboring and other countries had crossed the ocean even before that.

The wave of emigration from Macedonia, mainly from the traditionally emigrational regions: Florina, Bitola, Prespa, Castoria, Edessa, Tetovo, Ohrid, Thessalonica, Struga, Prilep, and other parts of Macedonia, intensified following the Ilinden Uprising in 1903. Nevertheless, emigration of the Macedonians from their country gained greater dimensions during the period that followed the partitioning of Macedonia, throughout the Balkan and First World Wars.

This was above all, the result of the unbearable political, economic, social, and security position of the Macedonian population. Therefore, according to some data during this period from all three parts of the partitioned Macedonia, about 60% of the emigrated Macedonians came from the Aegean part; 30 % came from the Vardar part; and 10 % from the Pirin part. According to the Special Commission of the UN for the Balkans, in its report of 13 May, 1949, a total of 232,000 Macedonians emigrated from Aegean Macedonia. In their place the Greek authorities brought Greek refugees (*prosvigi*) from Asia Minor and colonized the Aegean part of Macedonia.

Emigration to the Transatlantic countries intensified perceptibly following the Second World War, especially after the defeat of the Democratic Army in the Civil War in Greece, on whose side the Macedonian population from Aegean Macedonia had participated massively finally hoping to get its national and social rights. At the same time, the liberalization of the former SFRY policy on going abroad to work in other countries lead to emigration of a large number of citizens of what was then the Socialist Republic of Macedonia. However, the scale, dynamics, and character of the migratory movements from the



beginning till the present day, vary in form and content and correspond to the phases of the social, economic, and political development of Macedonia, as well as to the changes in the migration policies of the countries to which they migrated.

The number of Macedonian migrants increases from year to year as a result of the migration movements, the growing birthrate, and other factors. There is no complete and more precise information regarding the number of Macedonians in the Balkans and the Macedonian emigrants in the transatlantic countries, the European Union, and other countries. Official statistical data, on the other hand, regarding the number of Macedonian emigrants throughout the world, are unrealistic for many reasons.

Thus, according to them, in the USA there are 20,365 Macedonians (US Census Bureau, 1990,) in Canada there are approximately 54,000 Macedonians; in Australia there are 42,199 Macedonians (according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia); in the Federal Republic of Germany there are 49,400 legal residents (according to the central Statistics Bureau of SRG, 1999); in Switzerland 53,907 are legal residents; in Belgium 2,059 are legal residents; in the Netherlands there are 577 (according to the Dutch Bureau of Statistics;) in the Great Dukedom of Luxembourg there are 358; in Italy there are 21,988 (according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia;) in Austria there are 21 ("Statistic Austria"); in Poland there are 150 Macedonian families (according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Macedonia;) and in the Former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia there are 47,200 according to the official census.

On the other hand, according to an Austrian source, approximately seven million people lived in ethnic Macedonia at the beginning of the last, the twentieth, century. However, some more realistic estimates show that, in addition to the Macedonian population in the Republic of Macedonia (1,378,687 – according to the 1994 census) more than 300,000 live in Bulgaria, approximately 250,000 live in Greece, more than 150,000 live in Albania, and approximately 70,000 live in Serbia and Monte Negro. It has also been estimated that since the 19th century about 600 – 700, 000 Macedonians from every part of Macedonia migrated to various countries around the world. Without complete statistical and other information it is quite difficult to determine the exact number realistically. Nevertheless, there are estimates that approximately 500,000 Macedonian immigrants live in the USA, Canada, and Australia. Of these, about 150,000 live in the USA, close to 150,000 are in Canada, and over 200,000 are in Australia and New Zealand.

The majority of these come from Aegean Macedonia, and the Republic of Macedonia, while a small number come from the Macedonian part in Bulgaria and Albania. On the other hand, according to an Austrian source,



approximately seven million people lived in ethnic Macedonia at the beginning of the last century.

It has been estimated that approximately 150,000 residents of Macedonian origin live in the European Union alone (Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, Italy, Great Britain, followed by Slovenia, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, the Ukraine, and Russia,) and other countries. There are also a large number of ethnic Albanians from Macedonia in the European Union.

There is also a certain number of settlers of Macedonian origin who live in South America, Egypt, Israel, South Africa, Uzbekistan, and Turkey where there is a large number of Macedonian Muslims and ethnic Turks from Macedonia. There are Macedonians who live in Pakistan that refer to themselves as descendants of the army of Alexander the Great. Namely, on the Himalayas in the easternmost part of Pakistan, there is a tribe that differs from every other tribe around it.

They are tall and blond. They have their own autonomous country which they call *Hanza*, or *Hanzakut*, and speak a *burushaski* language and consider themselves Macedonians, descendants of Alexander. The Constitution of this Himalayan country states that they are descendants of Alexander the Great and his generals. Their flag is red and has a golden eightray Sun. In recent times they adopted the Islamic religion, but have retained their old traditions.

Modern economic emigration gained great intensity in the nineties of the previous century (XX) when more than 100,000 of the residents of Macedonia (including Macedonians, ethnic Albanians, and others) left the country. This can be seen from available data from the last census of the population of the Republic of Macedonia. According to it, in 1994 173,611 persons were abroad, of which approximately 50,000 left in the period 1989 – 1994.

There are a number of indications that show that these migratory movements continue with the same intensity even today. This is evident from the high level of negative net migration of 7,438 persons annually in the period 1994 – 1996, and the available data from foreign sources. For instance, according to data of the European Council, only in Germany, Italy, and Switzerland in the period 1996-1999 the number of Macedonian residents increased by approximately 41,000 people.

As regards the social and qualification structure of the Macedonian emigrants in the transatlantic countries we need emphasize that in the past the majority of them came from the villages, were of a difficult economic state, had a low level of education, and little skilled qualifications, unlike today's emigrants who mainly have completed tertiary education and are professionally skilled. Hence, in the past the main reason for emigrating was to provide for a living and save material reserves for the family. A small number of emigrants



left their native country due to political reasons, as well as the tradition of going abroad.

However, with the last several generations, as well as the more recent emigrants, especially those from the Republic of Macedonia, there is an emphasized emigration of people with completed tertiary education and a higher cultural and social level, which in turn results in a new structural level of Macedonian emigration. Thus, among them we find intellectuals from various fields, affirmed not only in Macedonia, but throughout the world.

Changes in the economic, political, social, educational, and qualification structure, and the accomplished material potential, also bring about a partial transformation of the living habits of the Macedonian emigrants in the Diaspora. Thus, many of them, especially the second and third generation, have made their way through to the higher classes in the societies in which they live.

However, in the political life of their new environments and societies, the Macedonian emigrants are far behind the other ethnic groups, which is also the case with the other emigrants from the Balkan countries. Nevertheless, their achievements in an economic, spiritual, educational, cultural, and sports scale increasingly contribute to their not being treated as second class citizens, but instead, as an integral and important factor in their new environments in the Diaspora, especially in the multi-ethnic societies.

Despite the differences in social structure which the emigrants of Macedonian origin in the Diaspora possess, and which are the result of the different levels of education and material status, they still have joint mutual characteristics in their everyday life. Thus, many of the emigrants from Macedonia are in a way assimilated or "melted in the assimilation pot." On the other hand, the majority of the Macedonian emigrants only seemingly accept integration in those societies while in fact they remained faithful to their traditional way of life.

They continue to maintain close family ties, essentially based and nurtured in a traditional patriarchal spirit, keeping the folklore, language, customs, and traditions brought with them from Macedonia. Providing for and completing the family is one of the priority aims in the life of the Macedonian emigrants in their new environment. For this reason the most part of their social life takes place mainly within the Macedonian ethnic communities. At the same time, some of them resist the demands of the new environment and find it difficult to adapt to the new way of life, afraid of losing their personal and national identity. Therefore, the majority of Macedonian emigrants continue staying close and gathering into the Macedonian ethnic communities located mainly in the larger industrial centers, where they initially began their organized life.

The first forms of meeting among the Macedonian emigrants date back to the time of their massive arrival in the new environments, when they brought



with them their culture, traditions, religion, customs... As a result of this at the very beginning they established groups from the same village for helping each other, and later cultural, church associations, and other forms of meetings in all of the major centers, such as Detroit, Gary, Chicago and Cleveland in the USA; Toronto, Hamilton, and Windsor in Canada; Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney in Australia; Goteborg and Malme in Sweden; in Copenhagen in Denmark; in Paris, France; Munich, Berlin and Hanover in Germany; Zurich in Switzerland, and other industrial cities.

The aim of these associations was to maintain the Macedonian culture, customs, and religious traditions, and to provide material aid to those Macedonians in need. At the same time they collected funds for construction of churches and other buildings in their new environments and in their native places in Macedonia. Thus, as early as 1919 they built the first church in Toronto, the Macedonian – Bulgarian church of *St. Cyril and Methodius*. Here also, in 1912 the first bank of the Macedonian emigrants from Aegean Macedonia was established. In those early years they also established a number of village societies of emigrants from the whole of Macedonia.

Macedonians in the Diaspora began more widespread organization as late as after the First World War. In the period between the two world Wars there was a noticeable movement and activity on a national scale. In the beginning many Macedonian emigrants, especially from Aegean Macedonia, had joined the Macedonian Patriot Organization ("*Makedonska patrioticheska organizacija*") known as MPO. However, after the change in its political orientation, and its shift toward the Great Bulgaria assimilatory policy, a certain number of Macedonians began establishing independent progressive groups in a number of cities in the USA and Canada.

They basically supported the affirmation of the realistic ways and paths which could be followed by the Macedonian revolutionary ideological struggle, which was an inseparable part of the struggles of the other progressive forces in the Balkans. After the first conference in 1930 these progressive groups united into one Soyuz, or association, i.e. the *Macedonian People's Association* (*Makedonskiot naroden sojuz*, MNS.) The main objective of the MNS was to fight for the freedom of Macedonia with the desire of establishing a Balkan federation which would guarantee wide national, political, and social rights and freedom of the Balkan peoples, including the Macedonian people of the three parts of Macedonia. In realizing this political platform the MNS had counted on the support and mutual action of every progressive force and everyone in the world, especially those of the Balkans.

There is a lot of data which clearly shows that during the Second World War the MNS, together with the other progressive organizations in USA and Canada, directed its forces toward an active anti-fascist battle. The members of this organization struggled to liquidate fascism, and were also supporters



of the establishment of a life that promises greater democratic freedom and permanent peace. Their assistance was also huge during the period of the establishment and renewal of what was then the People's Republic of Macedonia until they were stopped in the 1950's as a consequence of the Inform bureau.

At the same time, the Macedonian emigrants in the Transatlantic and other countries manifested a positive attitude and great loyalty toward the National Liberation War in Macedonia and offered organized assistance in the renovation and construction of the country after the war. Nevertheless, the campaign for construction of part of the hospital in Skopje was by far the greatest and most valuable in its effect and significance. Activities began in 1946, and in 1948 the hospital was officially opened.

This was at the same time both pride and encouragement for the connections with Macedonia. During those stormy times the liberal national and social development and penetration of the truth about the People's Republic of Macedonia, strongly induced the organized life of the emigrants on a national basis. At the same time this was a most effective protection against every foreign propaganda and enemy activity in the communities of the Macedonian emigrants.

On the other hand, when speaking of the organized activities in the Transatlantic countries, we need mention that it includes the majority of Macedonian emigrants. Furthermore, an important component in this kind of organization is the fact that they have joined into independent associations, churches and church communities above all, where the members are Macedonians regardless of the part of Macedonia they come from. At the same time the religious and national structures, emigrant organizations, and their memberships continued to grow constantly, while their activities spread and improved in quality.

Hence, in this period evident results were achieved in the spiritual and cultural and educational life. Numerous Macedonian churches and societies were established, as well as sports clubs and other forms of activity in which Macedonian emigrants gathered massively. However, the establishment of Macedonian Orthodox churches and church communities are of special significance for the activities of the Macedonian emigrants.

The Macedonian Orthodox Churches - Ohrid Archbishopric (MOC-OA) and communities in Australia, Canada, and the USA, and recently in the countries of the European Union, are the most significant and most massive gathering places of the Macedonians from every part of Macedonia. In addition to the church services, the Macedonian language, the authentic mother tongue brought from the native land can be heard freely at these Macedonian shrines.

At these cultural, educational, and spiritual centers there are Macedonian schools, and the Macedonian mother tongue, national history and geography are studied. Scripture is also taught at many churches. Thus, there is an open



process of establishing cultural and arts societies, entertainment, literature, and sports associations, publishing of newspapers, bulletins, and magazines, and opening of Macedonian radio and TV shows.

Therefore, the Macedonian Orthodox churches survive among the emigration as an invincible reality and important factor in the emigrant communities. The churches exist as a permanent trace, acknowledged by the domestic factor, and they act freely in the environment in which Macedonians live and work.

Macedonian Orthodox churches and church communities in the Diaspora are quite appreciated by those societies above all because of the results that the Macedonians achieve in their work, and because of their attitude and high level of loyalty toward their new fatherland. Nevertheless, it is most significant that through their church communities the Macedonian emigrants affirm their native fatherland, thus contributing to international relations. In fact, they are the bridge of collaboration between the Republic of Macedonia and Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada, countries of the European Union, and other countries throughout the world.

Many times it has been stressed that the Macedonian emigrants and their associations, with special emphasis on the Macedonian Orthodox churches and church communities, have grown into a quite significant positive factor in the establishment of good mutual relations between the countries in which they live and the Republic of Macedonia.

Unlike the USA, Canada, and Australia, Macedonian emigration toward countries of the European Union intensified after the Second World War and have continued till the present day. Initially Macedonians began emigrating to find temporary work and as the years passed it gained a permanent character.

This is especially true of the 1970's when pressure increased regarding the organized demands for workers in various European agencies and companies. Such demands were also accepted by the employment bureaus, which even made lists of workers who were interested. There were also various agencies and agents who referred our people directly to the Western European countries, especially to Germany, Switzerland, France, Denmark, and Sweden.

It is characteristic that in the beginning of the temporary work in these countries the people who left in an organized manner were mainly single young people.

They practically all left with a signed agreement in their pocket. This meant that they would remain there for one to five years to earn some money and return to their fatherland. It later turned out that only a small number of the Macedonian citizens who had left at the end of the 1960's and beginning of the 1970's had actually returned to the country. The majority of them had adapted to their new working and living environments.



They took their families with them, and thus began the new wave of emigrational movement from Macedonia toward Europe. Hence, Macedonians who had come to Europe, especially to Germany and Sweden in the seventies to what was then referred to as temporary work, began organizing themselves at the very beginning of their massive arrival. Macedonian clubs and associations established as a need to alleviate nostalgia, grief for their families from which many had been separated a long time, as well as the need for mutual socialization and communication, and easier realization of their specific mutual needs. Thus, gradually new forms of activity in sport, folklore, culture, and other fields began appearing. In time these grew into a rich mosaic of activities in many fields depending on the conditions, needs and opportunities of the Macedonians in their new environments.

Similarly, a certain number of Macedonians in the Diaspora attend churches such as the Catholic Church, the Anglican, Russian, Ukrainian, Serbian, Greek, and Bulgarian, especially the Bulgarian – Macedonian, and several Protestant churches. Such is the case with those churches that are under the jurisdiction of the Eastern Orthodox Church in North America (Toronto, Detroit, Fort Wayne, Indianapolis, and other cities); with the Greek Orthodox Church in Canada (Toronto, Hamilton, Windsor); and Australia (Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, and Sydney); the Serbian church in USA (Detroit) and Canada (Toronto); of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church (Melbourne); the Evangelist – Methodist church, and the Seventh Day Adventists' Church in Australia, as well as other churches. At the same time, in Melbourne there is a Macedonian Evangelist – Methodist Church whose members are mostly Macedonians from the Strumica area.

On the other hand, in USA there are churches named *Macedonian Baptist Church* whose members are the Afro-American population. This church adopted the Biblical name of Macedonia and has no connection with Macedonia or the Macedonian people. Among the clergy of these churches, especially the Catholic, the Anglican, and the Evangelist – Methodist Church, there are Macedonians who represent respectfully the name and the truth about the Macedonian people and Macedonia.

The issue regarding the Macedonians of Muslim religion is a significant chapter in the historical development of the Macedonians in the Diaspora. There are several hundred thousand of them in Istanbul, Ismir, Bursa, and other cities in Turkey, as well the countries of the European Union. These people mainly came from the areas of Debar, Reka, the village of Gorno Vranovci, Skopje, Tetovo, Gora (Former Federal Republic Yugoslavia) and other areas. Characteristically, this Macedonian population adopted the Islamic religion but retained the Macedonian language, culture, customs, and traditions brought with them from Macedonia.

As a result of the desires and efforts of the Macedonians of Muslim religion to maintain their origins in the new environment, there they established



cultural and artistic, and other clubs and associations of Macedonian character. Their love of Macedonia and the links with their ancestors' hearths are truly great. It is also a similar or perhaps identical case with the ethnic Turks from Macedonia who are nostalgically connected to the birth places of their ancestors. This contributes to the strengthening of relations between the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Macedonia on a spiritual, cultural, and especially economic scale.

Since the 1970's the number of newly established churches and church communities, clubs and other associative forms of gathering, has continued to grow constantly in the Transatlantic countries and countries of the European Union.

The majority of Macedonians are members of, or regular visitors to these numerous associations, where they organize religious, national, folk, sports, cultural, and other manifestations.

This was in fact where initial gathering and socialization took place. Initiators emphasized the obvious needs and intentions that the Macedonians open their own places for mutual correlation in widespread agreement and to activate all of their potentials in collaboration with their fatherland.

There they had the chance and opportunities to develop various activities and in a most respectful manner to affirm the Macedonian name, the Macedonian state, and the Macedonian Orthodox Church – Ohrid Archbishopric.

Through the establishment of above all the Macedonian Orthodox churches and church communities, as well as other kinds of associations, conditions were also created for the nurturing of the native cultural heritage, religion, tradition, and customs, all with the aim of maintaining the Macedonian identity and Macedonian truth.

The "Macedonian Digest"



A PART OF THE TRUTH ABOUT THE AEGEAN MACEDONIA (3)

To write about the past and present of Aegean Macedonia, a part of the divided Macedonia is responsible task, but also very pleased. It is for reasons often said that Macedonia is the most beautiful country in the Balkans and Aegean part of Macedonia is the core of this Macedonian beauty. It is not accidental, because in that area was once the headquarters of the Macedonian state of Philip and Alexander and of a great number of known and unknown heroes. That is why their descendants shine the horizons of the Macedonian emigrant galaxy with charisma as it may have only the stars of the Macedonian sky.

The Mother Nature donated Aegean Macedonia with a wealth of beauty and attractiveness. At the same time, its history has left invaluable traces of important events. Therefore, Macedonians from Aegean Macedonia wherever they are in the homeland or outside of divided Macedonia, rejoice proudly in all that and keep such a treasure for future generations.

Aegean Macedonia is a country whose name ever since the classical period has denoted a small province located in the immediate vicinity of Pella - the capital of the Classical Macedonian Empire. At the time Macedonia covered the territory between the currently drained Pazar Lake and the lower course of the Vardar River.

With the expansion of the boundaries of the Macedonian Empire, however, the area designated by the name of Macedonia gradually grew. Within it, the Macedonians from that period distinguished Upper and Lower Macedonia, primarily according to its geographic properties.

Otherwise, Macedonia as a geographic region covers the central part of the Balkan, an area enclosed to the north with the Mountains Sara, Skopska Crna Gora, Kozjak, Osogovo and Rila, and to the south with the Bistrica River and the coast of the Aegean Sea, ending at the mouth of the Mesta River.

Bigla and the watersheds of Mounts Korab, Jablanica, Gramos and Pindus surround Macedonia on the west, and on the east the Mesta River and the western parts of Mount Rhodope. Within these boundaries Macedonia covered an area of 67,741.2 square kilometers.

On the other hand, Lower Macedonia, unlike Upper Macedonia, mostly consisted of lowlands. On the south it was surrounded by the waters of the



Aegean Sea, on the south-west by the waters of Thermay Bay and the Perian Mountains, on the west by the mountains Vermion, Voras and Pajko, on the north by the Balkan massifs, and on the east by the hilly division between the Vardar valleys and Struma Rivers. Vardar divided Lower Macedonia into Eastern and Western; the western part of Lower Macedonia both physically and geographically was characterized by the central plain formed by the alluvia of the rivers Vardar, Bistrica, Ludias and Galikos.

That fertile land (with an area of approximately 1,500 square kilometers) on the south was enclosed by the waters of Thermay Bay, on the southwest by the mountains of Peria, on the west by Mount Vermion, on the north by Mount Pajko, and on the east by the Vardar River.

Today Aegean Macedonia covers a large part of Lower Macedonia. From the total area of Macedonia, the Aegean part spreads over 34,153 square kilometers, half of entire Macedonia. The Vardar and Pirin Macedonia were to the north, i.e. the current boundaries of Greece to the north, Albania and Epirus to the west, divided by the mountains Ivan and Pindus.

The southern border line reached Thessaly, divided by mounts Kamvunia, Pieria and Olympus. It was washed by the Aegean Sea and the Mesta River from the east.

The Aegean Macedonia relief is characterized by mountains that divide the country into numerous small and large lowlands and valleys with a large number of rivers and lakes. According to the current Greek administration, Aegean Macedonia is divided into the following districts: Kostur, Kozhani, Lerin, Voden, Kukus, Solun, Ser, Drama, Kavala, and Halkidiki. Christianity was the dominating religion within this area ever since the IV century which is evident from the archaeological findings and the numerous Christian churches, Episcopal cathedrals, basilicas, baptisteries and other sacral buildings of monumental dimensions.

They all show that Christianity was deeply rooted and well organized in Macedonia from the beginning to the present period.

Prior to the arrival of the Turks in the XIV century, Macedonia used to be a country in revival, with fascinating arts, affluent medieval literature, symbol of civilization. The Ottomans, however, regressed the development, and the long-lasting struggle for survival commenced.

So, in the light of the Ottoman plunders, long-lasting propagation of islamisation, cruel feudal system, various military campaigns, the difficulties and sufferings caused by them will leave deep and painstaking mark on the spiritual landscape of Macedonia, making it a vestibule where the West meets the East.

The Balkan Wars will designate the liberation of Macedonia from Turkish subjugation, but they will also mark its tragic severance between Greece,



Bulgaria, and Serbia, later also Albania, consequently followed by even coarser conditions and discrimination of the Macedonian people.

The greatest disaster of the XX century - the Second World War - will bring about the Second Ilinden and the ASNOM Decisions which will contribute to the accomplishment of the century-long aim - the establishment of the Macedonian State.

Namely, through active participation in the antifascist struggle during the Second World War, the Macedonians attained their freedom, but only on the part of their territory - Vardar Macedonia, which will be constituted as the Peoples' Republic of Macedonia, thereupon the Socialistic Republic of Macedonia, and since 1991 the Republic of Macedonia.

Finally, at the turn of the second millenium the Third Ilinden happened. The Republic of Macedonia become an independent and sovereign country that continued to build its independent democratic development.

The national composition of the population in the Aegean Macedonia was subject to major ethnic changes, in particular after the Balkan Wars and the division of Macedonia. Macedonians under the Greek rule were, and still are, subjected to assimilation torture and forced to immigrate, with the sole aim of altering the ethnic composition of Macedonia.

However, Macedonians existed, exist and will continue to exist since it is not easy to uproot a nation that has survived for centuries in spite of all measures of violence and assimilation.

Macedonians were given many national names to influence their awareness in a negative manner. They were called: Slavs, atheists, Christians, Macedonian Slavs, Macedoslavs, Slavo-Macedonians, Bulgarians, Bulgarian Slavs, Macedonian Bulgarians, Serbs, South-Serbs, Greeks, Macedonian Greeks, Greek inclined Slavs, Bulgarophones, Slavophones etc.

However, regardless of how they were called, they were and still are Macedonians. All of the names they were called can and should be disregarded since they are only a bunch of names for the same notion that denotes a single, tormented, divided nation with tragic fate, a nation that could be found all over the world.

The characteristics and traditions of the Macedonian nation, both by language and ethnic background, are unfamiliar to Greece. Therefore, the Greek bourgeoisie from the very beginning of its extended rule over Aegean Macedonia built a policy of physical extermination of Macedonian people focused towards alteration of their ethnic composition to its own benefit. That was the fundamental policy, in particular since the substantial support previously invested in the Patriarchate and the schools in Macedonia did not render the required results.



The Greek bourgeoisie, in its attempt to wipe out any marking that would suggest Macedonian attributes of Aegean Macedonia, in November 1926 adopted a law on replacement of the Macedonian geographical names with Greek names for villages, towns, mountains, fields, rivers, etc.

That law was published in the Official Journal of the Greek Government "*Efimeristis kivemiseos*", No. 332 dated 21 November 1926, and in No. 346 of the same Journal new Greek names were published.

National and political slavery reigns there even today and the Greek nationalists and chauvinists are still making great efforts to depersonalize Macedonian national spirit and to destroy and bury deep the rich historical and cultural past of the Macedonian people from Aegean Macedonia.

The "Macedonian Digest"



THE VIEWS OF THE TRUTH (4)

Macedonia is a historic and geographic area whose name dates from the beginning of times. The Bible mentions it several times, and many chronicle writers experienced Macedonia as a Biblical country. Everybody describing Macedonia, both in the past and in more recent history, were fascinated by the country. That is why Macedonia is said to be the country of crossroads, and yet a land of beautiful landscape and mystery, the land of people who have felt the burden of conquerors, empires, changes, and various enslavement. Nevertheless, it has preserved its magic and its name. From the time of Alexander of Macedonia, through the rule of Rome and Byzantium, including the time of major Slav migrations to the south, Macedonia was the crossroads of different civilizations, cultures, religions, languages, and peoples. During that lengthy and opulent time, only two nations were designated as part of the identity of the country - the Ancient Macedonians and the contemporary Macedonians.

Going back to his life in Aegean Macedonia, the period in the first years of immigration, and dealing with the new and unknown, he demonstrates an in-depth knowledge of the events, facts, truth, destiny, where nothing is left out or forgotten, but remained in his memory.

Individual events and developments are singled out through these pages that build the mosaic of time and truth. The facts show that it is about a spring of inexhaustible energy, and a unique mirror of the author's approach to display an authentic story and objective reality.

During the Macedonian "*Freedom Movement*" in Aegean Macedonia the hope of the Macedonians was hope of liberty, self-identification, their survival and survival in the Aegean part of Macedonia; where patriotism was punished most harshly, whereby the Greek regimes used all types of means and ways to destroy every progressive and national spark, thought and action in their White Sea region.

The Greeks hated Macedonians. They simply wanted to make them disappear forever from the country. To wipe them out of the ethnic map. He points out that they had three different charges against the Macedonians. The first was to be a communist. The second, to be Bulgarian. And third, the harshest one - when someone rummages in the pupil of your eye - to be Macedonian.

Surely one of these three charges could be imposed on anyone. And once a man was put in the whirlwind of the cruelty of the Greek islands or punished in



prison only because they'd demanded justice and truth, then, almost always, there was no hope of returning home.

As a result of a string of concatenation of circumstances, it was too late for the Macedonian people because up to 1949 everything that was connected with waging war and libertarian challenges came to an end. Terrorized and abused were those Macedonians who refused to become Greeks or to give up and forget their Macedonian code. Their Macedonian language. Fears were high because the Greek authorities used any possible ways and means to punish any progressive thought, to destroy any progressive idea. Those were cruel methods. Even under the windows of their homes informers-agents used to come to listen whether Macedonian language was spoken, whether Macedonian song was sung.

Even old people were forced to go on courses and evening schools to learn Greek. But Macedonians endured that horrible nightmare and agony bravely, firmly and with patriotism but they didn't renounce their most sacred feature - their Macedonian identity.

One of the greatest Christian commandments states: "*Love your neighbour as you love yourself.*" However, this commandment did not apply to the time of Philip and Alexander of Macedon, especially after the battle in Hironea. Unfortunately, ever since then, conditionally to say after the First Ilinden for the Macedonians up to now antagonism between the Macedonians and Greeks has been at a very high level.

In the literature is written that both, hate and love, faith and battle, submission and cooperation, and evil thoughts towards one's neighbour and all he possesses, continued to grow among both Christian peoples - the Greek and the Macedonians.

Part of this truth is still present even now, and many varieties of the neighbour's life sometimes influence the future of co-existence, while other times they throw a dark light upon these paths and turn them into labyrinths.

To state the above, let us start at the beginning. It is a fact that at the moment Aegean Macedonia encompasses a large part of southern Macedonia and that within it, the national composition of the population has undergone huge ethnic changes, especially after the Balkan wars and the partitioning of Macedonia. Macedonians under Greek rule were, and still are subjected to assimilatory tortures and forced emigration, with the sole aim of changing the ethnic composition of Macedonia.

This is done for the reason that the Macedonian people, according to its characteristics and customs, linguistically and ethnically, differs from the Greek.

For this reason, from the very first moment when the Greek bourgeoisie spread its power over Aegean Macedonia, it established a policy of physical



extermination of the Macedonian people and changing the ethnologic composition to its own advantage. Thus, with the intention of erasing every possible trace that reminds of the Macedonian character of Aegean Macedonia, the Greek bourgeoisie adopted a law in November of 1926 to give Greek names to the villages and cities, mountains, fields, toponyms, rivers, and so on. Everything that remained on Macedonia and the Macedonian people.

The time of the Civil War in Greece, during the period 1946-1949, they continued with the exodus of many Macedonians and members of the Greek communist party. As early as then, Macedonians were considered as potentially disloyal toward the Greek state. Therefore, on 1 October, 1947 a decree was adopted for taking away the right to citizenship, which was followed by steps for their expelling from at that time North Greece, while today Macedonia, but with a Greek character.

It is also a fact that during the Civil War in Greece, approximately 30,000 children aged between 2 and 14 years, the majority of which Macedonians, were driven out to former Yugoslavia and other Eastern European countries. At the time, more than 50,000 Macedonians were forced to emigrate due to the difficult and harsh reprisals to which members of the Macedonian national minority were subjected. More than 17,000 died in North Greece.

It is also a fact that on 23 August, 1953 a decree was adopted to colonize the border regions with "*new colonists which have a healthy national conscience.*" Therefore, Greeks settled in places from which Macedonians had emigrated. The same decree meant that numerous Macedonians, refugees from Greece, were deprived a Greek citizenship and their properties confiscated.

In 1959 the Greek government adopted a law which predicted compulsory statements of loyalty. Hence, the Greek authorities demanded that the population in the villages surrounding Lerin (now Florina) and Kostur (now Kastoria) confirm publicly that they do not speak the Macedonian language.

Such measures were also taken towards emigrants from Aegean Macedonia in Australia and Canada. In addition to this, in 1967 there was an interesting order that forbid the use of the Macedonian language, which was an act of taking away their citizenship, as well as other measures for assimilation of the Macedonians", he states and continues.

It is also a fact that assimilation of the Macedonians by the Greek authorities continues to take place even now, through the system of education. The inability to find employment in any state institution for those who declare as Macedonians, and through an entire new series of laws and regulations which are discriminatory as regards the Macedonian national minority.

For instance, we will emphasize the decision of 1982 as regards the repatriation of Greek citizens and political refugees, which allowed only "*Greeks by birth*" to return to Greece, i.e. those who will give up their Macedonian identity



and adopt Greek names. The law of 1985 also contains a discriminatory clause which prevents Macedonians in the Republic of Greece from attaining the right to ownership of property.

To top it all, in 1986 the Greek government dropped the "*St. Cyril and Methodius*" university in Skopje off the list of foreign academic institutions whose diplomas are acknowledged in Greece with the explanation that lectures at this university were in a language that was not "internationally recognized."

This shows that the official negation of the existence of the Macedonian national minority remained constantly in Greek policy, regardless of the government that was in power: left, right or profascistic.

In more recent times, Greek policy is once again turned against members of the Macedonian national minority. Similar destinies have the Turkish, Albanian, Vlah, Roma and other minorities that live in Greece. Some of the recidivism of Greek "*democracy*" continues to be evident. It is also a fact that the Republic of Greece refused to recognise the Republic of Macedonia under its constitutional name with the explanation that the use of the name shows its territorial aspirations toward parts of Greek Macedonia. Pressuring the Republic of Macedonia, Greece imposed an unofficial severe trading blockade in the autumn of 1992 by closing its border to Macedonia in February 1994 with the aim of inflicting economic damage, degrading the infrastructure, and throwing its northern neighbour, the Republic of Macedonia "*on its knees.*"

It is a fakt that Greece rude and offensive returns Macedonians who were born or derived from the Aegean part of Macedonia to enter that country of the European Union, even though they have American, Canadian or Australian passports. Otherwise, all these citizens of the world are loyal, well-known and recognized, many of them businessmen, cultural and prominent citizens in new areas of the United States, Canada, Australia, the European Union and other countries.

This Greek policy toward the Republic of Macedonia with diverse diplomatic activities slowed down the process of its international recognition, and contributed toward the precedent of its being accepted in the United Nations under a temporary name. And Greece is strong because it is a member of the European Union.

However, it forgets that it is not nationally homogeneous, but is in fact a multi-national country bearing all of the potential political consequences; it needs to accept European regulations regarding the treatment of minorities and protection of their human and cultural rights; it is a country from which the word "*democracy*" originates; it is a country with wide commercial, cultural, and other potentials; alongside with Macedonia it is the land of the past, with the hope that it will also be the land of the future; and finally, it is



a neighbour of the Republic of Macedonia, who should be the right hand to a better tomorrow.

We must emphasise here that the Macedonian and Greek people, regardless of their policy, have always collaborated in good times and bad times. This has been confirmed in recent decades with the increasing collaboration between the two countries and their people in cultural and other fields. In this respect, numerous translations from Macedonian to Greek and vice-versa have been published, and there has been great collaboration between folk entertainment groups, theatrical and other associations. A large number of Greek intellectuals condemn the political injustice inflicted upon well-known and recognized Macedonian citizens who descend from Aegean Macedonia. We must also emphasize the significance of the Greek Helsinki Committee and other associations protecting human and other rights of every citizen in the Republic of Greece.

Greece's signing of the Council of Europe Convention for Protection of National Minorities of September 1997, showed good signs of gradual positive changes in the attitude toward the minorities in Greece. This convention will probably lead to the disappearance of the reasons for Greek denial of the name of the Republic of Macedonia and the rights of the Macedonian and other minorities in Greece.

It is yet another fact that in most recent times Greece by far leads before all other foreign investors who have invested their capital in Macedonia. Thus, the participation of Greek companies in more than fifty investment projects amounting over 230 million dollars represents, on the one hand, a powerful potential and recovery, and on the other hand it means economic dependence of Macedonian economy on Greek investors. Good economic relations between the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Greece continue providing expectations that collaboration and investment policy of both countries will continue in future.

The "Macedonian Digest"



MACEDONIAN EMIGRATION IN THE USA AFTER WORLD WAR II (5)

The United States of America is a federal republic in Northern America that lies between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, between Canada and Mexico. It consists of 50 federal states and one federal district. Together with Alaska and Hawaii it is one of the biggest in the world with a population of 250 million people.

The majority of Americans migrated from Europe, many from Great Britain and Ireland, Spain, France, Germany, Germany, Italy, Russia (till the October Revolution and after the decline of the Soviet Union), from Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Croatia, Serbia, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Slovenia, and from Macedonia.

It also has a large Afro-American population, Indians, Eskimos, Jews, Japanese, Chinese, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans and other peoples. Its capital city is Washington, which is in the District of Columbia, and it has a population of over 3 million people including the suburbs. Other important metropolises include New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Detroit, Boston, Baltimore, Cleveland, San Francisco, Dallas and others.

The landscape of USA varies a lot. The continental part consists of several large geographical regions which differ in space and natural resources. Predominant climates include a continental, subtropical, coastal, continental-mountainous, and arctic to a mildly warm ocean climate. USA has large resources, and a large number of mountains, rivers, and lakes. Among the most significant lakes are: Upper, Huron, Michigan, Erie, and Ontario. The most significant rivers include the Mississippi and Missouri, the Rio Grande, Colorado, and many others.

The oldest known residents of the present territory of USA are the Eskimos and Indians. It is believed that the Normans were the first of the Europeans to come to the North American Continent about a thousand years ago. Christopher Columbus discovered the Central America in 1492. At the beginning of the XVI century the first European colonists began arriving from England, France, The Netherlands, Sweden, and Spain.

They waged wars with the Indians in order to conquer land. The first English colony was Virginia, founded in 1584, where England sent 500 convicts every year starting at the beginning of the XVIII century. The next colony was



Massachusetts in 1620. New Holland was founded in 1614. In 1662 the name of its capital New Amsterdam was changed to New York, the world's most important metropolis at the moment.

Since its foundation USA has always had a rich and turbulent history. Hence, in addition to the battles with the Indians, in 1775 the first conflicts began between the American voluntary detachments and the English army which in fact marked the beginning of the struggle of the North American continent for independence. With the Versailles Peace Agreement in 1783 England acknowledged the independence of USA.

This brought great changes not only in USA, but throughout the world. The USA was shaken by the Civil War in the period 1861 – 1865; the world economic crisis during 1929 – 1935; the Second World War, especially the war against Japan and the use of atomic weapons over Hiroshima and Nagasaki; the consequences of the inhuman vandalism over the World Trade Centre in New York on 11 September 2001; and the present crisis in Afghanistan.

According to its economic structure, USA is an industrial and agricultural country, which has accomplished a very high level of development of the productive forces in all of its commercial branches. This has enabled USA to establish economic domination of the capital throughout the world. It is one of the world leaders in the heavy and light industries, in food production, agriculture, the automobile, and other industries. It is the biggest and most significant economic, political, and military force in the world.

Presently USA is imposing itself upon the entire world through the language of technology of the XXI century – the English language, computer, astronomical, and other achievements in various fields. The English language has become the world's language without which communication cannot be imagined even in the poorest countries. It has become the *“road sign to the future”*.

Approximately 150 thousand Macedonians from every part of Macedonia live in USA. As the common Macedonian person will say, they are the *“pioneers”* in emigration across the sea. They live in practically every city across the rich American land.

However, as is usually the case with other migrants in what the people called *“the promised land”*, the Macedonians also gathered into groups and settled in a certain number of states. Thus, most Macedonians emigrants can be found in the following states: Indiana (Gary), Ohio (Columbus, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Kenton, and Akron), Michigan (Detroit and Flint), New Jersey (Passaic, Garfield, Totowa, and Cider Grove), New York (Syracuse, Rochester, Buffalo, and New York), Illinois (Chicago and Fort Wayne), California (Los Angeles), Pennsylvania (Philadelphia), Florida (Miami), Washington (Seattle), Arizona (Tempe), and other places.



On this occasion we will write about the House of Representatives in the USA, which is composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

No Person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the Age of twenty five Years, and been seven Years a Citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons.

The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct.

The Number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty Thousand, but each State shall have at Least one Representative; and until such enumeration shall be made, the State of New Hampshire shall be entitled to chuse three, Massachusetts eight, Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations one, Connecticut five, New-York six, New Jersey four, Pennsylvania eight, Delaware one, Maryland six, Virginia ten, North Carolina five, South Carolina five, and Georgia three.

When vacancies happen in the Representation from any State, the Executive Authority thereof shall issue Writs of Election to fill such Vacancies.

The House of Representatives shall chuse their Speaker and other Officers; and shall have the sole Power of Impeachment.

The "Macedonian Digest"



THE MACEDONIAN DIASPORA PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN AFFIRMING THE TRUTH ABOUT MACEDONIA (6)

Macedonian migration basically coincided with developments in the Balkans and it depended, even more, on the developments in Macedonia. As a result, the rate of moving away and going abroad to earn a living was conditioned, above all, by difficult economic hardships, and in very few cases of national and political character. The miserable, difficult, and often impossible conditions of living and the constant struggle for survival forced many Macedonians to opt, among other things, for leaving their own country in order to settle somewhere else.

Therefore, the process of going abroad to earn a living at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century became a mass phenomenon and it was one of the strongest proofs of the then intolerable conditions, especially in Macedonian villages. The village-dwellers were leaving Macedonia on a massive scale and going to Solun, Tsarigrad (Constantinople), Smirna, Skadar, and outside of Turkey – in neighboring countries such as Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, and sometimes in Austro-Hungary, France and Egypt. Thus, several thousands from the regions of Lerin, Prespa and Kostur went to Tsarigrad and Smirna each year; those from Struga and Bitola mostly went to Skadar; while those from Prilep and the villages of the Prilep region went to Serbia and Bulgaria; those from Ohrid and the surrounding area went to Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania, and there were many migrant workers from the regions of Veles, Kichevo, Demir Hisar, and Tetovo.

According to an unwritten rule, the migrant workers returned to their homes after several years of working abroad and most often bought land and houses with their hardearned money.

In addition, at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, Macedonians started working in overseas countries such as the U.S., Canada, Australia and South America (especially Argentina). Thus, it is known that the first migrant workers from Macedonia arrived on the North American continent in 1885, while the first large group was from the village Buff, Lerin Region and left in 1898. The first Macedonian - immigrant workers arrived in Australia after the First World War, while the first groups arrived in South America in 1924.



The process of going abroad to earn a living and moving away from Macedonia to the United States and Canada respectively was characteristic of the traditional migration areas: regions of Lerin, Bitola, Prespa, Kostur, Ohrid, Voden, Prilep, Struga, Solun, Tetovo and other parts of Macedonia. The immigration waves from these parts increased after the 1903 Ilinden Uprising, but they became more intense after the Balkan Wars and the First World War, which, instead of bringing liberation from the five-century old slavery, led to the triple partition, oppression, assimilation, denationalization and physical destruction of the Macedonian identity and culture.

All this was done by Macedonia's just liberated neighbours: Bulgaria, Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Greece and Albania. What happened in the previous period during several centuries and what happened after the First World War led, for a relatively short period, to great migration movements and ethnic changes in certain parts of Macedonia that had disastrous consequences for the Macedonian population. Consequently, according to a report dated May 13, 1949 of the UN Special Committee for the Balkans, 232,000 Macedonians from Aegean Macedonia moved away, and the Greek authorities populated and colonized Aegean Macedonia with refugees from Asia Minor in their place.

The period after 1960 was also specific. As a result of the opening of SFR Yugoslavia to the world and its inclusion in the international division of labor, along with the creation of an urban population in cities and liberalization of the policy of going to work abroad, many workers and intellectuals from the former SR Macedonia moved away and settled in North America. Immigration waves from Macedonia to all corners of the world continue even today, but the intensity varies depending on the economic and political moments in Macedonia, the Balkans, and globally.

As a result of the many waves of migration and the increasing birth rate, the number of Macedonian immigrants is growing from year to year. However, there is no complete and accurate data about Macedonians living overseas, in the European Union, and in some neighboring countries. Some more realistic estimates indicate that, from the mid 19th century to the present, more than one million Macedonians from all parts of Macedonia have moved to different countries. In the absence of complete statistical and other data, it is very difficult to accurately determine the exact number, but it is estimated that about 500 thousand Macedonian immigrants live in the U.S., Canada and Australia, out of whom about 150,000 live in the U.S., approximately 150,000 in Canada, and more than 200,000 in Australia and New Zealand. It is estimated that more than 150,000 Macedonians live in Europe and other countries. It is also estimated that about 50,000 immigrants of Macedonian origin live in South America, Egypt, Great Britain, South Africa and Eastern European countries, as well as in Turkey, where there are more than 300,000 Macedonian-Muslims and ethnic Turks from Macedonia.



The modern economic emigration grew in intensity in the 90's of last century when over 100 thousands citizens (including Macedonians, ethnic Albanians and others) left Macedonia. This is also confirmed by data from the 1994 Census of the Republic of Macedonia. According to this data, 17,611 people living outside of the country in 1994, out of whom about 50,000 left in the period 1989-1994. According to several indicators, these migration movements have continued with equal intensity until today. This is also confirmed by the size of the negative net migration (7,438 people annually in the period 1994-1996) and the data available from foreign sources. For example, according to the data of the Council of Europe, the number of Macedonian citizens only in Germany, Italy and Switzerland had increased to around 41,000 in the period 1996-1999.

The resettlement of immigrants from the camps in Greece, Italy and Austria to Australia, New Zealand and South America (Brazil and Argentina) mainly began in 1951; from 1957 to Belgium; from 1958 and 1961/62 to the Scandinavian countries, and then to the U.S., Canada and other countries. According to unofficial data there are also around ten thousands Macedonians from Belomorska (Greek occupied) Macedonia, as well as from Pirin (Bulgarian occupied) Macedonia, Albania and Kosovo.

Immediately after their arrival in their new environments in the postwar period the Macedonians started making attempts to organize themselves. In the beginning they were individuals-immigrants who had declared themselves to be anti-Communists in the detention camps. Those immigrants in Greek camps, however, who had declared themselves as Macedonians were exposed to a special regime of torture. They were mainly members of the *Macedonian National Committee (MNC)*, later renamed *the Committee of Liberation of Macedonia (OKM)*, *of the Movement for Liberation and Unification of Macedonia (DOOM)*, *the National Liberation Front of Macedonia (NOFM)*, and other organizations. The Macedonians, especially in the west-European countries, in addition to being organized into political parties, joined together and established newspapers in order to express their political and national commitment.

In addition, an important chapter in the historical development of the Macedonians in the diaspora is dedicated to the issue related to Macedonians of Muslim the religion. There are several hundred thousands of them living in Istanbul, Izmir, Bursa and other cities in Turkey, as well as in Europe and overseas. They came mostly from Debar, the region of Reka, the village of Upper Vranovci, Veles, Skopje, Tetovo, Gora (in Serbia and Montenegro, and Kosovo respectively) and from other places. Characteristic of this Macedonian population is that they are Muslims, but have preserved the Macedonian language, cultural values, customs and traditions brought from Macedonia.

The early Macedonian immigrant workers in the past and Macedonian expatriates later came mostly from rural backgrounds and lived in a more



difficult economic situation, having less education and low professional qualifications, unlike today's immigrants who mainly have got higher education and are professionally trained. Hence, the main purpose of immigration was to provide a basic livelihood and earn money for their family. The number of immigrant workers who left their homeland for political reasons and just for the sake of tradition to go abroad to earn a living was very small.

However, among recent generations, as well as among the newcomers from more recent times, especially from the Republic of Macedonia, there are more and more highly educated immigrants with a higher cultural and social status that has set a new structural level in the Macedonian Diaspora. Thus, there are intellectuals among them from different areas of activity that have established themselves not only in Macedonia but also worldwide.

The lifestyle of Macedonian emigrants in the diaspora has gone through a partial transformation due to changes in their economic, social, education, qualifications and increased monetary potential.

Moreover, many of them, especially from the Aegean part of Macedonia made their way into higher society where they live. But in regard to political life in their new environments and societies, the Macedonian settlers lag way behind other ethnic groups, as is the case with immigrants from other Balkan countries. However, their achievements on an economic, spiritual, educational, cultural and sports level contribute more and more so they are not treated as second-class citizens, but as an integral and important factor in the new communities in the diaspora, especially in multi-ethnic societies.

Despite the differences the expatriates of Macedonian descent in the diaspora feel in regard to their social structure, resulting from different levels of education and their financial situation, they do share some common characteristic features in their social life. Thus, a large number of newcomers from Macedonia are assimilated in a way, in a melting pot of assimilation. The majority of Macedonian immigrants, however, only apparently embrace their integration within local society, remaining loyal to their traditional lifestyle. Therefore, their social life is mainly within the Macedonian community. At the same time, some of them mount some resistance to the challenges posed by the new environment, and hardly fit in a new way of living, fearing they will lose their personal and national identity. Therefore, most Macedonian newcomers continue their relationships and they group together in Macedonian communities located mainly in major industrial centers.

Thus, the earliest forms of gathering of Macedonian expatriates date back to the time of their massive arrival in new environments when they brought with them their culture, traditions, religion and customs. As a result, in all major centres such as Detroit, Gary, Chicago, Cleveland - U.S., Toronto, Hamilton and Windsor - Canada, Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney - Australia, then Gothenburg and Malmo - Sweden, Copenhagen - Denmark, Paris



- France, Munich, Berlin and Hanover - Germany, Zurich - Switzerland, and other industrial cities, they formed their religious and cultural associations, as well as associations for mutual assistance. Their goal was to preserve Macedonian culture, customs and religious traditions, to provide money to socially disadvantaged Macedonians, and to raise funds to construct churches, schools and other facilities in their new environments and in their birth places in Macedonia as well. Thus, in 1910 the first church was built in Toronto, the Macedonian-Bulgarian church of St. Cyril and Methodij. There, in 1912, the first bank was founded by Macedonian expatriates from Aegean Macedonia. In addition, many rural societies were set up by the emigrants from all of Macedonia.

Macedonians in the diaspora began organizing themselves into larger organizations even after the First World War, while considerable movement and activity on a national plan was felt between the two world wars. Initially a large number of Macedonian newcomers, especially from Aegean Macedonia joined the *Macedonian Patriotic Organization* known as the MPO. However, as it began changing its political orientation and leaning to the pan-Bulgarian assimilatory policy, a certain number of Macedonians began setting up independent progressive groups in several cities in the U.S. and Canada.

They primarily advocated for recognition of actual directions and paths to be taken by the Macedonian revolutionary ideological struggle, which was an inseparable part of the struggle of other progressive forces in the Balkans. These progressive groups joined together in a union, i.e. the Macedonian National Union (MNS) after their first conference held in 1930. The main objective of the MNS was a struggle for the freedom of Macedonia with a desire to create a Balkan federation where broad national political and social rights and freedoms would be guaranteed to the Balkan nations, including the Macedonian people from the three parts of Macedonia. For the realization of this platform, MNS expected to rely on collaboration and support of all progressive forces and people in the world, especially those in the Balkans.

Extensive data show that during the Second World War the MNS focused its forces on waging an active antifascist struggle along with other progressive organizations in the U.S. and Canada. Members of this organization fought for the elimination of fascism, and were advocates for building a life that would promise greater democratic freedoms and lasting peace. Their assistance was also tremendous during the period of construction and redevelopment of Macedonia, until their abolition in the fifties as a result of the Informbiro (Cominform).

In addition, the Macedonian settlers overseas demonstrated a positive attitude and great loyalty to the National Liberation War in Macedonia and provided organized assistance for its reconstruction and redevelopment after the war. However, the most effective and most successful in its effect and importance was the campaign for construction of a part of the hospital in Skopje.



The campaign began in 1946, and in 1948 the hospital was officially opened, creating pride and a motive for their connection with Macedonia. In those turbulent times the free national and social development and the breakthrough of truth about SR Macedonia were a strong incentive for the organized life of our expatriates on a national basis. That was the most effective defense against all foreign propaganda and hostile actions in places where Macedonians lived and worked in the diaspora.

One of the most significant peace agreements ever signed was the 1913 Treaty of Bucharest. According to this Treaty Romania received Southern Dobruza; Serbia got Vardar Macedonia; Aegean Macedonia was given to Greece; while the Pirin part was given to Bulgaria. This partition left major scars on the historical development of Macedonia and the Macedonian people.

Also Romania was a favourite destination for many Macedonians for a long, long time, especially for those living in the western part of Macedonia, who, with their shoulderbags, set off worldwide to earn a living and then return to their Macedonia, to their ancestral roots. These emigration waves, according to some written documents and from communications with numerous storytellers, were pretty intense and left a mark on the history of the Macedonian people.

The biggest wave of immigration of Macedonians in Romania was generated after the Second World War. In 1949 during the Civil War in Greece, a huge number of political emigrants from Aegean Macedonia settled mostly in Bucharest. Their number was about 6-7,000 out of which 3,000 were Macedonians. Twenty years later, in 1968, the great immigration of Macedonians from Romania to the Republic of Macedonia, and a small number to Greece and other countries commenced.

In the course of the 19th century Russia was also a challenge to many Macedonians, mostly intellectuals, who finished their academic education there and, as leaders for national revival, fought for the Macedonian cause later.

Over a long period Macedonians mainly went to Moscow, St. Petersburg, Odessa and other places. However, the largest population of Macedonians came to the former Soviet Union during the Civil War in Greece, and settled in the Caucasus regions.

The number of Macedonians from Belomorska Macedonia was about 7-8,000 in only Tashkent and surrounding areas from 1949 onwards. That number later dropped rapidly due to the large number of returnees to Greece, Macedonia and other countries. Today several thousand Macedonians, mostly from Aegean Macedonia, live in the former Eastern European countries: Romania, Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovakia, Poland, Ukraine, Russia and other countries.



The Republics of Croatia and Slovenia, however, are countries where all rights are guaranteed to Macedonians as a national minority. They are countries where their governments, through material and financial assistance, help the development of minorities to promote their national, cultural and linguistic values. Thus, the Macedonians serve as a bridge for developing friendly relations among Croatia, Slovenia and Macedonia, promoting these two countries as democratic and civil-society countries.

The destiny of Macedonians in Serbia and Montenegro is similar if not identical to that of Macedonians living in Croatia and Slovenia. But here, due to the problem with the Serbian Orthodox Church, Macedonians don't have their own religious temples; but they are organized in cultural and artistic societies and other associations.

There are Macedonians who live in Pakistan as well and who consider themselves descendants of the soldiers and generals of Alexander of Macedon (the Great). In the Himalayas, in the eastern part of Pakistan, there is a tribe which differs from the others. They are tall with a white complexion.

They have their own autonomous territory which they call Hunza or Hunzicut, they speak Burushaski, and identify as Macedonians. The sun on their red flag has eight gold rays. Recently they accepted Islam, but retained the old Macedonian traditions.

In addition, there are Macedonians in Israel whose fate is similar to that of the Jews. Their hard life, overall conditions, strong love for their religion, nation, country, past and future have made Macedonians and Jews establish their sovereign and independent states. One of them is George Atanasoski who has learned from the Jews how painstakingly difficult is and how much sacrifice is needed to establish a state: how it is even more difficult to achieve freedom, and how the newly established state, Republic of Macedonia, is to be defended, built, protected and developed loftily, with strong faith, great love and best hope.

The "Macedonian Digest"



THE DESTINY OF THE MACEDONIAN PEOPLE AND ITS CHURCH (7)

The Macedonian people in their century – long struggle for their own state, national and cultural freedom and independence was at the same time struggling for the independence of its Orthodox Church. Therefore it is true that the Macedonian Orthodox Church is an important factor, if not the most important one, playing a significant role in gathering Macedonians within and outside their country.

The history of the Macedonian people in the last thousand years has always been closely linked to that of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, the archbishopric of Ohrid. The church was responsible for the creation of the tradition of mediaeval Macedonian painting, today known throughout the world as the authentic art of the country with all the characteristics of original creative individuality.

The history of the Macedonian Orthodox Church is characterized by three principal phases: 1. The Ohrid Archbishopric (11th century AC to 1767); 2. The jurisdiction of non-native churches in Macedonia (1767-1944); and 3. The Macedonian Orthodox Church in the face of the Ohrid Archbishopric (from 1944 until the present).

The first epoch begins, in fact, during the 7th century when the majority of people in Macedonia were Christianized, while Macedonians settled in the central part of the vast Byzantine Empire, being nearer to the emperor Justinian the First Macedonian, and to the church center of Constantinople (Istanbul). As an explanation, Justinian the First was born in the village Taor (Taorum) near Skopje, and his laws are well-known even today.

The Constantinople patriarchate had chosen the brothers Kiril and Metodi for missionary work in Moravia. Among their followers was Clement who, after coming back to Macedonia, became the first Macedonian Bishop with a residence in Ohrid (893).

He is, therefore, considered to be the first organizer of the Macedonian Orthodox Church with a local clergy.

The official Macedonian orthodox religious community was established by the end of the 10th century AD, when Samoil was proclaimed king of the newly created kingdom, and when the Ohrid Patriarchate was founded with a Patriarch as its head. It is assumed that the new church had received the blessing



of the Roman Pope, who had sent the king's crown to King Samoil. However the Byzantine emperor Basil II, after the fall of Samoil's kingdom in 1018, had reduced the Ohrid Patriarchate to an archbishopric without abolishing its autocephaly or reducing its scope.

The Ohrid patriarchy had remained within the framework of the Byzantine Empire during the 11th and the 12th century. At the beginning of the 13th century there were frequent political changes in the Balkans and in Macedonia.

Thus, the Sultan Mustafa III abolished the Archbishopric of Ohrid and joined its eparchies to the Patriarchate of Constantinople, which in turn was obliged to pay it debts. After more than seven and a half centuries of autocephalous life, the Ohrid Archbishopric was uncanonically abolished by a heterodox Sultan in 1767.

The next phase of the orthodox church in Macedonia began with its inclusion within the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, which is considered to be religious slavery of the Macedonian people, due to the fact that they had not only lost their religious and economic freedom, but they were also subdued to Hellenization since Macedonian education and culture were forbidden.

The National liberation War of the Macedonian people during the Second World War was not only aimed at national and social liberation, but also at solving the issue of the Macedonian Orthodox Church. In 1943 the first clerical assembly on the free territory in western Macedonia was held in the village of Izdeglavje, Ohrid district. This is considered as the end of the second phase of the Macedonian church issue.

In the autumn of 1944, part of Macedonia was completely liberated. The newly created Macedonian state had become an equal member of the new Yugoslavia. Therefore, the orthodox flock and the Macedonian clergy held the First National Church Assembly in 1945, which passed the decision for the formation of the Macedonian Orthodox Church through the reestablishment of the Ohrid Archbishopric.

In 1959, the Episcopal Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church approved the resolution of the Second Church Assembly of the Macedonian Orthodox Church held in Ohrid (4th – 6th October, 1959), about the separation of the Macedonian Orthodox Church as an independent church, with the newly elected head – the Archbishop of Ohrid and Macedonia, Dositej. The representative of the Serbian Orthodox Church headed by patriarch German took part in the investiture of the Macedonian bishop Clement.

The Third National Church Assembly of the Macedonian Orthodox Church was held on July 18th, 1968, in Ohrid, when it was decided to proclaim the independence of the Macedonian Orthodox Church and to have the Archbishop of Ohrid and Macedonia, Dositej to head it. The diocese of the Macedonian



Orthodox Church coincided with the boundaries of the Macedonian national state – the Republic of Macedonia.

According to the Constitution of the Macedonian Orthodox Church of 1974, the Macedonian Orthodox Church shall govern and arrange its ecclesiastical affairs independently, in accordance with dogmatic and canonical unity with the other orthodox churches. The Macedonian Orthodox Church has its coat of arms, its flag, and Macedonian is its official language.

The church eparchy bodies and administrative organs of the Macedonian Orthodox Church are: 1. The Archbishop, 2. The Holy Episcopal Synod, 3. The Archbishop's Religious Court, 4. The eparchies, seven in the Republic of Macedonia and three overseas and in the European Union countries (the American-Canadian, the Australian-New Zealand, and the eparchy of the European Union), are governed by bishops and helped by archpriest deputies in the cities of the eparchy.

The Holy Episcopal Synod is in charge of religious and educational activities and the publication of religious literature, as well as the education of the clergy and the monks.

The Macedonian Orthodox Church has its four year primary school (seminary) in Drachevo, near Skopje, where the future priests are educated, as well as the Faculty of Theology in Skopje, which is an integral part of the University St. Cyril and Metodij.

The following archbishops were appointed heads of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, Ohrid Archbishopric: The Archbishops of Ohrid and Macedonia – Dositej, Angelarij, Gavril, Mihail, and the present archbishop Stefan.

From the establishment of the American-Canadian Eparchy in 1969, the heads of this eparchy were the following bishops: Bishop Kiril, archbishops Gavril, Mihail and Stefan, while at present is the metropolit Metodij.

The "Macedonian Digest"



AMERICAN-CANADIAN-MACEDONIAN ORTHODOX EPARCHY (8)

Among the decisions of the church-people's assembly held in Ohrid during 17-19 July 1967, when the autocephaly of the Macedonian Orthodox Church within the Ohrid archiepiscopate was declared, was also the decision of the Holy Archbishop Synod to establish an American-Canadian-Australian Eparchy.

One of the aims of this significant church institution is to deepen relations and to strengthen love, faith, and hope among the Macedonian emigrants in the TransAtlantic countries with their fatherland and with the church, and to be the bridge that will bring Macedonia closer to the countries where they lived. Initially there was one Eparchy for USA, Canada, and Australia. Later there was a decision to establish an Australian-Macedonian Eparchy for Australia, which broke away as a separate institution. This was followed by the establishment of a European Eparchy.

According to the decisions of the Synod of MOC, G. Kiril, who was then vicar bishop of Tiveriopol, was chosen to be the first archpriest of the entire eparchy. On 10 August 1969 he was enthroned as its authorized eparchy archpriest. The act of enthronement was conducted in Toronto, the biggest Macedonian emigrant colony and church and cultural center of the Macedonians from every part of the world. It was carried out by Bishop Metodij, who was the metropolitan of Debar and Kichevo at the time.

The service during the enthronement was conducted by priests in the presence of a large number of Macedonians from every Macedonian colony in Canada and USA, numerous guests and officials of the Macedonian organizations and associations, as well as representatives of the Canadian government and the media.

For the first time an Eparchy Assembly as the most supreme body of this eparchy was founded on 4 October 1969 at the premises of the MOC of *St. Clement of Ohrid* in Toronto at which numerous delegates and guests participated. They also elected an Diocesan Eparchy Board, Diocese Ecclesiastical Court, and Diocesan Church – Educational Council.

Twelve years later the American-Canadian Eparchy was officially registered with the authorities of New York State. This act was a historical moment for the Macedonian emigrants and one of the most significant events in the life



and activities of the MOC on the North-American continent. The registering of this supreme governing body of MOC in USA and Canada strongly influenced the future affirmation of the Macedonian name and spiritual values of the Macedonian immigrants in their new environment.

The 12 September 1981 was a happy day for the Macedonians in USA and Canada when metropolitan Kiril signed the documents and marked the legal registration of the Eparchy at the MOC of *St. Dimitrija* in Rochester, New York State, in the presence of priests and prominent people of the Macedonian communities.

Namely, after prayer at the *St. Dimitrija Church*, for the first time beyond Macedonian borders, at the "*Americana*" hotel, the signatures of the archbishop and his depute meant legalization and recognition of the Macedonian Orthodox Church. At that time the Eparchy consisted of about fifteen church parishes and about ten parish priests. The Eparchy had now become an inseparable part of *St. Clement's Church*, the mother church in Macedonia.

News of the registration of the Eparchy quickly spread through the media in Macedonia, USA, and Canada. However, special attention was devoted to this event by the New York daily newspaper "*Times Union*" which announced the legal registration of the Eparchy, the existence of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, and of the Macedonian nation in general.

One of the most important activities of the American-Canadian Eparchy is the work of the church-people's assembly held every year since 1975. By 2002 this Eparchy had held a total of 28 church-people's assemblies. The last assembly in 2002 was held in Cleveland and was hosted by the Macedonian Orthodox Church of *St. Clement of Ohrid* in Loraine.

The idea to hold church-people's assemblies of the Macedonian emigrants who live in USA and Canada came from the Macedonian ethnic community in Gary, Indiana, more precisely the church of *Sts. Petar and Pavle*.

The idea was accepted by the church members and later by the other Macedonian Orthodox churches in Northern America. Hence, on 19 and 20 May 1975 a meeting was held at the *Assumption of St. Mary Church* in Columbus, Ohio.

A decision was reached that a church-people's assembly would be held every year in different cities in Northern America where there are Macedonian Orthodox churches. The basic aim of this meeting would be to strengthen unity of the Macedonian emigrants, and to improve and advance activities of the Eparchy.

It was decided that the meeting would take place every first Saturday and Sunday of September during the American "Labor Day" holiday, and that it would last two days. They also decided to determine the seat of the Eparchy,



and if possible, to provide conditions for permanent residence of the authorized bishop of the Eparchy.

They also discussed ways of strengthening moral support of the Macedonian emigrants in the other cities so that they, too would establish church parishes, build churches and cultural and educational centers, and create conditions and a tradition for the Macedonian emigrants to meet once a year at a joint spiritual and patriotic manifestation. This speeded the process of elimination of the influence of foreign propaganda from one part of the Macedonian migrants who had arrived before the Second World War.

The second meeting of the representatives of all Macedonian Orthodox Churches and church parishes was held at the *Birth of St. Mary Church* in Detroit. Here they made the first concrete program for the meetings and decided to begin preparations for the first assembly. Hence, the first church-people's assembly of the American-Canadian-Macedonian Orthodox Eparchy was held in Toronto in 1975.

Since then these assemblies have been hosted several times by the Macedonian Orthodox churches in Toronto, Columbus, Hamilton, Gary, Rochester, Detroit, Passaic, Chicago, Buffalo, Windsor, Syracuse, Mississauga, and Cleveland.

During this assembly there is a central meeting of the Eparchy committee. This church-people's assembly contributes toward affirmation of the national and cultural values of the Macedonian emigrants in USA and Canada. Different kinds of performances, sports, musical, and cultural, are held during this manifestation. Thus, the first evening is devoted to the Eparchy Assembly where there are discussions of the conditions, opportunities, and issues related to the church and spiritual living of the Macedonian migrants.

The second evening, Saturday, is devoted to the folklore so there are numerous performances by cultural and artistic clubs, folk dance groups, and folklore clubs from every church and church parish. The folklore dancers perform without competing. The third day, Sunday, is devoted to the spiritual and sports living. In the morning there is a joint service usually held by a Macedonian bishop assisted by every Macedonian priest in the Eparchy.

Throughout the day there are football matches which have a winning character. Here the most is seen of the young Macedonian generations who show great engagement and joint living throughout the entire Assembly. In the evening there is a collective, all Macedonian banquet, which ends the Assembly.

The American-Canadian Eparchy has a Statute which it follows. It was adopted at a regular meeting of the Eparchy Assembly held on 1 September 1995 in accordance with the Constitution of the MOC. The Statute was approved and acknowledged by the American church-people's assembly in full presidium at



its meeting held on 15 December 1995, decision no. 1/95. The Statute predicts all the rights and responsibilities of the Eparchy, its members, and management of the Eparchy.

Metropolitan Kiril, whose Christian name is Nikola Popovski, is the first authorized archpriest of the newly established American-Canadian-Australian Eparchy during the period 1967-1985. He was born on 23 June 1934 in the village of Carev Dvor, near Prespa. He finished primary school in his native village, and theology in Prizren. In 1964 he entered a monastic order at the monastery of *Sveta Precista* near Kichevo. For some time he worked as an employee for the Macedonian Archiepiscopate. In 1965 he began studying at the Moscow Spiritual Academy.

Two years later he was called back to his fatherland. In 1967, prior to the restoration of the autocephaly, he was enthroned as archpriest of Tiveriopol. He completed his theological studies at the Faculty of Theology, *St. Clement of Ohrid*, in Skopje.

Following the restoration of the autocephaly he was appointed authorized archpriest of the American-Canadian Eparchy, which he managed till 1985. In 1971 the Polog-Kumanovo Eparchy was established and he was appointed its first administrator. Later he became its metropolitan, his present position.

Archbishop Stefan, whose Christian name is Stojan Veljanovski, and who is the present head of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, was the second authorized archpriest of this eparchy for a short period after 1985. He was born on 1 May 1955 in the village of Dobrushevo, near Bitola. He finished primary school in his native place. In 1969 he enrolled at the school of Macedonian Orthodox Theology *St. Clement of Ohrid* in Drachevo, near Skopje, which he finished in 1974. He immediately enrolled at the Belgrade Orthodox Faculty.

After graduating in 1979, the Holy Archpriest Synod of the Macedonian Orthodox Church appointed him professor at the theology school in Drachevo. In 1980 he was sent to do postgraduate studies at the Ecumenical-patrolological institute of "St. Nikolaj" in Bari, Italy. At his return from Italy he was appointed lecturer at the *St. Clement of Ohrid* Faculty of Theology in Skopje, teaching Holy Scripture of the Old Testament and Patrology. While attending this position he was elected archbishop. He entered monastic order on 3 July 1986 at the monastery of *Sveti Naum Ohridski Chudotvorec* (*St. Naum of Ohrid Miracle Worker*) in Ohrid.

He was enthroned to metropolitan of Zletovo and Strumica, or Bregalnica, on 12 July 1986 at the *St. Dimitrij Church* in Skopje. Later, on 9 and 10 October 1999 he was elected and enthroned as fifth in order Archbishop of Ohrid and Macedonia. As archbishop of the MOC, Metropolitan Stefan continues to be authorized archpriest of the American-Canadian Eparchy.



For a certain period of time the following heads of churches of the MOC had been elected by function as archpriests of this Eparchy: g.g. Dositej, g.g. Angelarij, g.g. Gavril, and g.g. Mihail.

Archbishop Dositej, whose Christian name is Dimitar Stojkovski (Sojkovik) was the first, archbishop and creator of the restored Ohrid Archiepiscopate within the Macedonian Orthodox Church. He was enthroned to the archbishop's throne of *St. Clement of Ohrid* in October 1958. He was born on 7 December 1906 in Mavrovo. He entered monastic order in 1924 at the monastery of *St. Mary-Precista*, near Kichevo.

During his 23 year-long position of archbishop between 1958 to 1981, he managed the MOC wisely, sincerely, and with a lot of self sacrifice. The church was then renewed thoroughly including all of its vital organs - the episcopate, clergy, eparchies, church parishes in the fatherland and the Diaspora, churches and monasteries, education, and the name and work of Christianity and the MOC in general. His name is inscribed in golden letters in the history of the Macedonian Orthodox Church. He died in 1981.

Archbishop Angelarij, whose Christian name is Cvetko Popovski, stood at *St. Clement's* throne between 1981 and 1986. During his five years as archbishop he continued building the Macedonian Orthodox Church with a lot of enthusiasm and great hopes. He believed deeply in the unity of orthodoxy and he saw the church which he managed as only one more star in the string of Orthodox churches. Led by these deep Christian impulses, with unlimited self-sacrifice, he affirmed the work of our holy church as a dignified among the dignified churches, by spirit and life.

Archbishop Gavril, whose Christian name is Gjorgi Miloshevski, began preparations for publishing the New Testament in the distant year of 1949. He spent almost his entire life investing his knowledge and energy in the education activities of the Republic of Macedonia as a state official, but he was never far from the church. Instead, he was a close collaborator of the archbishops and church authorities. The projects which archbishop Dositej began - construction of *St. Clement's Church* in Skopje, and publishing of the Bible in the Macedonian literary tongue - will remain as diamonds in his archbishop's crown. However his old age and fragile health were too much a burden, so he retired from the throne in 1993. He died in 1995.

Archbishop Mihail, whose Christian name is Mihail Gogov, was elected head of the Macedonian Orthodox Church on 4 December 1993. Archbishop Mihail is a living page in the most recent history of the Macedonian people and



the holy Church. He took the burden of the archbishop's dignity upon himself as a brave clergyman, who had devoted his entire life to religious service. For many years archbishop Mihail had also been professor and dean of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Skopje.

During his appointment as archbishop the necessary changes and additions were made to the Constitution of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, the Statutes of the three eparchies in the Diaspora, and other church laws and legal norms.

During his time the publishing field was enriched and many religious books were issued, translations and originals were published. His time will especially be remembered by his magnificent sermons as a talented church orator. His presence in the electronic and printed media in Macedonia and abroad contributed toward affirmation of the Macedonian Orthodox Church. He died on 6 July 1999 at the age of 87.

Metropolitan Metodij, whose Christian name is Metodij Zlatanov, was born in Berovo on August 24, 1963. Primary and secondary education ends in Skopje. Then the first two years of study at the Faculty of Philology "*Blaze Koneski*", *Department of General and Comparative Literature*, and then abandoned these studies and enrolled at the Orthodox Theological Faculty of St. Kliment Ohridski in Skopje.

Since the beginning of September 1995, the foundation of male monastic community in Strumica diocese, first at the Monastery of St. Mary Eleusa - Veljusa, and later in St. Leontie - Monastery, he begins his life. In 1996 was ordained Hieromonk and several months later, the feast of Saints Fifteen Tiberiopolis martyrs, the abbot of the monastery of St. Elijah in Strumica. In early 1998 he graduated at the Theological Faculty of *St. Kliment Ohridski* "in Skopje.

Soon after she enrolled in graduate studies at the Department of Macedonian Literature and began working as a full professor and vice chancellor at the Macedonian Orthodox Theological Seminary St. Kliment Ohridski "in Skopje. In 2004 was produced in the dream act, and the next 2005th was consecrated Bishop of Velika. In March 2006 defend the master's thesis titled "*Koco Racin Bogomil* (reading of traditions) that acquires the title of Master in Philology. That same year he was appointed, first administrator, and then responsible for metropolitan United State - Canadian Macedonian Orthodox Diocese.

The "Macedonian Digest"



THE MACEDONIANS IN CANADA (9)

It is assumed that Toronto is the third largest city of the Macedonian population. According to some unofficial data, in this metropolis and the surrounding areas about 120,000 Macedonians from all parts of Macedonia have settled thus far. Therefore, it is said that it is a Macedonian church-national center for generations. They are accustomed and have found a place under the sun in everyday life with other hundred nations and ethnic groups that have settled in this beautiful and for many things a typical big city rich in the region of Ontario.

On the other hand, Canada is considered a world example of a multicultural society. It is the first country in the world to officially recognize multicultural diversity and continue its stable, significant and consistent non-discriminatory policy. Thus, multiculturalism has declared itself as a policy of the government of Canada, where any indigenous inhabitant or newcomer has the right to freedom of conscience, religion, thought, expression, peaceful assembly and association, enjoyment and development of their own culture, dissemination and application of their own religion and the use of the mother tongue.

Toronto is a beautiful and ornate city with a very good location. It is spread on the shore of Lake Ontario, the eighty kilometers from Niagara Falls and a city with many European targets, which magically attracts and enchants any visitor and traveler. It is a city with beautiful skyscrapers, sumptuous neighborhoods with architecture adapted from around the world, with art galleries, museums, opera and many other cultural and historical monuments.

Otherwise the first Macedonian settlers have been among the most significant ethnic groups in Toronto and they play an important role in general. They came from every part of Macedonia, and they are very closely connected, especially with the Church of *St. Clement of Ohrid* and with the organization "*United Macedonians*".

Toronto was one of the first settlements in Canada. It was founded in 1793 under the name of York, and got its current name in 1834. Today, it is the biggest industrial, cultural, political, administrative, and sports center, as well as the 'pearl' of Ontario, and a metropolis with great prospects. The first Macedonian settlers have been among the most significant ethnic groups in Toronto and they play an important role in general. They came from every part of Macedonia, and they are very closely connected, especially with the Church of *St. Clement of Ohrid* and with the organization "*United Macedonians*".



Toronto and New Market are the cities of the future for Steve and Lilly Pliakes. Toronto is a home to the largest concentration of Macedonians outside of the Balkans, with estimates ranging from between 100,000 to 150,000 Macedonian-Canadians. An active Diaspora community with a rich history in Canada, the city's earliest migrants crossed the Atlantic as temporary economic sojourners, political refugees, and, later, as permanent settlers.

It is often said that Toronto has evolved into a cosmopolitan, multicultural city where in excess of 120 nationalities live with diverse cultures, customs and religions. There are many places of worship where the people may attend to celebrate their various beliefs - churches, synagogues, mosques and temples.

There is a large Macedonian Community in Toronto and the nearby cities which has been able to support four Churches, one in Toronto and in the nearby vicinities of Mississauga, Markham and Ajax. *St Clement* is located in the area of East York in Toronto and it is not only a place of religion and prayer but it is also a gathering place for the Macedonian people, a place to call home. Many cultural events, festivals, banquets celebrations take place in the magnificent, spacious hall. The Facility is also made available to the many Village and Cultural Associations for their meetings.

There is a Senior Citizens Club and a Seniors' Lunch is offered once weekly for a nominal price. This has proven of great success as it offers the opportunity for people to socialize, share stories and visit with each other which makes for great friends. This Group also has trips and a yearly banquet in September to celebrate Macedonian Independence Day.

"*Makedonka*" is the Dance Group which has won many awards. There is also a Literary Association, "*Brakja Miladinovci*", the Ladies Auxiliary, Chess Club, Bowling League and Choir. Along with the Macedonian Community, the United Macedonian Organization was in the forefront in the building of *St. Clement* which was completed in 1965 and will celebrate its Golden Anniversary in 2015. .

The late 1940s and 1950s saw the arrival of some 20,000-30,000 Macedonian immigrants to Canada, including child refugees from Aegean Macedonia. The character of postwar Macedonian migrants differed considerably from previous waves: most were permanent settlers, many were sponsored by established family members, vast numbers were well-educated professionals from urban centers, and the majority possessed a more developed sense of national identity.

With the establishment of the People's Republic of Macedonia within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1944, an ethno linguistic and cultural project aimed at fortifying a uniquely Macedonian national identity was undertaken.

By 1950, a literary language had been standardized and by 1967, an autonomous Macedonian Orthodox Church was established. In the 1960s, the *Matica*



na Iselenicite od Makedonija (Queen Bee of the Macedonian Immigrants) was founded to promote Macedonian culture and facilitate communications between the Yugoslav Republic and the various Diaspora communities around the world. Through the Matica, Toronto's Macedonians were able to communicate with their compatriots in the Balkans and even coordinate activities, such as relief efforts for victims of the 1963 earthquake in Skopje.

In the years after the Second World War, Toronto quickly became a kind of the locus of Macedonian nationalism in North America. Since the 1950s, the associational and cultural life of Macedonians in Canada has flourished. Individual communities have inspired local newspaper, radio, and television programs, sporting groups, literary societies, historical associations, folk-dance troupes, and genealogical societies.

Macedonians in Canada, in the past they were closely associated with traditions. Therefore, they often settled the previously established Macedonian ethnic neighborhoods. There, in the Canadian metropolis, Macedonian settlers achieved remarkable results in the field of culture, education and social life in general.

Their achievements in the economic, educational and cultural terms, broadly, they contributed not be treated as second-class citizens, but as an integral and important part in the new environment, known and recognized by domestic factors and other ethnic groups. A number of business people of Macedonian origin worldwide have achieved obvious results.

Such progress, above all, contribute to their social recognition and more favorable treatment in the areas where they live, by treating them as the separate ethnic community, equal with the other ethnic groups in more national societies in Canada.

Their contribution in this area has the Macedonian Orthodox Church, which plays a significant role in the collection of the Macedonians in the country and in the world. This is especially apparent with the constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, on-management-restoration of the Ohrid Archbishopric in 1958 and after the proclamation of its autocephaly in June 1967. Macedonian Orthodox Church made a run between Orthodox Macedonians States, and between numbering Macedonian emigrants in overseas countries - the US, Canada and Australia as well as among the Macedonians in the European Union (Western European countries).

According to the latest data the Macedonian Orthodox Church has over 2000 religious facilities only in Macedonia; churches, monasteries, chapels, chapels, theological educational institutions, libraries and other public buildings, and more than 80 churches and monasteries were built in the US, Canada and Australia and the European Union (former Western European countries).



It was especially emphasized in the constitution of the Republic of Macedonia in 1944, which the Macedonian emigrants from all parts of Macedonia accepted as a national state and a part of Macedonia.

This historic act of creation of Macedonian statehood, with its attributes: state, nation, language, religion, history, culture, literature, science, folklore, traditions and other characteristics, and later with the proclamation of the Macedonian Orthodox Church and its independence, It meant a huge turning point in much of Macedonians, deceived by the propaganda of the neighboring countries. That was really the beginning of a new time and a prosperous period for the Macedonians in Canada.

In most parishes are organized weekly special schools where they learn the native Macedonian language, national history, geography and religious instruction. Also, in the parishes developed system of sections such as literature, folklore, sports, cooking and more.

It printed a number of newspapers, magazines, newsletters other publications and broadcast television and radio programs that play an invaluable role in the enrichment of all activities of the Macedonian emigrants.

Like other ethnic groups in Canada so the Macedonian immigrants have also established several ethnic organizations. They provide a sense of security and become a place for ethnic organization on national plan, building in them a patriotic faith, love and hope for their homeland, Macedonia.

The first organized associations in Canada for providing help were the fraternities of the villages from the Aegean part of Macedonia, among others, *Oshchima* established in 1905, *D'mbeni* 1906 *Zhelevo* 1907 *Gabresh* 1911 *Banica* 1911, *Buf* 1919 and others.

They've preserved their Macedonian ethnicity and therefore their associations and organizations have created opportunities for regular mutual contacts and faster integration into a new society.

In addition, the immigrants from ethnic Macedonia were linked through numerous organizations for providing help and socio-cultural, religious, political, informational and other organizations and associations respectively. Between the First and Second World War, the Macedonian immigrants were organized, inter alia, in several ethnic associations.

The first organization that gathered Macedonian immigrants in the US and Canada was MPO (Macedonian Patriotic Organization) and under this name it acts even today.

MPO was established on September 30, 1922 in Fort Wayne, Indiana, where the first congress of the Macedonian political organizations, and the village and district societies respectively, was convened. At the beginning MPO acted on behalf of Macedonia equally as it did for all other Balkan countries.



However, in the period 1927-1929, the organization came under strong Bulgarian influence, when the process of disorientation and disorganization among the Macedonian emigration took place. Since then MPO has started to deny the national identity of the Macedonian people, defending the thesis for a kind of some Bulgarian character of Macedonia.

Although MPO nowadays sticks to its old commitments, some positive changes are noticeable with the leadership of MPO in relation to the Macedonian national issue, the Macedonian Orthodox Church and the Macedonian people in general. Today, the generations of old MPO members who feel as Americans and Canadians look to the progress of the Republic of Macedonia with sympathies.

In 1929, in Pontiac, Michigan, however, the first Macedonian independent progressive group, whose number was later increased to six in the US and Canada, was formed. The organization of cooperation and coordination in general of all actions among progressive groups was entrusted to the Steering Committee that convened the first conference in Toledo, Ohio, on 22 and 23 March 1930.

The goal of the Macedonian independent progressive groups was to unite the Macedonians seduced by MPO and develop political activity among Macedonian settlers. And one of the great desires and requirements of these groups was to create a Balkan federation, which would guarantee wide national, political and social rights and freedoms of the Balkan nations, including the Macedonian people from the three parts of Macedonia.

After World War II many Macedonian associations were set up in Toronto, including the elderly home "*Canadian-Macedonian Center*", known as "*Home for Elderly People*" where the old enjoy in a cozy accommodation. This center with hundreds of apartments, dining rooms and other necessary facilities is a pleasant place for living for many Macedonians and Canadians. It is one of the oldest and most important Macedonian institutions.

In the annals of Canadian-Macedonian Home it is recorded that in 1973 a large piece of land was bought with an area of over three hectares on which the Elderly Home was built in the interest of and for the need of all Macedonians living in Toronto and the surrounding regions. Then on May 7, 1978 the foundation stone was officially laid down, and on 24 September, 1978 a carved stone was officially unveiled with the inscription "*Canadian-Macedonian Place 1978*". At the opening ceremony the Home was renamed "*Canadian-Macedonian Retirement (Elderly) Center*."

Within the Canadian-Macedonian Centre, that celebrated the 35th anniversary of its opening on June 12, 2014, the Ladies Auxiliary "Daughters of Macedonia" is working. It was established in 1977 and prominent citizens of Canada of Macedonian origin participated and were its members. Also within



the center successfully works the *Macedonian-Canadian Retirement Club*, the first in Toronto, which was open on January 15, 1974 and officially registered on April 1, 1977.

In the building of The Elderly Home works also the Canadian-Macedonian Historical Society. It is the only of its kind in the diaspora that plays a significant role in the overall scientific and cultural activity of many Macedonian intellectuals of Canada and that has its own library within the Home.

In fact the "*Canadian-Macedonian Historical Society*" is an association consisting of Canadians of Macedonian origin from all parts of Macedonia dealing with Macedonian history, culture, language, literature and generally with the Macedonian truth in the past and present. It was established in 1991 by a group of enthusiasts and its number is constantly growing attracting other professionals and enthusiasts to cherish the Macedonian benefits.

In Toronto the association "*Macedonian Human Rights Movement*" is also actively working. It was founded in 1986 and its aim is to fight for basic human and national rights, including the right to freedom of expression and association.

This important Macedonian Association supports democratic principles for all ethnic Macedonians and other oppressed peoples in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Charter of the United Nations, the European Convention on Human Rights, the Charter of Paris and all other documents of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

In addition, in Toronto is also active the Macedonian Center for Cultural and Social Integration. It was founded and is part of the Macedonian community in Canada that aims to improve cooperation among the members of the Macedonian community and promote the integration of Macedonians in Canadian society easier and faster. This association makes efforts to fill gaps in services for settlement and adapting of the Macedonians immigrating to Canada, whose number is rapidly growing.

The members of this Macedonian association are committed to the wellbeing of their community and they foster the Macedonian language, traditions, culture, customs and other values of the Macedonians in Canada.

On January 25, 2010 in Toronto a branch of "*Macedonia 2025*", American association of business professionals, was established. This association was set up in cooperation with Scotiabank of Canada. On this occasion it was said that this association is bringing people together and is a fantastic opportunity for the Macedonian business professionals to engage in an environment where they can learn from each other, build relationships and invest in themselves.

"*Macedonia 2025*" is an independent and non-political organization dedicated to strengthening and improving the economy of the Republic of Macedonia. What makes this project unique is the diversity of its participants, because



it is led by a team that has rich experience in the field of telecommunications, information technology, financial and banking sector, infrastructure development, entrepreneurship and legislative processes.

In Toronto there are Macedonian organizations and different associations that are beyond the church communities, but have very good relations with the Macedonian Orthodox Churches. One such association is "*Macedonian-Canadian Retirement Club*" founded in 1975. In the past, the Macedonian retirees mainly gathered and held meetings at various Macedonian restaurants and shopping centers. Today it is the same case with the middle generation who gather several times a week in "*coffee shops*."

The idea of setting up the "Association of Children Refugee from Aegean Macedonia" was born in the late seventies of last century. Then, the group of young and educated people in mutual communication got the idea of creating an organization in which members will be people who survived the tragedy of the civil war in Greece and the exodus in many other countries. That group is comprised of children-refugees who came in Canada mainly from Poland and the former Czechoslovakia, and some of them have come through the Republic of Macedonia as well.

As an explanation, the Association of Children-Refugees was registered as a charity organization, which in its ranks unites children-refugees from Aegean Macedonia and their descendants.

Also in Toronto, the "*Macedonian-Canadian Academic Association*" was established in 1975. In its ranks it gathers the Macedonian intellectuals of Toronto. The main objective of the association was to maintain connections with scientific workers from Macedonia and beyond, and to organize various lectures on Macedonian history and science.

"*The Macedonian Association of WW II Soldiers*", meanwhile, was founded in 1983. It included veterans of the Second World War and was part of the Royal Canadian Legion, section 617. Regretfully, in 1989 a split occurred in this association and a second association of Macedonian veterans in Canada was established. The newly formed association of WW II fighters is an independent Macedonian society, but it is also within the Canadian League of veterans. It is registered and has its own rules of procedure.

The "*Macedonian Student Organization*" is also set up in Toronto that is the first of its kind. It was formed in 1987, at the University of Toronto. It is estimated that about 250-300 students from second and third generation of the Macedonian immigrants study at the "*Toronto*" university. A special role in organizing the work of the Macedonian Student Organization played Department of Macedonian Language, and it maintains close cooperation with several other ethnic student organizations.



The second Macedonian Student Organization was founded within the university "York" in Toronto. This university is known as an ethnic university, because students from different ethnic groups study here. The third Macedonian Student Organization, however, exists within the Polytechnic Institute of Toronto.

Also, Toronto is home to other organizations, such as "*Children of Alexander of Macedon*", "*Macedonian-Canadian Medical Association*", and the "*Macedonian-Canadian Business and Professional Association*". The "*Canadian-Macedonian Federation*", meanwhile, was founded in Toronto, in August 1990. It's showed activity, primarily in helping the Macedonian lobby in the fight for recognition of Macedonia by the United Nations and by other international institutions, as well as providing material assistance.

The Federation organized the "*Macedonian Dance*" attended by numerous Macedonian immigrants and representatives of the Canadian authorities. During this cultural event funds were raised to help Macedonia, which were mainly used to purchase medicines.

The Department of Macedonian language is based in Toronto. Its foundations were laid during the Third Slavic Conference in 1997. It was organized with great support of university professors and students from Canada and the United States, as well as the Macedonians united at the church "*St. Clement of Ohrid*" and literary association "*Brothers Miladinovci*." Today the Macedonian Department is one of the most important institutions on the north-American continent.

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THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA HAS RECOGNIZED THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA UNDER ITS CONSTITUTIONAL NAME (10)

The decision of the United States to use the constitutional name of the Republic of Macedonia in its bilateral relations with Macedonia is certainly of the utmost political importance due to, first of all, the role which the United States plays in international politics and international relations in general.

In addition to Russia and China, the United States of America is the third permanent member (out of the five) of the UN Security Council that has recognized Macedonia under its constitutional name which the Government and people of Macedonia have chosen to be the name of their country.

This in itself has particular significance because it supports the fact that the political will of the United States, expressed in that decision, affirms and reinforces objectively the inherent right of each country to choose their name independently.

This means that the additional conditions which were imposed on Macedonia in relation to its accession to the UN (to accept the provisional reference FYROM and to enter into negotiations with Greece over the name) have no legal character.

"We know very well who is a friend of Macedonia - it is the leader of the free democratic world, U.S. President George Bush," said the leader of the party *Macedonian Alliance*, Mr. George Atanasoski during the campaign of President Bush for his second term at the White House. These words of our famous businessman, a Macedonian who has been successfully working in the United States for many years, were proved to be true and confirmed in reality.

The promise that President Bush gave Mr. Atanasoski and the delegation of the *Macedonian Alliance* during their meeting at the White House in Washington that he would make efforts for recognition of Macedonia under its constitutional name was kept. The U.S. Government, or the State Department, consider Macedonia a close ally, whereas in past years it wholeheartedly



supported its territorial integrity, and considered our state a key factor for stability in the entire region.

"There has been always a close cooperation between the Macedonian Alliance and the Republican Party, and it shall continue the same way also in the future. Within the politics of a state or a party there are certain strategic interests that could be realized and implemented only through dialogue and mutual cooperation in the interest of both parties," pointed out Mr. Atanasoski.

In fact, the Macedonians in the U.S. and the Macedonian lobby have got an extremely important and crucial role for the recognition of Macedonia under its constitutional name because they have always supported the policies of President Bush and they have stood firmly behind his presidential candidacy.

As an explanation, the dispute over the use of the name Macedonia emerged after the 1991 referendum on independence, and reached its climax in 1993 after the accession of Macedonia to the United Nations under the provisional reference of Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) in the period when Greece imposed a trade embargo and closed the border with our country. In compliance with the 817 Resolution of the Security Council of 1993 both parties were urged to continue to seek a solution to this name issue, but October 1995 is considered as a starting point in the normalization of relations between the two neighbors when, as a result of Hellenic pressures, Macedonia changed its national flag.

As a result of the Interim Agreement signed that year, Greece and Macedonia thawed their relations and pledged to start negotiations under the UN auspices. Regretfully, the lengthy negotiations in New York didn't bring any convergence of opinions about the name.

Following the decision of the United States to recognize Macedonia under its constitutional name, the Hellenic machinery, authority and fanatical opponents of Macedonia remained completely stunned, shocked and nervous.

It was difficult to describe the situation in Athens after the State Department officially informed the Greek government that the United States recognized Macedonia under its constitutional name on an international level, and permanently. Titles like *"Bush, the godfather of Skopje"*, *"A knife in our back from the U.S."*, *"Political crime of the U.S."* reflected the climate in the Greek newspapers.

Greek Foreign Minister Petros Molyviatis had to cancel his trip to Brussels in order of the Central Committee of Rainbow, the party of Macedonians living in Greece, expressed their hope that such recognition would not lead to awakening of ultranationalism in Greece and among the ruling party New Democracy.

At that time the newspapers and electronic media in Athens considered the U.S. government a main culprit for the chaos on the Greek political scene. The TV duel between government spokesman Theodoros Roussopoulos and



PASOK President George Papandreou made an impression in the public eye that the country was trying to discover who was less guilty for these unpleasant events according to their opinion, rather than face the facts.

The image was made even worse by the statement of President Konstantinos Stephanopoulos, who said that Greece still had exclusive rights to the name Macedonia, which was an opinion that had prevailed only among the leaders of the Greek Orthodox Church by that time. The ordinary people of Greece were confused and unable to understand how their country could be so weak on a diplomatic level and suffer yet another big defeat from their small neighbor. The Government was so weak that it was forced, regretfully and for shame, to resort to its last weapon to avoid further surprises in the EU - a veto.

The first survey of public opinion in Solun was carried out during demonstrations organized by the ultra-national fascist party LAOS. Less than 2,000 citizens of Solun gathered in front of the statue of Alexander of Macedonia, to protest against the act of the U.S. and to declare that Macedonia could only be Greek. Demonstrations that were expected to cause disorder and chaos, turned into a fiasco.

The event was so pale and faded into insignificance, so that they caused the organizer George Karadzaferis, leader of the LAOS party, to put an end to it just one hour later and to cancel the march to both the U.S. and to the consulate of Macedonia.

On the other hand, in Skopje, the capital of the Republic of Macedonia, the citizens celebrated this very important event with dignity. Under the motto *"Goodbye former Macedonia, goodbye Yugoslav Macedonia; Good day Republic of Macedonia,"* 190 civil society organizations, joined by thousands of various representatives, gathered in the square "Macedonia" to celebrate the recognition of the constitutional name of Macedonia by the United States.

The people that gathered in the square extended their message addressed to U.S. President George Bush and the U.S. representatives in Macedonia, led by Ambassador Butler, expressing their gratitude for this recognition. NGOs also sent a message to Greece to be a good neighbor, friend and frontrunner on the Macedonian path towards Europe. Appreciation was extended to all 100 counts to present an official protest to Mr. Thomas Miller, U.S. Ambassador to Greece.

On that occasion, Mr. Molyviatis said that the decision of the U.S. government would have manifold adverse effects on destabilizing the region. PASOK, the main opposition party, accused the conservative New Democracy government of destroying the international reputation of Greece.

Former Ministers Theodoros Pangalos and Vasos Papandreou were very sarcastic saying that the Macedonian name issue that had led to the 1993 fall



of the government of Mitsotakis was causing a similar fall of the government of Karamanlis.

The two smaller parties at the Greek parliament - Communist Party (PRO) and Center- left party - also responded to this act criticizing the U.S. for their action. Archbishop Christodoulos also expressed his deep concern. Former Foreign Minister Pangalos named the decision of the U.S. administration as unfair, while Mr. Beglitis, member of the European Parliament, said that the name recognition would affect the stability and security of the Balkans.

The odds were that, over time, most of the population of Greece seemed to have forgotten that there was a problem with the name, although many of them participated in the 1992 demonstrations in Athens and Solun. However, the members of the Central Committee of Rainbow, the party of Macedonians living in Greece, expressed their hope that such recognition would not lead to awakening of ultra-nationalism in Greece and among the ruling party New Democracy.

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The TV duel between government spokesman Theodoros Roussopoulos and PASOK President George Papandreou made an impression in the public eye that the country was trying to discover who was less guilty for these unpleasant events according to their opinion, rather than face the facts.

The image was made even worse by the statement of President Konstantinos Stephanopoulos, who said that Greece still had exclusive rights to the name Macedonia, which was an opinion that had prevailed only among the leaders of the Greek Orthodox Church by that time. The ordinary people of Greece were confused and unable to understand how their country could be so weak on a diplomatic level and suffer yet another big defeat from their small neighbor.

The Government was so weak that it was forced, regretfully and for shame, to resort to its last weapon to avoid further surprises in the EU a veto. The first survey of public opinion in Solun was carried out during demonstrations organized by the ultranational fascist party LAOS. Less than 2,000 citizens of Solun gathered in front of the statue of Alexander of Macedon, to protest against the act of the U.S. and to declare that Macedonia could only be Greek. Demonstrations that were expected to cause disorder and chaos, turned into a fiasco.

The event was so pale and faded into insignificance, so that they caused the organizer George Karadzaferis, leader of the LAOS party, to put an end to it just one hour later and to cancel the march to both the U.S. and to the consulate of Macedonia.

On the other hand, in Skopje, the capital of the Republic of Macedonia, the citizens celebrated this very important event with dignity. Under the motto



"Goodbye former Macedonia, goodbye Yugoslav Macedonia; Good day Republic of Macedonia," 190 civil society organizations, joined by thousands of various representatives, gathered in the square "Macedonia" to celebrate the recognition of the constitutional name of Macedonia by the United States.

The people that gathered in the square extended their message addressed to U.S. President George Bush and the U.S. representatives in Macedonia, led by Ambassador Butler, expressing their gratitude for this recognition. NGOs also sent a message to Greece to be a good neighbor, friend and frontrunner on the Macedonian path towards Europe.

Appreciation was extended to all 100 countries that until the had recognized Macedonia under constitutional name, while the organizers did not forget any any of former Macedonian presidents, prime ministers, presidents of the Assembly and foreign ministers. Except for the large number of Macedonian and American flags, and the flags of the USA, Greece, United Union and Macedonia joins together, there were no flags from any political party.

On the occasion of the decision of Macedonia of the United States to use the constitutional name of Macedonia in the bilateral relations with the Republic of Macedonia, the president of Macedonian Alliance, Mr. George Atanasoski sent a letter of thanks to his namesake, President George Bush.

The Monograph "George Atanasoski"





***PART FOUR -
MAGEDONIANS IN
AUSTRALIA, CANADA
AND USA***



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BIOGRAPHY OF METROPOLITAN KIRIL'S FAMILY TREE (1)

The Monograph for Metropolitan Kiril, who was the head of the the Polog and Kumanovo Eparchy is by Slavè Katin, published by "*Makedonska iskra*" from Skopje and Polog and Kumanovo Eparchy (2007) on 342 in Macedonian and English is the mirror for life and work of the Metropolitan Kiril.

The Most Reverend Metropolitan of Polog and Kumanovo, Kiril (Nikola Popovski) is the oldest enthroned Bishop in the Macedonian Orthodox Bishopric. He is also the only living signer of the historical Decision of the Holy Bishops' Synod of the MOC (of 1967) for the restoration of the entire spiritual and canonical autocephalous state of the Ohrid Archbishopric.

Metropolitan Kiril was born on 23 July 1934, in Carev Dvor, Prespa. In his birth place, he completed his primary education with excellent grades at the Miladinov Brothers (Brakja Miladinovci) Primary School. At that time, the Principal of this school was Goga Prculovski. After this, Metropolitan Kiril learnt theology in Prizren, and studied in Russia and Skopje.

Metropolitan Kiril comes from the noble Christian Orthodox family of Popovski, who got their name from being devoted to God and to the church for centuries (the word '*Pop*' means '*Priest*'). For more than 300 years his ancestors devoted 32 of their descendants to the clergymen's rank of the church of the Macedonian people. This further encouraged his love for God and the desire to devote himself to God's learning, rather than to continue his education at one of the military schools, which had also been considered.

Metropolitan Kiril vividly remembers his grandfather Ico Ristovski and his grandmother Vanja who originated from Carev Dvor. They were noble old people and Kiril's fond memories from his childhood have been deeply embedded in his memory. They had seven children: Trenka, Krume, Kire, Gele, Mila, Tome, and Bojan, the father of Metropolitan Kiril.

His father, Bojan, chose to share his lifetime with the beautiful young girl, Milica, with whom they lived to celebrate 50 happy years of matrimony.

They raised eight children: Naum, Ljuba, Dragan, Nikola (Metropolitan Kiril), Zhivko, Kime, Viktor, and Vanča. Hence, it is no coincidence that you may hear comments that not only is the Popovski family one of the most hardworking, but one of the somewhat bigger families in the Prespa area, too.



Metropolitan Kiril's parents were among the more distinguished people, known and remembered for their hard work, their honesty, and their strong devotion to their dear ones. Often in Carev Dvor people would tell and retell of the nobleness and goodness of Milica, who gathered her family like a true queen bee, cherishing an exceptional mutual love and encouraging them constantly so that good luck and prosperity may follow them along the paths they decided to follow, each individually, and all together as the Popovski family.

Growing up under the wing of warm parental care and attention, very early in his childhood Nikola began showing a tendency, talent, and gradual obsession with the goodness in the family tradition, in his home, and his birth place.

This drew him from a very young age. Pupil Nikola began devoting himself, at first secretly, more and more to these holy road signs that were to determine his paths in life.

And finally, it was already clear that his path in life was already determined. No, he would not go to military schools, but he would do what he loved most and deepest in his heart - he would continue studying theology.

From his early childhood, being the fourth child of Milica and Bojan Popovski's eight children, just beside the warm native hearth Nikola would grow up within a typical Macedonian noble source of the Orthodox faith, whose holy tradition gave meaning to and enlightened his life. Precisely here, in addition to his learning of God from the strong believers among whom he was growing up, and later from the old religious texts saved by the generations of his ancestors, the true, original Macedonian patriotism of his parents, grandfathers, grandmothers, and other relatives he was surrounded by would be presented to him.

As a very young child, he smelt the scent of incense in the beautiful church in Carev Dvor devoted to *St. Nikola*. Nikola's primary school was very near to this church. Everyday, on his way to or from school, he often visited the church and remained there exalted by his impressions of the frescoes and icons around him. His future was predetermined as early as then.

Many candidates had applied for the entry examination for enrolment at the *Theological School* in Prizren, which was held at the premises of the Skopje Diocese. As an excellent student having a beautiful voice God had gifted him with, in 1951 he was accepted at the school alongside with a few other candidates, including Aleksandar Candovski. Ljubin and Vlade Popovski, all from Carev Dvor, also attended the entry examination.

They represent the first postwar generation from Macedonia to get their degrees in theology after five years of learning at the Prizren school. In one period, Nikola had to endure very difficult temptations, for at the time of his studies religion was often propagated to be opium for the people. Nevertheless, he firmly resisted these temptations. In 1956, he received his degree for



completion of his five-year-long theological studies. After theology, Nikola fulfilled his military duty of two-and-a-half years in Sremska Mitrovica.

Following his return in 1962, the young theologian began working in the Skopje Diocese. In Skopje he experienced the catastrophic earthquake of 26 July 1963 when, along with the theologian Aleksandar Candovski and with D-r Slavko Dimevski, he made utmost efforts to save the archive documents of the Macedonian Archbishopric, which were then taken to the residence of the head of the Macedonian Orthodox Church (MOC) at the time, His Beatitude Archbishop Dositej of Ohrid and Macedonia.

On the Annunciation Day (7 April 1964), Nikola entered the monastic order at the Monastery of *St. Mary (Ragjanje na presveta Bogorodica)* near Kičevo when he gladly adopted the name of the Macedonian equal to apostle, Kiril Solunski. At the same time, he was ordained to the rank of erodeacon by His Beatitude Archbishop Dositej, and very soon he was promoted to the rank of archdeacon.

In that capacity, in the spring of 1965, the young archdeacon Kiril accompanied His Beatitude Archbishop Dositej during his visitation to the USA and Canada, where he assisted in the consecration of the first Macedonian church in Toronto dedicated to *St. Clement of Ohrid (Sveti Kliment Ohridski)*, on the holiday known as *Palm Sunday (Cvetnici)*. During the first week after Easter, he participated in the consecration of the Church of *St. Mary (Presveta Bogorodica)* in the American city of Columbus, Ohio. During their one-month visitation to the USA and Canada, the high delegation of MOC visited Gary (Indiana), Syracuse, and other cities on the North American continent in which there are colonies of thousands of Macedonian emigrants.

The Monograph "Mitropitan Kiril"



SERMON OF METROPOLITAN KIRIL DELIVERED AT ST. DIMITRIJA CHURCH IN SKOPJE, IN 1967 (2)

On the day dedicated to holy Apostles Peter and Paul, 12 July 1967, His Beatitude, Archbishop Dositej of Ohrid and Macedonia, concelebrated a holy liturgy with Metro politans Kliment, Naum, and Metodi, and with many priests and deacons.

His Beatitude, Archbishop Dositej was the first who congratulated Bishop Kiril on his election and, among other things, he said:

We have been praying to God to endow us with one, two or three individuals as candidates for bisho p. At this moment, we thank God that he has given to us a child of our own, personified as the Most Reverend Kiril to be our Macedonian Bishop. Handing over to you this bishop's crosier, which is a symbol of bishop's power, I would like to underline that if you do not carry it with love, you are not going to have power.

Extending congratulations for your high rank, we all desire from the bottom of our hearts that you will show the love you have inside you to the devotees. May God Jesus Christ be your example in your life, which is full with love. Take your cue from the Macedonian holy men and may they be the examples in your work. May the holy

Apostles, to whom we are giving honor today, be of your assistance in carrying your responsibility to the devotees.

Thanking His Beatitude for his paternal words and best wishes for successful work across the meadow of God, the newly ordained Bishop Vicar of Tiveriopol delivered the following sermon in which, among other things, he said:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,

Your Beatitude, your eminencies, dear wisened-by God archpriests of our Macedonian Orthodox Church, distinguished representatives of our national-government, honourable God-loving fathers and sincerely religious brothers and sisters,

Today, I was risen, through the divine grace and the effect of His blessing, to a high holy rank by the laying of you hands over me.



At the time when I was impatiently waiting to return to my fatherland, following the hard studies, I was thrilled, immediately after my arrival from Moscow, to receive the news that the Holy Bishops Synod of our Macedonian Orthodox Church under your leadership, Your Beatitude, has called me to conduct essential apostolic service.

Comprehending my powerlessness before God, and listening to the voice that was calling out "...follow Me" (Lk. 5, 27), I found myself faced up to the most difficult spiritual analysis. A dilemma has emerged in my mind: whether I deserve to conduct such a high service? This thought of mine makes me declare that it is with fear and trembling that I take this high rank. Upon the recognition of my powerlessness, may our Lord Jesus Christ be my witness that I didn't have a craving neither for such a noble bishop's rank nor for the spiritual power which stems from it.

However, since about three years ago I took the Christ's Cross from the head of our church, His Beatitude Archbishop of Macedonia, following the commandment of Christ, "*If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me*" (Matthew 16, 24), now I have no other choice but to accept this heavy burden as well from the hands of Your Beatitude and of other archpriests.

I think that it is a divine Providence that determined my destiny to shoulder, before God, this heavy and responsible burden when I was relatively young and non-experienced, so that today, through the blessing of the Holy Spirit and by the laying of your holy hands upon me, I am honoured with the blessing of the bishop's service. You have concluded that I am going to be more useful to our Macedonian Orthodox Church and to our holy Macedonian people as a bishop, since you know my passionate love for our holy church and my own people. And being convinced that you are right, I would like to link up with the words of the psalm singer David, "*The cup of God I take, and the name of God I call*".

My God, I know that you have always answered my ardent prayers directed towards You. Your Most Holy Mother has always taken me under Her Holy Omophorion to enable me to keep my faith in you. And not only to keep it, but also to build it up so that I could serve your Church and your devoted Macedonian people through that faith and through Your endless love.

At this very moment of taking great responsibility I hope that Christ shall be always with me, enabling me to follow the examples of the prayers of the first Apostles, of the other Christian apostles, of the first educators, the holy fathers who were wised by God, of our great Slavic enlighteners and educators, patrons and representatives of our Macedonian Orthodox Church of *St. Clement* before the throne of the almighty God, the *Holy brothers Cyril and Methodius*, our patron and miracle worker *St. Clement Ohridski*, *St. Naum* who was great and chosen by God, *St. Sava*, *St. Angelarij*, *St. Gorazd*, *St. Erazmo*, *St.*



Joakim Osogovski, St. Prohor Pčinski, St. Gavril Lesnovski, St. Jovan Rilski, St. Nektarij Bitolski, St. Georgi Kratovski the martyr, and of St. Sergij Radoneški the miracle worker, my every-day assistant and protector during my studies.

Only then I could be honoured by God to utter the words of "St. Apostle Paul. *I do not live any longer, but Christ is living in me...*" (Gal. 2, 20), realizing at the same time that I was not created for the sake of myself, not for my personal happiness, but precisely for the sake of God and of all those dear to us.

Only with such a sincere and passionate love for the faith in the holy Church and in the people, only by the example and the face of God with which we were all born and dressed in Him through the holy mystery of Christening, and by the example of the great holy men and countless national martyr-sons and daughters of the Macedonian people, I could get strength as well to live following the example of Christ the Saviour and the holy Apostles, in self-denying and always ready to live for them, to be close to them and dear to them when they are happy, to be a consolation when they are in troubles and overwhelmed by grief, to be ready to sacrifice even my life for them.

The love for God and the faith in our Church and in our Macedonian people-made me, before all, go and finish the seminar. In 1964 that sincere love took me to the monastery of the most innocent *Most Holy Mother of God (Presveta Bogorodica)* in Kičevo at the time when I was going through bitter experience just when my beloved mother was on an operating table respectively, to lower my head obediently and take upon my weak shoulder the heavy cross of Christ given to me by His Beatitude, Archbishop of Ohrid and of Macedonia.

The love that St. Clement of Ohrid demonstrated through all his life of this world to his Macedonian people, whose real followers we are supposed to be, made me, when I was young, give up the enjoyments of my life of this world.

I am convinced that the same love is warming up the hearts of all you present here at this temple and of all Macedonian brothers and sisters of ours who, due to objective reasons, are not here today.

That passionate love invigorates and fills hundreds of our Macedonians in the United States of America, Canada, Australia, and in all quarters of the globe, enabling them to preserve their national identity.

The great love demonstrated by His Holiness, Patriarch Aleksey of Moscow and All Russia, and by other high church dignitaries, during their visit to Ohrid in 1962 in regard to the spiritual credits of St. Clement of Ohrid, inspired me to complete my theological education at the Moscow Spiritual Academy, and to invest all my efforts in filling my gaps.

Pride is sin and I avoid it. But, let me today utter several thoughts with pride. I am proud and conceited that, by the Divine Providence being a son of Macedonia, the Holy Bishops Synod of our Macedonian Orthodox Church has honoured me with such a lofty rank. I am even more proud that I take this



rank from our native bishops so that together with them I could serve our Macedonian Orthodox Church of St. Clement, our pious people, and the holy Church of Christ.

I promise that it will be with that passionate love that I am going to lead the heard of sheep entrusted to me, to direct it to the Love of Christ, and that I am going to make efforts, zealously and with open heart, together with all of you to maintain the holy deed of our Church and of our Macedonian people.

Ultimately, I am going to invest all my efforts so that the truth about our Church is maintained, that our Church lives as an equal child in brotherly love and harmony with the churches all over the world, develop equally with them under the wing of the one, holy, cathedral and apostolic Church of Christ.

In the end, allow me please to express my sincere appreciation to you, Your Beatitude, and to you, the most reverend eminencies, to express my deep gratitude to all of you, distinguished representative of our national government, to all brothers, priests and deacons present here, and to all of you, my close friends and dear believers, who contributed greatly to celebrate this bright and significant day of mine most solemnly.

I would like to ask all of you to offer your ardent prayers before our joint Mother, Omnipresent Mary. May she always be a representative before her monogamous Son, may she direct me to follow firmly in His path, live only in accordance with his Commandments, be a loyal servant to our Church and our Macedonian people, and honor me to say, at the end of my life of this world, the words of the holy Apostle Paul, "*I fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.*" (II Tim. 4, 7), since the center and the goal of my life of this world has not been my worthless self. God and my believers have been my center, my purpose and happiness of my life.

Pray that the love of God be a living and inexhaustible source for me, in all my activities yet to come; that the most gracious God give me strength to overcome all difficulties that will arise on the path to salvation.

AMEN!

The Monograph "Mitropitan Kiril"

MACEDONIAN ORTHODOX CHURCHES IN AUSTRALIA – CONSECRATED BY METROPOLITAN KIRIL (3)

Australia is the smallest continent below the Equator, in the Southern Hemisphere, between the Indian and the Pacific Ocean, to the south-east of Asia. As a continent, it includes the mainland of Australia and the island of Tasmania, and has an area almost the size of the European Union. Most of its mainland is a desert land, but there are extensive green belts along the coastline, as well, while the living conditions range between tropical and moderate climate.

The northern coast of *Terra Australis Incognita* – Unknown Southern Land – Australia, as the geographers of the Middle Ages called this land, was discovered by the Portuguese and the Spanish navigators (Luis Vaez de Torres, around 1588). Then, the Dutch began more thorough explorations in 1605/06 when their sailor, Tasman, went around and came to the Tasmanian Island, which was named after him. In 1770, the English sailor James Cook explored Australia better and declared it an English property.

At that time only several hundred thousands of Aborigines, isolated from the civilization, lived there. Later, in 1778, the first convoy of transporters and trading ships with 717 convicts on board was sent to Australia under the command of Captain Phillip, which marked the beginning of the colonization of this new land.

The first land inhabited by the Europeans was Port Jackson, founded in 1788 by the English convicts, while in the late 18th and early 19th century many colonists from Europe, particularly England, settled there. At that time, self-governing colonies were established such as: New South Wales in 1788; Tasmania, 1825; Western Australia, 1829; South Australia, 1835-37; Victoria, 1851; Queensland 1859; and the Northern Territory, 1863-4. Starting in 1855, the colonies became so independent that each one gradually formed a constitutional government with a parliament. In 1901, all the colonies, with the exception of the Northern Territory, formed the Australian Federation. The Northern Territory joined ten years later, and was granted the status of a British Dominion.



The capital city of Australia is Canberra, located on the territory of the Federal Government, established as a settlement in 1913. The biggest mountains in Australia are the Australian Alps and the Blue Mountains. There are very few rivers, the biggest being the Murray River, with the Darling River as its right tributary. Today, Australia is one of the most important industrial and commercial powers, and plays a very significant role in the world.

The Australian nation consists of numerous ethnic groups and serves as an example for many nations and countries. By living together, the ethnic groups shape the well known Australian multinational mosaic of cultures of the peoples and nations that live on the fifth continent.

PERTH - ST. NIKOLA CHURCH COMMUNITY (SV. NIKOLA)

Perth, the capital city of Western Australia, is the third largest commercial and cultural center in Australia, behind Sydney and Melbourne. Many regard it as one of the most beautiful cities in the world, and frequently refer to it as the "*pearl of Australia*". It is a million-size metropolis, located at the mouth of the Swan River, and spans over tens of kilometers along the coastline of the Indian Ocean. Traditionally, flowers and greenery are cultivated here.

Perth is the city in which several tens of thousands of Macedonians, particularly from Aegean Macedonia, have founded their permanent homes. The first migrants from Macedonia arrived in the 1920's. Here, in the "*promised land*", they began their new life as farmers, cutting the forests to obtain fertile land, particularly for gardening. Among the first migrants from Macedonia were those that came from Neret, Bapčor, Turije and other villages from the Kostur (Castoria) and Lerin (Florina) areas, as well as those from the villages beneath the legendary Vič Mountain, who had arrived even before 1925. It is believed that the Macedonians were the first who introduced tobacco growing in this part of Australia.

They remained in the new world, but never forgot about their native country. They express what cannot be forgotten by their organized gatherings, socializing, and living together, and in doing this they nurtured their national identity, traditions, faith, customs, and culture of their native land.

However, the convocational life began intensifying in 1967 with the arrival of protopresbyter stavrophore Metodi Gogov, who conducted the religious service in Macedonian for the first time. Later, with the establishment of the first Macedonian Orthodox community of *St. Nikola*, excellent results have been achieved in the Macedonian community.

Namely, as a result of their strong patriotic spirit and attachment to their native country - Macedonia, the Macedonians in Perth launched an initiative to establish a Macedonian community as early as in 1962. This was followed by the purchase of a land at the corner of Albert and Kelly Streets to first build



a cultural center, and then a church community. Therefore, they decided that the same building would be used both as a center and a church. Many Macedonian migrants deserve credit for this project, especially: Mita Mijas, Trpče Pejov, Kosta Kapinkov, Kosta Angelovski, Sam Kristy, Tome Miovski, Vane Cigulev, Vane Boršov, and many other donors and patriots.

The formal consecration of community church of St. Nikola was performed on 6 April 1969 by Metropolitan Kiril and the Bishop of Debar and Kičevo, Metropolitan Metodij, in a joint service with the priests Metodi Gogov, Metodi Lazarevski, and Gjorgji Kacarski. The service was enriched with the presence of numerous distinguished Australian public figures and several thousand Macedonians with their friends. The church was devoted to St. Nikola and is the second Macedonian church in Australia. Nevertheless, this was Metropolitan Kiril's first visitation to Australia and the first Macedonian consecrated facility abroad at all. Therefore, he often reminds vividly the meetings, talks, and successes he has achieved in this community.

QUEANBEYAN – ST. PROPHET ILIJA (SV. PROROK ILIJA)

Queanbeyan is a small town in New South Wales, near the Australian Capital, and is an important commercial and cultural part of Canberra. It has numerous hotels and catering facilities, of which a dozen belong to Macedonians. The Macedonian Orthodox church of Saint Prophet Ilija functions successfully in this eternally green environment with a favourable climate for rest and recreation. Several hundreds Macedonians, who live in Queanbeyan and Canberra, go to this church. The majority of these are Macedonian migrants from the Aegean part of Macedonia, particularly from the villages of Trsje and Statica, in the Florina area. Many also came from Debarca, from the Ohrid, Bitola, and Castoria regions, as well as from other places throughout Macedonia.

The first migrants from Macedonia arrived here as early as 1926. Gjorgji Nano, from the village of Trsje, Florina, was among the virtuous patriots and donators. He was one of the founders of this community, and he was often referred to as "the soul of the church". With his activities in the Australian society, he has contributed towards the Macedonians being appreciated and respected in Queanbeyan.

The activities of the Macedonian migrants in Queanbeyan and Canberra began as early as 1947 with the formation of the "*Mlad Goče*" branch of the *Macedonian-Australian National Union (Makedonsko-avstraliski naroden sojuz – MANS)*. Some of its members had even taken part in the 1903 Ilinden Uprising. Kosta Panov and Vasil Atanasov are among other members of the Macedonian community who were active fund raisers for the construction of the central hospital in Skopje.



When speaking of the history of the Macedonian Orthodox church community of *Saint Prophet Ilija* and of the Macedonian emigrants in Queanbeyan and Canberra, we cannot but mention 20 April 1969, when Metropolitan Kiril found himself among the Macedonian community for the first time.

The church, built in 1872 and protected by Australian laws as a cultural monument, was then consecrated. That Australian spring day in April transformed itself into a day of great celebration and immense joy. The church was consecrated by Metropolitan Kiril and Metropolitan Metodij of Debar and Kičevo, in a joint service with priests Metodi Gogov and Metodi Lazarevski. The event was attended by numerous emigrants, guests, ambassadors, city officials, representatives of the *Catholic and Presbyterian Churches*, and high officials of the Australian Ministry of Emigration, among others.

In the early years, among those that contributed toward the Macedonian Orthodox church community of *Saint Prophet Ilija* were its members and presidents, including: Simo Tanevski, Krste and Done Pazov, Trpo Nanov, Ljube Kolevski, Jordan Galev, Ilija Petroski, Slave Blaževski, Jordan Postolovski, and many other distinguished emigrants.

NEWCASTLE – THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY (SV. BOGORODICA)

Newcastle is a beautiful, tame city in New South Wales, with a population of approximately half a million. Located on the Pacific Ocean about 250 km to the north of Sydney, it is a highly developed industrial center, among other things.

Among the first migrants from Macedonia to arrive here in the 1920's were those from the region of Lerin and Bitola and they were followed later by several thousand emigrants from all parts of Macedonia. Following the example of the Macedonians in Melbourne, they have organized themselves on a church-national level, too. In 1960, Macedonian Bishop, Metropolitan Naum, arrived in their community for the first time.

He conducted the first religious service in Macedonian, in a joint service with priests Nestor Popovski and Gjorgji Angelovski. This was of great significance for the Macedonians, not only to boost their morale, but also their national spirit. Later, the church community was established, and in 1961 land was purchased for building a church and a center. The Community Statute was registered, too. This community has particularly flourished following the reconciliation of the two splinter groups in 1967, when they began fund raising for the construction of the first Macedonian church in their community.

The 25th of April, 1969 is a day that should be remembered. On this day, in the presence of numerous emigrants, and in a joint service with many Macedonian priests, Metropolitan Kiril consecrated the land on which the new Church of the *Mother of God* was to be built.



Vlado Popovski was appointed first priest, to be followed by Živko Popovski who, together with numerous donors, activists, and emigrants, and their own voluntary work, contributed towards the construction of this eternal shrine of the autocephalous Macedonian Orthodox Church in Newcastle.

Among those who deserve special credit, both in the beginning and afterwards, are: Petar Šabalev, Rade Eftimovski, Nikola Sazdanov, John Fotev, Lale Dafov, Blaže Jovanovski, Stevo Georgiev, Pande Babamovski, Gjorgji Mangovski, Risto Ilkov, Risto Pandov, and many others. Since then, Intensive construction works on the church of the Mother of God had begun and it was consecrated in 1971 by Metropolitan Kiril.

WOLLONGONG - ST. DIMITRIJA (SV. DIMITRIJA)

Wollongong is one of the major industrial centers in New South Wales, with long sandy beaches and picturesque landscapes. The city is washed by the waters of the Tasman Sea mixed with the currents of the Pacific Ocean, which makes it a tame and pleasant place for living. Located at about 80km to the south of Sydney, it includes the suburbs of Port Kembla, Cringila, Bulli, Kiama, and others, all of which belong to the Illawarra municipality.

One of the biggest steelworks in the world is in Wollongong, where many Macedonians used to work in the past. They have come from every part of Macedonia, but mostly from Bitola, Ohrid, Prespa, and other areas.

The activities for establishing a church community of Macedonians in this area began as early as 1967, when they registered the first Church Board with the Australian authorities that managed, in the years that followed, to purchase a plot for the construction of St. Dimitrija Church. The land was consecrated by Metropolitans Metodi and Kiril in May 1969. Two years later, on 4 April 1971, the foundation stone was laid. On 27 August 1972, a modest consecration ceremony was conducted.

A great number of the Macedonians of every generation, in the early stages and later, deserve credit for the establishment and construction of this Macedonian center that bears the name of St. Dimitrija. Understandably, special place is given to the presidents: Dimko Dimitrievski, Spase Loženkovski, Milan Katankovski, Trajan Trajanovski, Mile Tasevski, and others; then, the priests: Ljupčo Miloševski, Vasil Slamkov, Vasko Dimitrievski, Klime Džeparovski; and the members: Zlate Tanevski, Mijal Stefanovski, Angele Ristić, Angele Brglevski, Dimče Nikolovski, Sergie Sekulovski, and Najdo Panovski among others.

SYDNEY - STS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS (SV. KIRIL I METODIJ)

Sydney is the biggest city and harbor in Australia and one of the world's metropolises. Founded in 1788 as the first English settlement on the fifth



continent, today it is the biggest import–export harbor in Australia, and the capital of New South Wales. This beautiful and attractive metropolis is the second center of the Macedonians in Australia, after Melbourne. The first Macedonians arrived here in the 1920's, and today there are Macedonians from every part of Macedonia. However, the majority come from Pelagonija, especially from the villages beneath Mt. Pelister, as well as from Prespa, Ohrid, Florina, and other areas.

Activities for the organization of the national and cultural life of the Macedonians in Sydney began particularly after WWII. Among the first activists were Vasil Hristov, John Pizarkov, Vasil Boškov, and Iljo Malkov among others. Later, an Executive Board for the establishment of a community was set up consisting of many distinguished Macedonian emigrants. Its President was our well-known compatriot, Mik Velkovski who, together others and their tremendous effort and endless work, helped to the development of quite a significant church life.

The Church of *Sts. Cyril and Methodius* was consecrated on 22 January 1978. The formal consecration act was conducted by Metropolitan Kiril. He consecrated the church in a joint service with many Macedonian priests in Australia, in the presence of numerous believers, representatives of the World Church Association, the Emigration Department, and Macedonian emigrants from Melbourne, Newcastle, Queanbeyan, Port Kembla, and Wollongong.

The newly adapted church served as a Macedonian temple for six years but because it was too small and could not meet the needs of the Macedonian believers for somewhat more specific cultural and educational needs, they began, in 1976, constructing a new church at the same location.

The foundations were consecrated by Metropolitan Kiril, too, and a fund raising campaign commenced. The church management board had a very responsible task, which they fulfilled to everybody's satisfaction, by raising huge funds for the construction of this Macedonian cathedral church, and the first temple in Sydney.

The construction of the Church of *Sts. Cyril and Methodius* was completed in 1977, and on 16 October of the same year it was officially opened. This important day was shared by many Macedonian emigrants, while the doors of the church were symbolically opened by New South Wales Prime Minister, N.K. Wrenes.

The church was consecrated by the Head of the MOC, His Beatitude, Archbishop of Ohrid and Macedonia Dositej in a joint service with the Bishop in charge, Metropolitan Kiril, along with numerous Macedonian priests from the Macedonian eparchies in Australia, and tens of thousands of guests. On that occasion, Dragan Razmovski was elected first President of the Church Board, while archpriest Vlado Popovski was appointed as a parochial priest. This Macedonian church is one of the biggest in Australia, and the only one outside of Macedonia that has two thrones and two altars.



MELBOURNE – ST. PROPHET ILIJA (SV. PROROK ILIJA)

Melbourne, the capital city of Victoria, is the second biggest commercial, cultural, political, and administrative center in Australia, immediately following its eternal city-rival, Sydney. Very often, Melbourne is considered one of the most significant centers of the automobile industry, a sports Mecca, and city-pearl across the Equator. The city spans along the Yarra River, which, with its numerous meanders, makes Melbourne an attractive city to work and live in.

Several thousand Macedonians from all parts of Macedonia live in this conglomerate of peoples, nations, ethnic groups, and native population. The first Macedonian community outside Macedonia - St. George Church was built there in 1960. A dozen other churches followed later.

As early as 1971 a steering committee for the organization of the *St. Prophet Ilija* Macedonian Orthodox church community was set up. This committee consisted of many distinguished emigrants of Macedonian origin, especially from the Bitola and Prilep areas, including: Ilija Miloševski, Cvetan Veljanovski, Tome Dervišovski, Boris Trajkov, Vele and Vojo Božinovski, Pero Gjorčevski, Kole Najdovski, priest Metodi Lazarevski, and later, priests Gjorgji Kacarski and Eftim Betinski, as well as many other believers and patriots who invested a lot of effort and funds to build this Macedonian church. The Church of *St. Prophet Ilija* is the epitome of fine architecture, whose icons are the work of Macedonian masters, while many icons were gifts from the Macedonian migrants.

Funds were raised very quickly and in 1974 a Methodist Church was purchased, which was adapted for conducting religious services for the Orthodox Macedonians. On 26 December 1974, what is referred to as a 'small consecration' was conducted. However, the most significant date for the St. Prophet Ilija Church is of course 2 May 1976, when the Bishop responsible for the Australian-Macedonian Diocese, Metropolitan Kiril, consecrated the church in a joint service with numerous Macedonian priests before several thousand visitors and many guests from the Australian society and government. This was a day to remember, for it meant beginning of the activity of another Macedonian temple on this continent.

As a result of the numerous church-national activities, the Macedonian center in Sunshine was build, which is a place for gathering, socializing, and recreation.

MELBOURNE – ST. NIKOLA CHURCH (SV. NIKOLA)

Melbourne is an Australian and world metropolis, and the capital city of the state of Victoria. Due to its exceptional geographic location, the area was inhabited by numerous native population, but since 1835, the city has developed into a significant place for the state of Victoria. Many Macedonian Orthodox churches and two monasteries were established here. One of these



Macedonian shrines is the Macedonian Orthodox church community of *St. Nikola* in Preston. It is the third spiritual and educational center in this area, built with a lot of hard work, love, money, and effort of a group of Macedonians of which we especially need mention the following: Gjorgji Pisevski, Boris Lozanovski, Gjorgji Janakievski, Živko Stojanovski, Pece Stepanovski, Mile Panov, and Dragan Gaštevski among others who led the campaign for the construction of the church. In 1976, the funds donated by members of the Board and other emigrants were used to purchase a larger property in Preston.

On 8 February 1978, the church was consecrated. This formal event was conducted by the Head of the MOC, His Beatitude Archbishop Dositej of Ohrid and Macedonia, in a joint service with the Bishop in charge, Metropolitan Kiril, a large number of priests. It was a splendid occasion that will be remembered for long. Five thousand believers came to share the joy in the presence of the leader of the Labour Party, Mr. Whitlam, and other representatives of the Australian government and society.

St. Nikola Church began its activities with zeal. Thus, in the first six months of its official opening, 75 newborn babies were christened and 15 weddings were conducted. The distinguished migrant, Gjorgji Pisevski, was its first President, while Jonče Petrevski, who was later one of the most active presidents for several terms, was Vice President together with Mile Panov. Radoslav Atanasovski was appointed as the first parish priest.

PERTH – ST. NIKOLA CHURCH (SVETI NIKOLA)

Perth, the capital city of Western Australia, contains almost three quarters of the population of this federal state, the biggest one. Perth is not one of the world metropolises, but it does cover an area on which New York or Tokyo could easily fit. Here, in this part of Australia, where there are no seasons in the European sense of the word, several tens of thousands of Macedonians have settled here permanently along with the other ethnic groups, nations and peoples from all over the world.

St. Nikola Church is a church-national and religious institution in Perth. It began its activities in 1977 when a building was purchased thanks to the numerous activists and donors of Macedonian descent. At the very beginning, the holy relics from the original church were brought here and it was consecrated on 12 February 1978.

This formal event was conducted by the Head of the MOC, His Beatitude, Archbishop Dositej of Ohrid and Macedonia, along with Metropolitan Kiril, who was the American-Canadian-Australian Bishop at the time, in a joint service with many Macedonian priests, several thousand Macedonians, representatives of the Anglican, Catholic, and United Church, as well as many public figures from the cultural and social life of Western Australia. This was



Metropolitan Kiril's second consecration of a church but this time in Northern Perth.

The Macedonian Cultural Center which is a part of the United Macedonian community was opened in 1989. Then the main celebration in Perth was held in this community, an event that marked the activities of the Macedonian emigrants in Australia.

GEELONG – ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH(SV. JOVAN KRSTITEL)

Geelong is a city located at about 80km to the south-west of the metropolis of Melbourne. It is one of the more significant industrial centres and harbours of the state of Victoria. Spanning along the Phillip Bay, it seems to have concealed from the currents that come from Tasmania, and is a pleasant place for living and working in at the same time being a center of the automobile industry.

Many Macedonian families have settled in this city, the majority of which came from the Bitola area, but most from the village of Dragoš near Bitola but there are also families from the villages of Lažec, Velušina, Bistrica, Graešnica, Žabjani, and other villages beneath Mount Pelister. Others came from Prespa, and other villages in the Ohrid and Struga areas. Here the St. John the Baptist Community was registered, whose activities for raising funds began in 1977. Many Macedonians contributed to these activities by donating funds for the building of the church.

Jovan (Johnny) Angelovski, the first President, and biggest donor and founder of the church, was among the first and most significant activists, donors, and socially active public figure in this community. He was followed by Cvetko Ilievski and Mile Stojanovski, who were declared lifetime members.

Also deserving great credit are: Tome Dimovski, Ilija Nikolovski, Dimitar Angelovski, Josif Pačovski, the priests Gjorgji Kacarski and Čedomir Ilievski, among many other activists who invested a lot of effort and funds in this significant Macedonian church and culturally educational center in Geelong.

On 15 January 1978, the Bishop in charge of the Australian Diocese, Metropolitan Kiril – assisted by several priests and in the presence of numerous emigrants and Australian officials– laid and consecrated the foundation stone to the new Church of *St. John the Baptist*.

This was a turning point in the life of the Macedonian emigrants. Metropolitan Kiril's act of consecrating the church was a special event in itself, and one the Macedonians will always remember. The first service in the church was conducted, which marked the beginning of a new church life and a new page in the chronicle of the Macedonian community in Geelong.



SYDNEY - THE CHURCH OF ST. PETKA (SV. PETKA)

Sydney is considered to be one of the most beautiful cities in Australia and in the world whose symbols are the Harbour Bridge and the Opera House, which, from a distance, looks like a big swan with its wings spread out, petrified as a stone guard, forever over the blue Bay. One of the suburbs in the three-million city of Sydney is Rockdale which is about 20km from the center of the city, close to Botany Bay, where Captain James Cook first arrived in the past, thus laying the foundations to the modern-day Australia.

Several tens of thousands of Macedonians live here in Rockdale, where both English and Macedonian are spoken. The majority of them came from the areas of Bitola, Prilep, Ohrid, Prespa, Struga, and other places. It is often said that the villages of Capari and Gjavato, near Bitola, have moved to Sydney. In Rockdale, Bitola's twin city, the Macedonians have somewhat bigger opportunities to develop their national awareness, and to spread the Macedonian culture, language, and traditions.

The church activities began in 1977 with the visitation of the MOC delegation led by the Head of the MOC, His Beatitude Archbishop Dositej and Metropolitan Kiril. Most of the activists of the Board for construction of a church were members of the 'Ilinden' folk dance club. Among them we need to give special credit to: Pasko Grbevski, who was the first President, Jone Belčev, Pero Kikerekov, Jonče Kokalovski, Kire Cirevski, Mitre and Lazo Dupešovski, priest Aleksandar Ivanovski, and many other public figures and patriots from the Macedonian community in Sydney.

With the funds raised from donations and assistance from all the Macedonians in Rockdale, the Steering Committee purchased an old house which they pulled down. In its place in less than three months, in May 1977, they built the Macedonian Orthodox Church of St. Petka, and all other necessary facilities. Soon afterwards it was consecrated, and head-priest Spase Stefanovski, Bishop's assistant, conducted the first liturgy in Macedonian, in the impressive presence of several thousands of Macedonians.

Nevertheless, 19 February 1978 will remain the brightest day for this community. This was the day when the church was consecrated by His Beatitude Archbishop of Ohrid and Macedonia, Dositej, in a joint service with Kiril, Metropolitan of Australia at this time, and a numerous Macedonian clergy. It was consecrated in an exceptionally rare atmosphere created by more than ten thousand Macedonian migrants from Sydney and other places in Australia.

MELBOURNE – MONASTERY OF ST. CLEMENT OF OHRID (SV. KLIMENT OHRIDSKI)

The idea to establish church communities and build churches emerged at MANS even before it was formally disbanded. Thus, as a result of the strong



national feelings and awareness of the Macedonians in Melbourne, the first steps were taken in 1955 to establish the first Macedonian church community of St. George in Melbourne.

The first public gathering took place on 14 May 1956, at which it was decided to establish a Macedonian church community and to begin raising funds for building a Macedonian church. Vasil Mojanov was elected first President of the Committee, while Petre Božanin was its secretary. An endless number of activities began unrolling. On the day of Ilinden in 1958, they laid the foundation stone of St. George's Church. After its construction and adaptation, the church was consecrated on 7 August 1960 by Bishop of Zletovo and Strumica, Metropolitan Naum, in a joint service with priests Nestor Popovski and Gjorgji Angelovski, and the clergy of the Syrian and Anglican Churches. The event was attended by many believers, guests, and friends of the Macedonians. In that way a new, bright, and significant page in the history of the MOC and the Macedonian people in general was turned.

Within the first church community the Epping Cultural and Educational center successfully functions, where the new church of St. George and St. Mother of God is located. Metropolitan Kiril laid the foundations to this center in 1981. The monument to the great Macedonian revolutionary, Goce Delčev stands high here, and is a gathering place for every generation of Macedonian descent.

The Monastery of St. Clement of Ohrid, located beside King Lake, approximately 80km from Melbourne, is of special significance for the community. This first Macedonian monastery in the world was consecrated on 29 January 1978 by the Head of MOC, His Beatitude Archbishop Dositej, along with Metropolitan Kiril and numerous Macedonian priests. The monastery has a large estate covered in dense vegetation, and is used for holding picnics, fairs, village patron saint celebrations, and other outdoor activities.

The festival known as the 'Days of Macedonian Culture' was held in this Macedonian park in December 1983. This event, held under the patronage of the Government of the State of Victoria and the Socialist Republic of Macedonia, gathered more than twenty thousand visitors and contributed toward the multicultural development of Australia.

AUSTRALIAN - MACEDONIAN DIOCESE

The Macedonian Orthodox communities, churches, and monasteries in Australia are constituted upon legal grounds and are set up as religious, national, social, humanitarian, and culturally educational institutions. In order to conduct their activities, these communities have the full support of the Australian Government above all, and of their mother-church, St. Clement's Church. The establishment of the communities in Australia largely contributed toward



raising the level and, to a certain extent, determining the national identity of the Macedonians that live abroad. Regardless of which part of Macedonia they came from or the kind of their travel documents, the Macedonians in Australia can get documents issued by the Macedonian Orthodox church communities that are evidence that they are Macedonians. Furthermore, this gives them the right to elect and to be elected in the church-social bodies. Hence, they receive birth certificates, marriage certificates, and other documents that are official and legal before the Australian administration.

The Macedonian Orthodox communities and churches that are active in Australia and New Zealand have their own Diocese, which is a significant spiritual and cultural-educational body. It protects, organizes, and affirms the all Macedonian churches, spiritual and patriotic interests and needs, allowing Macedonian emigrants from every part of Macedonia to feel the national and church freedom.

The Diocese provides conditions for increasing affirmation of the entire cultural heritage and of the current progress of the Macedonian people. This has been confirmed by the Australian authorities, too who regard Macedonians as a separate people, and a living bridge for the friendly relations between Macedonia and Australia.

The Australian-New Zealand-Macedonian Diocese was established in compliance with the decision of the Holy Bishops' Synod of the MOC with the aim of deepening the relations and strengthening the love of the Macedonian emigrants in Australia with their fatherland and with the church.

At first, it was a joint Diocese for the USA, Canada and Australia, known as the American-Canadian-Australian-Macedonian Orthodox Diocese when, in 1967, Metropolitan Kiril was elected the first Bishop of this joint Diocese. Since 1981 onwards, Metropolitans Timotej and Petar have been elected Bishops of the Australian Diocese while vice presidents of the Diocese were: Vasil Mojanov, Risto Altin, Kosta Radin, Vančo Nedelkovski, and Jovica Simonovski, among others. Today, it is called the Australian-New Zealand Diocese.

The headquarters of this Diocese is in Melbourne, Victoria, where the Bishop's Vicar, i.e. a head priest always resides.

The Australian-New Zealand-Macedonian Diocese makes efforts to maintain the church and national traditions, folklore, language, past, and the present of the Macedonian people, which they brought with them from their fatherland Macedonia to Australia, their new setting.

The Monograph "Mitropitan Kiril"

MACEDONIAN ORTHODOX CHURCHES IN CANADA – CONSECRATED BY METROPOLITAN KIRIL (4)

Canada is a country in North America whose population is mainly of English and French descent, as well as more than a hundred other nationalities, including over a hundred thousands Macedonians. It consists of ten provinces: Alberta, British Columbia, Quebec, Manitoba, New Scotland, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, and Saskatchewan; and two independent territories: Yukon and the Northwest Territory with the Arctic (French) Archipelago. English and French are official languages, but each nationality is allowed to speak their native tongue, and to have independent schools in their language, churches, and associations. Ottawa, the capital city, has a population of about one million and is located in Ontario, while bigger and important metropolises are: Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, Edmonton, Hamilton, Winnipeg, Quebec, Calgary, Halifax, and Windsor among others. Canada has a continental climate, subarctic in the south and polar in the north. The best known rivers are the St. Lawrence, McKenzie, and Nelson rivers and the following lakes: the Upper, Huron, Erie, Ontario, Winnipeg, and Great Slave Lake among others. The famous mountains are the Rocky Mountains, which stretch across the western part of Canada.

Prior to the arrival of the Europeans, Canada was inhabited mainly by Iroquois Indians and Eskimos. It is assumed that the Normans arrived in the 11th century for the first time. However, it is believed that Giovanni Caboto (John Cabot), an Italian sailor serving England, first discovered the east coasts and the Labrador Peninsula in 1497. The first settlers from Europe were the French who founded Quebec in 1608. In 1627, Canada was known by the name of “*New France*”.

The English colonizers continued settling during the 17th century and they fought against the Iroquois, too and conquered territories gradually and expanded westward. The war between France and England in Europe in the course of the 18th century influenced and instigated clashes in Canada, too. In addition, during the wars over the Spanish Succession, the English managed to conquer a part of it and in compliance with the 1713 Peace of Utrecht they were acknowledged the right to Acadia and the territories surrounding Hudson Bay. During the seven-year-long war, the English conquered the entire



territory of Canada which was granted to them by the 1763 Paris Peace Agreement. Throughout the 19th century, there was a lot of migration and expansion of the colonizers towards the west, which led to the establishment of the Canadian Confederation in 1867 with the status of a Dominion.

Today, Canada serves as an example of a multicultural society. It was the first country in the world to acknowledge the multicultural diversity officially.

TORONTO - ST. CLEMENT OF OHRID CHURCH (SV. KLIMENT OHRIDSKI)

Toronto was one of the first settlements in Canada. It was founded in 1793 under the name of York, and got its current name in 1834. Today, it is the biggest industrial, cultural, political, administrative, and sports center, as well as the 'pearl' of Ontario, and a metropolis with great prospects.

The first Macedonian settlers have been among the most significant ethnic groups in Toronto and they play an important role in general. They came from every part of Macedonia, and they are very closely connected, especially with the Church of *St. Clement of Ohrid* and with the organization "*United Macedonians*". The initiative to establish this church was launched at the Fourth Ilinden picnic which the "*United Macedonians*" held in 1962.

The decision to build the Church of *St. Clement of Ohrid* was reached at the large gathering that took place at the King Edward Hotel on 7 August 1962. In addition to the several hundred Macedonian migrants, this event was also attended by Metropolitan Naum, the then-Bishop of Zletovo and Strumica at the time, and Kiril Stojanovski, a parochial priest. They were the first Macedonian church-national missionaries in the biggest Macedonian colony who, on 12 August 1962, conducted the first service in Macedonian and the first ceremony of christening. It was a memorable event, noted with capital letters in the history of this church community.

Another significant date for the Macedonian Orthodox Church of *St. Clement of Ohrid* is 12 December 1962, as well, when the church community was registered with the Canadian authorities and when this document was sent out to numerous emigrants. The aim of this act was to boost the morale and faith of the Macedonians because, until then and contrary to their own wishes, they had to satisfy their religious needs at religious facilities that were not Macedonian, yet, many of which had been built with funds and donations from the Macedonians.

It seems that 5 April 1964 is one of the most significant dates in the history of this church when its foundation stone was laid in the presence of several hundred Macedonian migrants from all parts of Macedonia, Canadian government officials, public media representatives, and friends of the Macedonians. One year later, the church was consecrated by the Archbishop Dositej of Ohrid and Skopje and the first Macedonian Metropolitan, in a joint service with the



Bishop Naum of Zletovo and Strumica, Archdeacon Kiril Popovski (Metropolitan Kiril), and priests Nestor Popovski and Atanas Popov.

A tremendous contribution to the coordination of the activities of the community have made the following presidents, in addition to many distinguished emigrants: Spiro Sanders, Kosta Endros, Jim Juglov, George Lukras, Filip Angelkovski, Sime Gadžovski, Telly Mariovče, Kris Dimov, Dr. Aleksandar Georgievski, Vasil Pandovski, Jan Givens, Nikola Karanfilovski, Tome Tanaskovski, Alek Petličkov, Dr. Dragi Denkovski, Nikola Stojanovski, to the current president Aleksandar Popovski, as well the priests: Kiril Stojanovski, Atanas Popov, Ahil Teoharev, Branko Pačemski, Dragi Kostadinovski, Ilija Dimitrovski, Ilče Miovski, Ilija Donev, Jovan and Trajko Boseovski, and many other distinguished activists from this community.

The Ladies' auxiliary, folklore group "*Makedonka*", the Church choir, Literature association "*Grigor Prličev*", Association of pensioners, and other sections play a special role in overall work of the church. Metropolitan Kiril is a respected person and often a guest at a number of celebrations and other activities in this church.

HAMILTON – ST. NAUM OF OHRID (SV. NAUM OHRIDSKI)

Hamilton, the city to the south-west of Lake Ontario, is one of the leading iron industry centers in Canada, and the place where the successful Macedonian Orthodox church community of St. Naum of Ohrid - the Miracle Worker, is located. The Macedonians began settling in this highly developed industrial city on the crossroads between Toronto and Niagara, as early as the 1920's. The earliest settlers came mainly from the areas of Lerin, Bitola, Kostur, and Prespa, such as: Pando Hristov, Kris Janev, Nikola Gulis, Kris Anastasov, Spiro Karfil, and Lazo Vasilev among others.

Since on the northern side of Lake Ontario, in Toronto, there was the Church of *St. Clement of Ohrid* which was reminding of Lake Ohrid and the city of Ohrid itself, upon the initiative of Metropolitan Kiril it was decided that the new church in Hamilton be named after St. Naum of Ohrid, the other great educator, doctor, miracle worker, and contemporary to St. Clement of Ohrid. In Hamilton, as in Toronto, the initiative to establish a Macedonian church community was launched by the Hamilton branch of the national organization "*United Macedonians*", whose first president and organizer of many cultural-educational events that nurtured the Macedonian national customs and traditions was Sime (Sam) Klašov in cooperation with other distinguished Macedonian emigrants including: Petre Vasilev, Ahil Janev, Mihajlo Nikolovski-Majorčeto, Kosta Romanovski, Trpe Sarievski, to the current president Jordan Gičevski, and the priest Dane Ilievski. In 1969, Metropolitan Kiril gave his blessing for buying a Baptist church, and he performed the first service in Macedonian.



Spiro Karfil, a distinguished emigrant and businessman from the village of Rabi, Dolna Prespa, was elected the first President of the Board of this church community who, on 24 February 1970, together with other members of the Board, managed to register this spiritual and cultural center with the Canadian authorities.

On 9 May 1971, the Macedonian Orthodox Church of *St. Naum of Ohrid* was officially consecrated in the presence of numerous Macedonian emigrants from Hamilton, Toronto, Buffalo, Lackawanna, Niagara, Rochester, and other places. It was consecrated by the Metropolitan Metodij of Debar and Kičevo, in a joint service with the priests Nestor Popovski, Boris Popovski, and Atanas Popovski, and Deacon Aleksandar Candovski. Then, intensive activities headed by the Ladies' auxiliary and other sections commenced.

WINDSOR - ST. NIKOLA (SV. NIKOLA)

Windsor is one of the most significant economic, administrative, cultural, and commercial centers of the province of Ontario. The city was founded in 1834. The automobile industry is its main commercial branch. Windsor is a university city, and an important railroad junction that links Canada to the USA.

In Windsor, the southernmost city of the province of Ontario and of Canada, which, due to its large and beautiful parks and flower gardens, is often referred to as "the city of flowers", the Macedonian Orthodox church of St. Nikola was built. Many life stories of the Macedonians are linked to this beautiful and attractive city, located on the left bank of the Detroit River, which connects Lake Erie and Lake Huron. Just because Windsor is located opposite the automobile metropolis – Detroit, it has always been a magnet for the Macedonian emigrants.

The Macedonians in Windsor were among the first Macedonians on the North American continent who organize themselves on a national and cultural level, and who established one of the most homogenous Macedonian emigrant communities.

First, they set up a youth organization and a football club, and in 1969 there was an initiative to establish the church community of St. Nikola. The first religious service in the mother Macedonian tongue which Metropolitan Kiril conducted in Windsor and Detroit, in 1970, served as a basis for its initial activities.

In 1979, the construction of St. Nikola Church was completed, while on 12 August of the same year Metropolitan Kiril, in a joint service with many priests from Canada and the USA and in the presence of numerous Macedonian migrants from Windsor and Detroit, consecrated the newly-built church building which is pride and joy for the Macedonians in Windsor. But, on 4 May 1980, the church burnt down in a destructive fire under unknown circumstances. A year



later, it was restored with the support of the Canadian Government and the charity of the Macedonians from Windsor and Detroit. On 9 May 1982 the new church was consecrated by Metropolitan Kiril.

The Macedonian Orthodox church community of *St. Nikola* is a true center and gathering place of the Macedonians in which a lot of people invested much of their time and efforts, among whom were the former Presidents Spiro and Mark Branov, Nik George, Stenli Dimov, Tome Damčevski, Gjorče Kotevski, to the current president Ljupčo Ančeski, and many other distinguished emigrants of Macedonian descent, as well as the community priests, Dane Ilievski, Mitko Popovski, and Aleksandar Mustenikov, among others.

In addition to the above mentioned churches which Metropolitan Kiril consecrated while he was in charge of the American-Canadian-Macedonian Orthodox Diocese, he also consecrated or performed services in other churches in Canada together with other metropolitans in charge of this Diocese. Thus, the Head of the MOC, His Beatitude Archbishop Mihail and Metropolitan Kiril performed the first service in Macedonian in the *Church of St. Mary* in Cambridge, Ontario, on 21 July 1994.

On that occasion, they had a meeting with a larger group of emigrants of Macedonian descent from Cambridge and its surroundings. This meeting left a deep impressions on those present and encouraged them to undertake numerous activities on a spiritual, cultural, and national level.

The foundation stone of *St. Nedela Church* in Pickering was laid by the head of the MOC, Archbishop Stefan together with Metropolitan Kiril and Archimandrite Nikodim Carknjas on 17 September 2000. Two years later, on 8 September 2002, they consecrated this church where all religious rituals are now performed for the Macedonians in this part of Canada. Soon afterward, Metropolitan Kiril together with Archbishop Stefan laid the foundation stone of *St. Ilija Church* in Mississauga, on 7 September 2002, while in 2006 they consecrated it.

The Monograph "Metropolitan Kiril"



MACEDONIAN ORTHODOX CHURCHES IN USA – CONSECRATED BY METROPOLITAN KIRIL - PART I (5)

The United States of America is a federal republic on the continent of North America, stretching between the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean, between Canada and Mexico, consisting of 48 contiguous states and the non-contiguous states Alaska and Hawaii, as well as one federal district. With its population of about 300 million, the USA is one of the biggest countries in the world.

The majority of today Americans originate from the emigrants from Europe who reached the American continent – mostly from Great Britain and Ireland, followed by immigrants from Germany, Italy, Russia (upon the October Revolution), from Poland, Norway, Sweden, and Macedonia, then a large Afro-American population, Indians, Japanese, Chinese, and other nationalities.

Its capital is Washington, in the District of Columbia, which together with its suburbs has the population of over three million. Other important metropolises are: New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Detroit, Boston, Baltimore, Cleveland, San Francisco, and others. The landscape of the USA varies largely. Predominant climates include a continental, subtropical, coastal, continental-mountainous, and subarctic to mildly warm oceanic climate.

The USA has an abundance of mountains, lakes, and rivers. The famous lakes are Lake Superior, Lake Huron, Lake Michigan, Lake Erie, and Lake Ontario, while the most significant rivers are the Mississippi River, Missouri River, Río Grande River, Colorado River, and many others.

The earliest known settlers of what is presently the USA were the Eskimos and Native Americans. It is believed that the Normans were the first of the Europeans who reached the North American continent a thousand years ago. Christopher Columbus discovered North America in 1492, and the earliest European colonies began arriving early in the 16th century from England, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Spain who, in order to conquer land, waged wars against the Native Americans. The first English colony was Virginia, founded in 1584, then Massachusetts in 1620, while New Holland was founded in 1614 with New Amsterdam as its capital city whose name was changed to New York in 1664.



The USA has always had an abundant and turbulent history from its foundation to the present day. In addition to the battles against the Native Americans, the first conflicts between the American voluntary detachments and the English army began in 1775, which in fact marked the beginning of the struggle of the North American continent for independence. In 1783, England acknowledged the independence of the USA by the Versailles peace agreement that brought great changes not only in the USA but throughout the world.

The USA was shaken by the Civil War from 1861 to 1865; the 1929-1935 world economic crisis during; the WWII, especially the war against Japan and the use of atomic weapons over Hiroshima and Nagasaki; the war in Vietnam, and by the today's crisis in Iraq.

The USA is one of the leading powers in the heavy and light industries, in food production, and agriculture. It is also one of the biggest political and military forces in the world.

GARY – THE CHURCH OF ST. PETER AND ST. PAUL (SV. PETAR I PAVLE)

Gary, in which the Macedonian Orthodox church of *St. Peter and St. Paul* was built, is a city that belongs to the State of Indiana, located at a distance of approximately 50 km from the metropolis of Chicago, State of Illinois.

With its population of over a hundred thousands, mostly black, this city is known for its heavy industry that began developing as soon as it was founded in 1906. It is one of the biggest steel centers in the world, where the Macedonians started coming as early as it was founded, mostly from the Aegean part of Macedonia, from Ohrid, Bitola, Prespa, and other places.

The Macedonians in Gary began organizing themselves in the period between the two World Wars, mainly through their membership in the *Macedonian-American People's Union* (MANS). Among them were the following emigrants: Blagoj Popov, Atanas and Vasil Bliznakov, Metodi Metlev, and others. Later, in September 1960, Petre Gligorović, Vladimir Gašević, and Petre Ristić, who had come to the USA when Macedonia was still a part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, initiated a campaign to build a Macedonian church.

The initiative to build a church to be named after St. Peter and St. Paul was gladly accepted and warmly welcomed by many Macedonian emigrants in this area. It is the first church of the Macedonians in the USA that was under the jurisdiction of the MOC.

The initiative for building a church was boosted in 1960. In 1961, this church community was registered by the Macedonian Orthodox Church in Skopje when they requested that a priest be sent from Macedonia. Priest Boris Popovski performed, for the first time, a service in the mother tongue, in Macedonian, at a Syrian Orthodox Church.



The building of this church was adapted to an Orthodox church and soon afterward, on 14 October 1962, the foundation stone was laid of this church which was to become the first Macedonian building on the North American continent. In 1967 this church in Gary was the seat of the Metropolitan Kiril.

The Church of *St. Peter and St. Paul* was consecrated on 14 July 1963 by the Head of the MOC, Archbishop Dositej, in a joint service with the priest Klime Malevski, Kiril Stojanovski, and Spiro Tanaskovski.

A great number of Macedonians have contributed significantly to the development of the spiritual and national life of this church. Among them we need to emphasize the following presidents: Blagoja Krstevski, Stevo Gjeorgievski, Blagoja Jovanovski, Milan Šikanovski, Boris Ilievski, Manojlo Trajkov, to the current president Boris Velovski, and the priest Tome Stamatov, as well as the Ladies' auxiliary, sports and youth sections.

COLUMBUS – ASSUMPTION OF ST. MARY (USPENIE NA SVETA BOGORODICA)

Columbus is the capital of the State of Ohio since 1810, which with its population of almost one million is an administrative, trade, cultural, and political center. Although it is the largest city in the state, it is on the third place according to its population (after Cleveland and Toledo). Most of the Macedonians who live here came from the areas of Bitola, Florina, Prespa, among others, and there are distinguished businessmen among them who play an important role in the social life.

The Macedonians in Columbus are united in the Macedonian Orthodox Church of the Holy Mother, which is a significant leading institution for the overall church living of the Macedonians in this area. One of the first initiators for the establishment of *St. Mary's Church* and its first president was Andon (Tony) Stojčev, well-known emigrant from Gumendža, Aegean Macedonia.

He transformed his immense love for Macedonia into the Macedonian Orthodox Church. Together with many progressive emigrants from older generation including Velo Božin, Gjorgji Tošev, Angel Čalis, Lazo Belčov, George Nedelković, and Simo Ristov among others, he played a very important role. Despite the strong propaganda stemming from the 'machinery' of the neighboring countries against Macedonia, they set up a Board for building a Macedonian Orthodox church that was to be placed under the wing of the Church of Macedonia.

One of the most significant dates noted in the history of this Macedonian community, and generally in the history of the Macedonian emigrants in the USA and Canada, is 30 December 1958. It was on this day when a religious service in Macedonian was performed for the first time on the American



continent by priest Stefan Belčevski. This important event and patriotic deed took place in the "Aleksandar Makedonski" Hall.

This was followed by a large-scale fund raising activity and campaign. In 1961, the Macedonian families, a few in number, purchased a land where the foundation stones were laid and consecrated in 1964. Soon afterwards, the building of the Church of Assumption of the Holy Mother of God began. Metodi Pašovič, Velo Božin, and Petar Kristov were signatories for the church.

When the church was finished, it was consecrated on 9 May 1965 by the Head of MOC, His Beatitude, Archbishop Dositej of Ohrid and Macedonia, in a joint service with Metropolitan Naum of Zletovo and Strumica, deacon Kiril Popovski (Metropolitan Kiril), and priests Nestor Popovski and Stefan Belčevski in the presence of hundreds of believers, friends, and representatives of the American society.

Many activists deserve credit for the construction of this church and the success on a church-national level of the Macedonian community in Columbus.

However, special place is reserved for the presidents: Andov Stojčev, Jim and Trajan Milenković, Metodija Pašovič, Goce Labudovski, Vasko Celevski, Risto and Goce Gjorgjevski, Branislav Manev, to the current president Josif Hristovski, as well as priest Duško Georgievski, Ladies' auxiliary and the Sunday's school.

Namely, the old church was burnt down in 2006. The new temple, which is dedicated to the Holy Mother of God and is located in Columbus, too, was consecrated on 22 October 2006 by Archbishop Stefan and Metropolitans Kiril and Metodi.

The Church of the *Assumption of the Mother of God* hosted the Macedonian convocations on a number of occasions, but at 1985 Convocation the then Mayor of Columbus declared Metropolitan Kiril in charge of the American-Canadian Diocese, an honorable citizen of this city.

SYRACUSE - THE CHURCH OF ST. GEORGE THE MARTYR (SV. VELIKOMAČENIK GJORGJI)

Syracuse is a city and a harbor on Erie Channel, located in the north-western part of the state of New York. It is a railroad junction, an industrial center for motor vehicles, for precision mechanics, chemical, porcelain, graphic industries, and others. The third Macedonian Orthodox church named after St. George the Martyr was built in this city. This North American city was founded in 1825 and the USA Central Meteorological Station is headquartered here.

Several thousands of Macedonians live here that mostly came from the area of Bitola, particularly the village of Velušhina, from Prespa, Florina, and other places. One of those who initiated the construction of this Macedonian



patriotic structure was the well-known and virtuous emigrant from Velušina, Marko Jankulovsk, while the first president Jovan Mangovski and the first priests, Ilija Kaninski and Branko Pačemski had significant missions, too.

The Macedonians in Syracuse also built the Church of St. Mary. However, due to certain circumstances, when the church was about to find itself under the wing of the MOC, it was taken away and given to a foreign jurisdiction. Therefore, the Macedonians left the church, which was later disbanded and sold.

Having no other choice, in August 1963, some Macedonian families from Syracuse got together and arranged to raise funds. In April 1965, a high church delegation arrived in Syracuse led by the Head of MOC, His Beatitude, Archbishop Dositej of Ohrid and Macedonia, who conducted the first holy liturgy in Macedonian in a joint service with Bishop Naum of Zletovo and Strumica, Kiril Popovski (Metropolitan Kiril) and many priests, at the premises of the church.

Soon afterward, when the church was adapted into an Orthodox church, on 21 July 1968 it was consecrated Metropolitan Kiril in a joint service with priests Klime Malevski and Ilija Kaninski, in the presence of a large number of Macedonians.

In 1978, the Macedonians of Syracuse purchased a new church lot on which a cross was erected on 21 August 1979, while on 16 August 1978 the foundation stone was laid. Today the Church of St. George the Martyr stands on this site and is an important contribution to the family of Macedonian Orthodox Churches in the USA.

In October 1984, the construction of the new building of the Macedonian Orthodox Church of St. George in Syracuse was completed, while a year later Metropolitan Kiril consecrated the church in a joint service with numerous priests, and in the presence of Macedonian emigrants.

Among the activists related to the church activities many Macedonians deserve great credit, but special place is reserved to the presidents: Risto Božinovski, Krste Dimovski, Gjorgji Dimovski, Vangel Mangovski, Risto Razmovski, to the current president Tode Ribarovski, as well as the priests Branko Pačemski, Lazo Stefanov, Branko Postolovski, Ladies' auxiliary and other sections.

ROCHESTER – ST. DIMITRIJA (SV. DIMITRIJA)

Rochester, a city of the lilac, as is often called this beautiful, attractive, and significant center, is the home of the successful Macedonian Orthodox church community of St. Dimitrija. This metropolis, located on the north-western coast of Lake Ontario, is one of the US light industry centers, and a significant port in the state of New York. The earliest Macedonians arrived here between the two World Wars. They came from Bitola, Florina, Prespa, Ohrid, and other



areas. It seems that most numbered were from the village of Bukovo, near Bitola, and so it is often said that *'Bukovo is in Rochester'*.

The Macedonian emigrants in Rochester began organizing themselves, on a large-scale, at the end of 1966 when they established the *Macedonian-American Club*, whose members came from every part of Macedonia. Later, they started a campaign to establish a church community.

Many Macedonians participated in this campaign, of which particular credit needs to be given to Jovan and Ana Galovski from Smilevo, Nove Ilievski from Dihovo, near Bitola, to Risto Ristovski, the first priest, and to the Presidents, Aleksandar Ognjanovski, Mile Cickovski, and Pando Kabrovski, among others.

The 11th of May 1969 is a significant day for the *Church of St. Dimitrija* because it was on this day that this church community, one of the first in this area, was registered with the American authorities in the state of New York. Two years later, on 14 May 1974, the foundation stone of this monumental Macedonian spiritual, cultural, and educational center laid and consecrated.

Two years later, the center was opened. On 19 August 1978, Metropolitan Kiril, in charge of the Diocese, consecrated the church in a joint service with Macedonian parochial priests from the USA and Canada, and in the presence of numerous migrants, guests, and American officials. Soon afterward, they built a community center and a small Church of St. Nedela, located to the west of the main church.

Within this church, the Macedonian radio-hour, folk dance group, soccer club, Sunday school, Ladies' auxiliary and other sections are very successful.

The Monograph "Metropolitan Kiril"



MACEDONIAN ORTHODOX CHURCHES IN USA – CONSECRATED BY METROPOLITAN KIRIL - PART II (6)

DETROIT – THE BIRTH OF ST. MARY (SV. BOGORODICA)

Detroit is a huge city and harbor at the mouth of the Detroit River in the state of Michigan. It is the fifth largest city in the USA, and a world center for production of automobiles. It was founded by the French, and it has been a part of the USA since 1796. In addition, Detroit is one of the centers of the Afro-American population, and is a significant cultural and sports center.

As early as the 19th century, Macedonians from all parts of Macedonia began migrating to Detroit. According to some data, now there are more than ten thousands Macedonians from the areas of Prilep, Lerin, Ohrid, Gostivar, but the most numbered are those from Tetovo, Prespa, and Bitola. They say that the village of Vratnica, near Tetovo, and the village of Ljubojno, near Prespa, 'have moved to Detroit'.

The Macedonians there have opened many companies, restaurants, agencies, and factories in this metropolis, especially in Sterling Heights. They have several radio shows, and a Macedonian television program, as well as folk dance groups, and sports clubs. Thus, it is often said that the Macedonians in Detroit feel at home because they have fully retained their customs and traditions that are same as in their "old place" – Macedonia.

The activities for the organized activity of the Macedonians in Detroit and its vicinity began even before WWII, when the MANS was established. However, as a result of the Serbian and Bulgarian nationalistic propaganda, the real Macedonian church living for the Macedonians here began in the 1970's. More precisely, in 1974 a Steering Committee was set up to organize a Macedonian Orthodox church under the jurisdiction of the MOC, which meant a new kind of social life.

In fact, the Macedonians in Detroit had supported the initiative to establish and build their own Macedonian Orthodox church even earlier. However, their wish came true on 14 January 1975, when a Steering Committee was set up to establish the *Macedonian Orthodox Church of St. Mary's Birth (Ragjanje na Presveta Bogorodica)* in Warren, Detroit. The first liturgy in this community was performed by the bishop in charge, Metropolitan Kiril, in a joint service with Metropolitan Mihail of Povardarie, at a Roman Catholic Church in August 1975,



and this event was followed by a picnic attended by thousands of Macedonian immigrants.

As a result of the numerous activities, the funds raised, and the strong will of the Macedonians to have their own Macedonian spiritual, cultural, and educational center, on 13 August 1978, during the celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the Ilinden Uprising, Metropolitan Kiril, in a joint service with head-priest Eco Jovanovski, consecrated the land, in the presence of many visitors, while on 24 December 1978 a building was bought in Warren which was consecrated on 20 July 1980 by Metropolitan Kiril.

A great number of immigrants deserve credit for the purchasing and initial activities of the *Church of the Holy Mother*, nevertheless, the following need to be underlined: the honorary President Kris Nik, well known donor and a factory owner, who came from the village of Bolno, near Prespa; the first President Vlado Pašarikovski; then the presidents: Mile Topalovski, Sane Todorovski, Miško Vasovski, to the current president Svetle Stamevski, as well as the priests Blagoja Aceski and Dragi Trpeski, Ladies' auxiliary, folk dance group and other sessions.

The old building of the church was sold, and a new church was built which is a cathedral church and the biggest building of the MOC in the USA now. Large halls and other facilities were built next to the church building, which all represent a wonderful Macedonian architectural complex.

This place was consecrated on 25 September 1995, while the foundation stone was laid on 21 September 1998. The new building of *Church of the Holy Mother*, or more precisely the hall, was consecrated on 21 September 2000 by Archbishop Stefan and Metropolitan Kiril. Two years later the new temple was consecrated, on 21 September 2002, by Archbishop Stefan and Metropolitan Kiril.

The Church of the *Birth of the Holy Mother* is one of the most significant Macedonian spiritual, cultural, and educational centers in the USA. It is a gathering place for many Macedonians from Detroit and its vicinity, and a coordinator of numerous activities, including also the Convocations.

PASSAIC (CEDER GROVE) – THE CHURCH OF STS. CYRIL AND METHIDIUS (SV. KIRIL I METODIJ)

The Macedonian Orthodox church community of Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Passaic, in the state of New Jersey, is one of the most significant Macedonian spiritual centers on the North American continent. The idea to build this Macedonian center was very old. However, the organization of the Macedonians on church level started in 1972.

A somewhat large group of Macedonians deserve credit for the purchase of the first church building, but Gjorgji Tanov from Resen has a special role.



In addition, he is the biggest donor to this church and to the first Macedonian monastery abroad, i.e. to St. George Monastery. The other 21 members of the Board, which was elected by the Assembly, have contributed much, too. Its first president was Bogdan Simonovski, while Gjorgji Tanov was an honorary President. The following presidents also deserve credit: Pande Dimitrovski, Naume Naumovski, and Naum Trajkovski, among others.

One of the brightest dates of this significant Macedonian center is 15 March 1973, when the church was registered with the American authorities in New Jersey. On 27 May of the same year, Metropolitan Kiril conducted the first holy liturgy in Macedonian at a Russian Orthodox Church, which was attended by hundreds of Macedonians from several states of the USA.

Soon, the Church Board and its members decided to purchase another building in Passaic, which was redecorated and adapted to serve the needs of the Macedonian believers. Metropolitan Kiril officially consecrated the Macedonian Orthodox Church of *Sts. Cyril and Methodius* on 24 November 1974, in a joint service with Metodi Gogov, the then-Metropolitan Mihail of Povardarie, along with the protopresbyter stavrophore Boris Popovski, and the then priest Jovan Boseovski, in the presence of several thousands Macedonians.

As a continuation of the traditions of the Church the Macedonian Orthodox Church *St. Cyril and Methodius* in Passaic, the Macedonians in New Jersey decided to build a new church in 1993. In 1994, they purchased about ten hectares of land along with a temporary hall. Here they built a Macedonian Orthodox church in the style of *St. Mary's Church* in Kalište, and following the design of *St. Nikola Church* in Canton, Ohio, respectively but of somewhat larger dimensions. On 7 August 1993, Metropolitan Mihail consecrated its foundation stone. Mr. Kiro Gligorov, the then President of the Republic of Macedonia, and the first Macedonian Ambassador to the USA attended this ceremony, among others.

A great number of activists deserve credit for the construction of this church, starting from the first presidents up to the current president Nikola Milevski, priest Slobodan Petkovski, a great number of activists, Ladies' auxiliary, folklore group and other sections, too.

BUFFALO – STS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS (SV. KIRIL I METODIJ)

The large city of Buffalo, located in the immediate vicinity to the Niagara Falls, is one of the most important centers in the state of New York. It is a large port on Lake Erie and the channel that links Lake Erie and Ontario. It has a highly developed automobile industry and iron works, and is one of the biggest cultural and sports centers in this part of the USA.

The Macedonians started settling in Buffalo at the beginning of the last century, but most of them came after WWII, when they began their initial joint



activities. They mostly came from the regions of Prespa, Lerin, Bitola, and other places of Macedonia.

An initiative to build a Macedonian Orthodox church in Lackawanna and Buffalo was launched by a group of progressive Macedonians way back in 1968. Later, on 11 May 1969, the Church of Sts. Cyril and Methodius was registered by the New York State authorities. After long preparations and active fund raising campaign, priests Mihail Teoharev and Gligor Lapevski consecrated the church and laid the foundation stone for construction of the adjacent facilities on 24 May 1975, the day of the Patron Saints of the Church. On 7 September 1975, Metropolitan Kiril consecrated the church hall. It took a long time to build the church.

And when it was finished, the *Church of Sts. Cyril and Methodius* was formally consecrated on 13 September 1981, marking a new way of spiritual and cultural living. The consecration ceremony was performed by Metropolitan Kiril in a joint service with numerous Macedonian priests, and in the presence of several thousands of believers from the USA and Canada. The consecrating of this church was an event that many have remembered, particularly Metropolitan Kiril.

Many Macedonians, who invested much of their funds and time, deserve credit for the accomplishments of this community. Nevertheless, special credit goes to the presidents: Živko Popovski, Vlado Carovski, Cvetko Fotevski, to the current president Mile Nečovski, then to a great number of activists such as Ljubin Nečovski, Živko Andreevski, George Mihajlidis and others, as well as the Ladies' auxiliary and other sections, all of whom have enriched the church, national, and cultural life of the Macedonians in Buffalo and Lackawanna.

CHICAGO – THE CHURCH OF STS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS (SV. KIRIL I METODIJ)

Thousands of Macedonian families live in Chicago, one of the biggest cities in the world and a most significant industrial, trade, political, cultural, and sports center in the state of Illinois and beyond. They came from all parts of Macedonia, but mostly from the areas of Prespa, Bitola, Ohrid, Prilep, Skopje, and other places.

An initiative was launched, on 21 May 1976, to begin a fund raising campaign for building a Macedonian spiritual and cultural center that would serve the interests of the Macedonian emigrants from all parts of Macedonia. It was decided that the church would bear the name of *Sts. Cyril and Methodius*, and as a result the church community was accepted as a part of the MOC by a letter of the Holy Bishops' Synod of the MOC. Soon, the Church Board purchased a building of a Lutheran Church, which was renovated and adapted for performing Orthodox services.



One year later, during the Easter holidays, priest Boris Popovski conducted a small consecration ceremony, while on 3 August 1981, the church was consecrated by Metropolitan Kiril in a joint service with numerous Macedonian priests, and in the presence of hundreds of Macedonian emigrants and representatives of the city authorities.

As the community increased, the Church Board purchased several hectares of land in Berwyn, south-western suburb of Chicago, where a new church and a center were built. The land was purchased in 1985, and the first Macedonian picnic was held on it on 16 June of the same year. It is a beautiful Macedonian piece of land, like a green oasis surrounded with tall trees that make the area a pleasant place for rest and recreation.

Every church member deserves credit for this, but most of all the presidents, including: Trajan Ilievski, Stojan Čklamovski, Trifun Saljamovski, Trajan Tanevski, Boris Ničov, to the current president Ilče Mušarevski, as well as the priests Boris Popovski, Stojan Stojanov, Tomislav Petkovski, Tony Joševski, and Rubinčo Aceski, Ladies' auxiliary, folk dance group and other sections.

Among those numerous donors to this Macedonian center, voyvoda Kosta Makedonski, distinguished emigrant and patriot from the Pirin part of Macedonia, deserves a special recognition. He, together with a great number of patriots, supported the laying of the foundations of the new church, which took place on 24 July 1988.

The new Church of *Sts. Cyril and Methodius* was consecrated on 30 August 1992 by Metropolitan Kiril in a joint service with many other priests. Thanks to Metropolitan Kiril, the members of this church raised a large sum of funds and made this occasion a memorable event for the Macedonians in this part of the USA, and for everyone who attended that magnificent ceremony.

CINCINNATI – ST. PROPHET ILIJA (SV. PROROK ILIJA)

In one of the oldest university cities in the USA - Cincinnati, which stretches alongside the Ohio River, on the very south-western border of the state of Ohio the Macedonian Orthodox church community of St. Prophet Ilija was registered, the only Macedonian spiritual and cultural center in this beautiful and rich part of the USA. Here, in this large city, Macedonian families from all parts of Macedonia have settled.

The Macedonian community in Cincinnati is one of the smaller ones within the family of Macedonian communities. Nevertheless, these Macedonian emigrants nurture patriotic feelings, Macedonian spirit, Orthodox faith, and the strong love for the MOC and for their fatherland – Macedonia. In the initial years, some Macedonians from Cincinnati used to go to St. Mary Church in Columbus, but later decided to have their own church.



The Macedonians in Cincinnati will always remember 27 February 1977, when a Steering Committee was set up to establish the Macedonian Orthodox church community of *St. Prophet Ilija*. With the money they raised a land of several hectares was bought in 1978. There is hall on that land which is also used as a church.

The same year, in compliance with the decision of the Holy Bishops' Synod of the MOC, this church was taken under the wing of its Mother church, while in May 1980, the foundation stone was laid for building a new church hall. On 26 August 1982, when the hall was finished and opened, the then-Bishop of the American-Canadian Diocese, Metropolitan Kiril, conducted the first service in Macedonian in Cincinnati, in a joint service with protodeacon Jovica Simonovski, which was a special experience for the Macedonians in this city.

A new church was completely built and it was consecrated by His Beatitude, Archbishop Mihail of Ohrid and Macedonia in 1996. The church was built in several architectural styles, and is 16 meters tall, being in that way one of the tallest Orthodox churches in the USA. It was built in an amphitheatric style and therefore can seat about 500 people.

Among the Macedonians in Cincinnati, the following were particularly active: Vidan Stojanovski, Kire Karapaša, Mitre Lazarevski, Blaže Talevski, Pando Stojanovski, Metodija Angelovski, Blagoj Todorovski, Korun Pavlovski, and other distinguished emigrants, many of whom were presidents of the Church Board. The Ladies' auxiliary and other sections should be also mentioned.

LORAINÉ – ST. CLEMENT OF OHRID (SV. KLIMENT OHRIDSKI)

Lorraine is located alongside Lake Erie and has a population of several hundred thousands, and a highly developed iron and steel, mechanical, textile, and ship building industry. The city was founded in 1807. The Macedonian ethnic group has an important place among the 55 nationalities from all over the world that live and work in the city of Lorraine, Ohio. A shrine to the Macedonian generations – the Macedonian Orthodox Church of *St. Clement of Ohrid* – was built here.

This Macedonian center is a gathering place and a holy shrine to the Macedonians of Lorraine, Cleveland, Elyria, Amherst, and other places that came there mainly from the Aegean part of Macedonia and the areas of Prespa, Bitola, and Ohrid.

In the past, the Macedonians from this part of Ohio used to go the Church of *St. Cyril and Methodius*, which was mainly built from the funds and donations of the Macedonians, but was under the jurisdiction of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. Therefore, the Macedonians organized themselves and decided to build their own Macedonian church under the jurisdiction of the MOC.



Thus, in this colony the first liturgy in Macedonian was performed by priest Boris Arsovski, at a Ukrainian Church in August 1978. After that, they began raising funds and they purchased the land in Avon on which the new Church of *St. Clement of Ohrid* was built.

On 14 August 1983, Metropolitan Kiril consecrated and opened the new hall in the presence of several thousands guests. One year later, they got their first Macedonian priest, head-priest Boško Kiproovski, whose role in the spiritual life of the Macedonians and their getting together is immense.

On 11 August 1985, Metropolitan Kiril consecrated the foundations of the new church in a joint service with five priests, in the presence of numerous believers and of the mayors of Loraine and Sheffield Lake. Soon afterward, on 17 July 1986, the construction work of the new church was finished, and a small consecrating ceremony was conducted. On the day when this church was consecrated, the first service was also conducted and it was the wedding of David Kris Talev and Vesna Ilija Georgieva. On 16 September 1996, this new church was consecrated by the Head of the MOC, His Beatitude Archbishop Mihail.

Special credit for the spiritual development of this community goes to many Macedonians in the USA and Canada, to the donors Nikola Bogoevič, Risto Manovski, and Kire Stefov, as well as many others who supported the development of this Macedonian community in which numerous activities take place, not only in the church, but also in the cultural and educational level.

Metropolitan Kiril has conducted many services at the Church of *St. Clement of Ohrid*, and has led many fund raising campaigns.

The Monograph "Metropolitan Kiril"



MITROPOLIT KIRIL - CREATOR OF NEW SPIRITUAL VALUES (7)

As the oldest ordained Bishop, with four decades of experience, and with such a significant missionary national and spiritual road that he had walked in the recent modern history of the Holy Church and the state, Metropolitan Kiril is well respected. He is respected, above all, by his people and the Holy Church, as a great supporter of and a fighter for the maintenance of the honor, dignity, and autocephalous status of the Macedonian Orthodox Church. In 2000, a big Orthodox spiritual – church and cultural festivity of the MOC was held all over the Diocese of Polog and Kumanovo upon the occasion of two millennia of the birth of Jesus Christ, and 40 years of the restoration of the Ohrid Archbishopric (1958). These magnificent celebrations took place at the *St. Atanasij Monastery* in the village of Lešok, and at *St. Joakim of Osogovo (Sveti Joakim Oso govski)*, and were accompanied by special church -spiritual and cultural-educational events.

Undoubtedly, Metropolitan Kiril enjoys great respect among Macedonian people and beyond, as a Macedonian national pastor, but also as an uncompromising fighter for the maintenance of the autocephalous status of the Macedonian Orthodox Church and its complete defense from the noncanonical and non-Christian attacks from some sister churches.

Furthermore, he has proven, and continues confirming himself as an uncompromising spiritual and national “fighter” for the defense of the constitutional system, of the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the independent Republic of Macedonia.

For this reason precisely, he places the unity of the Macedonian people based on the grounds of the spiritual-church, the national, and the nation-building one, as the crown to this holy struggle. These three vital pillars of the Macedonian dignity, and the maintenance of our holy Macedonian name and language, must not be neglected.

Bishop Kiril confirmed his virtue, honor, and dignity during the absurd clashes in 2001. At this time, through the activities of his Diocese, he was one of the Macedonian fighters for the defense of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Macedonia, particularly in those areas in which the dirty military action took place.



Although very painful, nevertheless, he and his people's clergy, endured 'on their feet' the suffering of the peaceful Christian population, the destruction of the Lešok Monastery, the desecration, the burning of many Orthodox churches and monasteries, the destruction of the homes of his Christian believers, and their being driven away from their native hearths – all with the aim of forming ethnically clean areas to be inhabited only by Albanians.

His struggle for restoration continued. The old and new monastery near the village of Lešok was restored over the foundations of the old church. The other Orthodox churches that were desecrated by the heterodox believers, mostly in the Tetovo and Kumanovo area, are also being built, restored, and reconsecrated. During his time as pastor in the Diocese of Polog and Kumanovo, since 1971, a total number of 26 churches, 11 monasteries, 69 church facilities, 30 crosses, and numerous other religious facilities, which is an impressive new constructional spirituality were built.

Metropolitan Kiril continued to bear the Holy Cross on his shoulders, and to walk the Macedonian Golgotha with pride and dignity, abounding every step with prayers to God for the salvation of native and dear Macedonia, of the noble Macedonian people, and of *Saint Clement's* Macedonian Orthodox Church.

Metropolitan Kiril has been awarded many rewards and acknowledgements for the results achieved in the church, spiritual, social, and other fields during his many decades of working and managing. We especially need mention the *Golden Plaque* from the Macedonian Migration Office (Matica na iselenicite od Makedonija); the *Order of Merit* with silver rays of 25 May 1984, upon Decree 43 of the SFRJ Presidency at the time, awarded to him for his exceptional activities, particularly among our migrants in the diaspora; *Certificate of Gratitude* from one of the oldest Macedonian folklore ensembles, *Goce Delev*, from Skopje; and the highest acknowledgements from the municipalities of Kratovo, Kriva Palanka, Kumanovo, and other places.

He has also received numerous special plaques from the Macedonian Orthodox Dioceses of the USA, Canada, and Australia, i.e. from the Macedonian Orthodox church communities, societies, and associations overseas. He was awarded these at various formal occasions, jubilees, and at significant accomplishments of the Macedonian parishes and churches

The Monograph "Metropolitan Kiril"

MACEDONIAN PEOPLE AND MACEDONIAN STATE CANNOT EXIST WITHOUTH MACEDONIAN CHURCH (8)

AN INTERVIEW WITH METROPOLITAN KIRIL

The following interview which was published in the "Makedonsko sonce", No. 666/667 dated 4 May 2007, and was given on the occasion of the Easter holidays, was conducted by Kokan Stojčev:

The oldest enthroned Bishop within the Macedonian Orthodox Church and the only living signer of the historical Decision on the renewal of the full spiritual and canonical autocephaly of the same Ohrid Archbishopric, personified today as the Macedonian Orthodox Church of St. Clement, adopted by the Holy Bishops' Synod of the Macedonian Orthodox Church and approved at the Ohrid 1967 Convocation, is the most Reverend Metropolitan of Polog and Kumanovo, Kiril (Nikola Popovski). Metropolitan Kiril was born in Carev Dvor, in the region of Prespa, on 23 July 1934.

He completed his elementary education there, and then he studied theology in Prizren. He comes from a patriarchal orthodox family whose ancestors had given even 32 priests. In the eve of the feast of the Annunciation, on 6 April 1963, he was admitted to the monastic order at the *Monastery of the Birth of St. Mary* in Kičevo, while he was ordained to the rank of erogjakon by His Beatitude, Archbishop Dositej of blessed memory, who was renovator of the Ohrid Archbishopric personified as the Macedonian Orthodox Church.

Six months later he was promoted to the rank of archdeacon. In 1965, together with His Beatitude, Archbishop Dositej, he traveled to the U.S.A. and Canada where, together with the Head of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, he consecrated the first Macedonian church in Toronto, Canada, on Palm Sunday.

In addition, during this visitation, they consecrated the second Macedonian church of the *Assumption of St. Mary (Uspenie of Presveta Bogorodica)* in the city of Columbus, Ohio, the USA, on Sunday following the Easter. Upon his return, Metropolitan Kiril went to Moscow to study at the Moscow Spiritual Academy in Zagorsk.

After finishing the first degree, he was called back to return to his motherland in order to pursue more sublime church-spiritual interests for his people



and homeland, and for his mother – the Macedonian Orthodox Church. Soon afterwards, he finished his studies at the Theological Faculty in Skopje. On 5 July 1967 the Holy Bishops' Synod of the Macedonian Orthodox Church elected him Bishop's Vicar of Tiveriopol.

As a member of the Synod, he participated in the preparation of the voluminous report on the historical events in Ohrid where, on 17 and 18 July 1967, in the church of Sveti Kliment Perivleptos, the Synod unanimously adopted the historical Decision on full renewal of the autocephaly of the ancient and glorious Ohrid Archbishopric personified as the autocephalous Macedonian Orthodox Church today.

That Decision was formally approved by the highest legislative body – the Archbishopric Convocation. This Decision was ratified by His Beatitude Archbishop Dositej and by the following Metropolitans: Kliment, Naum, Metodij and Kiril who, at that time, was the youngest member of the Synod.

Kokan Stojčev (KS): *This year is going to be a crucial one for many things because the present conditions are similar to the pressures that the foes to the Macedonian people have exerted against our Holy Church and made attempts, by all possible means, to prevent the renewal of the Ohrid Archbishopric personified as the Macedonian Orthodox Church today. Your four-decade long engagements bear witness to that!*

METROPOLITAN KIRIL: *The 2007 year of our Lord, which, by the grace of God, has just begun, is of vital importance for the faithful Macedonian children no matter where they live. Any anniversaries and celebrations in the course of this year are going to be enriched with significant contents and with magnificent marking of the 40 year-long creative working and growth of our ancient Ohrid Archbishopric renewed as the autocephalous Macedonian Orthodox Church.*

On 17 and on 18 July 1967, in our ancient Jerusalem, i.e. in Ohrid, we corrected the great historical injustice done in 1767 when our Ohrid Archbishopric was abolished contrary to the canon law. With the historical Decision adopted by the Holy Bishops' Synod and approved at the First Convocation, we restored the spiritual freedom of our people and the right to a full and free religious and spiritual living and creative working in our fatherland and in the diaspora. By that act, we reinstated the honor, dignity and pride of our people, of our motherland and of our Holy Church which has got an apostolic succession.

A great number of creative workers, Christianized prayer book writers, saints, and martyrs, that God recognized and acknowledged to be holy and praiseworthy, have been included in our huge church-spiritual and cultural-educational pan-national deed.

Those Christianised holy men, who were walking on the Macedonian biblical land, belonged to the Macedonian people that, unfortunately, have been still denied, while their Church has still been disputed. Their number is great, and a pleiad



of Macedonian educators and teachers have given brilliant immortal works both to us and to the world. In spite of that, some of our neighbors deny everything that is Macedonian: the church, nation, and the state.

Our Holy Church was abolished with the Sultan's Irade adopted by an authority of a different faith than ours which, according to the canons of the holy Church of Christ, is not valid. We knew and we were aware that the church-spiritual fight we had started would be hard and tough, but we also knew that it had to be a victorious one.

In fact, we had no other alternative. Freedom is not served on a tray. Freedom should be earned by great self-sacrifices. And instead of common sense and evangelical love to prevail among some dignitaries from the neighboring churches and instead of putting an end to the problem, which was artificially imposed on our Church and which was purely political, even bitterer and more poisonous arrows are shot on our pan-national and church organism.

Their goal was and still is to open wounds, still not healed, to the Macedonian pan-national tissue and to spiritually enslave us again. During this four-decade long period we have done everything we could to find a mutual solution that would be of interest to the holy orthodoxy. But, all that was in vain. Why?

Because some of our neighbors do not have any desire, any readiness, not even a crumb of Christian evangelic love to accept the fact that we exist, live and that we are successful in this Balkan area and everywhere where we live as a Christ-loving Macedonian people, as a sovereign Macedonian state, and as a living autocephalous Church. Let us thank God that we were able to successfully dig up our century-old roots that had been covered by others. The fruits of our free religious life are visible on any level.

Hundreds of churches and monasteries have been built and renovated in our homeland and in the diaspora. We have opened our two educational institutions, the Theological High School and the Theology Faculty, where the Macedonian pastors and archpriests study. We have published and republished the Bible in the Macedonian language several times, as well as many other theological books.

For the needs of our Holy Church, we have consecrated holy chrism three times. We have started with three dioceses and three archpriests, while now we have ten dioceses and eleven archpriests, twice as much avantgarde Macedonian pastors and a great number of monks and nuns that carry out missionary work on all continents.

What is most important is that we have our noble, faithful people who endlessly love and respect their mother Church as their own mother. In the embrace of the newly built marvelous churches, more than 80, of the monasteries and cultural-educational centers and schools in the diaspora, whose capital value is estimated to be several hundred millions of American dollars, more than one million



wholeheartedly devoted children of their mother, St. Clement's Church, are being churched.

Turning our attention to the activity and creative work of our Holy Church on the North American continent I would like to underline, with special satisfaction and immense gratitude, that the organization "United Macedonians" has played a grandiose role for our expatriates, especially for those in Canada. It was established in the sixties, but with its long term program and strategic goals that Organization knew what it wanted. A great number of enthusiasts, trustworthy Macedonian sons and daughters, imbued with honest love for Macedonia, have laid the foundation stones for the organized life of our people not only on cultural-educational level, but also on patriotic and religious one.

We owe a debt of gratitude to them precisely for the construction of the first Macedonian church in Canada, the cathedral church of St. Kliment Ohridski, in Toronto, which was consecrated on the day of the Palm Sunday in 1965. They hoisted the Macedonian red flag, which was flying atop that first-built Macedonian holy place, and they called the Macedonian people to strong national and church-spiritual unity.

As a result of their exalted patriotic and church-related commitments, soon the church-spiritual life began to be organized also in the cities of Windsor and Hamilton, where today the Macedonian Churches of St. Nikola and of St. Naum Ohridski rise high in their splendors.

KS: *Lately, the so called joint activity of the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Greek Orthodox Church has been transferred on international level. They lobby for the recognition of the so called 'Church of Jovan'!?*

MITROPOLITAN KIRIL: *Their behavior is neither human nor Christian, and even less evangelic.*

By such an improper and inappropriate behavior they want only one thing – that we vanish as a Macedonian nation, as a Macedonian state, and as a Macedonian Orthodox Church. They want to ruin us and to uproot us from our century-old Macedonian regions on the Balkans. Today, the Serbian Church and the Greek Church, in alliance with each other, are doing all that even more severely, and they keep on pursuing the goal to alienate us and to deprive us of our name.

Should we still deceive ourselves and hope for their good intentions? Their strategy is a long-term and dirty one. Renegades, traitors and thieves headed by Zoran Vraniškovski, who has proved to be the greatest liar and thief in the history of our Holy Church, have placed themselves in their service in recent years. The Serbian Church, in agreement with the Greek Church, knows that if we loose our name and autocephalous status of our Holy Church, then we will also loose the Macedonian identity and sovereign Macedonia.

KS: *Does it mean that the pressure on the dignitaries of the Macedonian Orthodox Church shall be increased as well?*



METROPOLITAN KIRIL: *Not only these renegades and traitors, but also any other that will lay their hands on the dignity, name and autocephalous status of our Holy Church, shall not be spared from the curse of the 1767 Ohrid Archbishopric that befell several traitorous Greekphilic families, the curse uttered by Arsenij II, the last Archbishop, and written down by Gligor Prličev, leader of the Macedonian revival:*

*“Ah, listen to me, my dear God,
Let Stamče bey and Bujar Ligdo Nejko Čelebi
Be never happy.”
The gracious God had listened
to that heartburning curse.
And their offspring and their glory
Disappeared without noise;
Spiders are, therefore, spinning their
vast webs across their houses,
while owls are now hooting
under their deserted eaves.*

This song is about several Greekphilic families in the region of Struga that had betrayed our Holy Church, but whose descendants were completely destroyed. At this crucial moment of time in which we live as a Macedonian state, people and as a Church, it is essentially to underline that the goal of such pressures, which are becoming more and more frequent, is to prevent Macedonia from becoming a part of the Euro-Atlantic integration, because if Macedonia becomes a part of the Euro-Atlantic integration then their century-long territorial aspirations will be forever ruined. But, since the justice and truth are on our side, let us hope that God shall help us soon be sitting at the joint table of NATO and EU, and that in that way we shall be forever relieved from the heavy burden, which was imposed on us by some of our neighbors, and which we have been forced to patiently bear, and be able to remove that burden once and for all. To summarize, their strategy is clear - they attack our Church in order to disintegrate the Republic of Macedonia, and deprive our people of our name.

Without people, there can be no state. Without state, the people cannot exist. Without both people and a state, an autocephalous church cannot exist. Without a church, the people and their state cannot exist because the fullness of freedom, be it nationhood-related, national, cultural-educational or spiritual, cannot be experienced. Both the Macedonian God-loving people and the state represent our Macedonian organism, our body. The Macedonian Church is our Macedonian soul.



KS: *These objectives are our century-long commitments. Macedonian people, their culture and literacy had been created before all Balkan peoples and civilizations!*

METROPOLITAN KIRIL: *The biblical Macedonia was enslaved and partitioned for centuries, while the Macedonian God-loving Christian people lived in terror and genocide almost to their extermination brought and done by some neighboring countries that, unfortunately, were also assisted by the churches with which we are still waging wars. Even today, our Church is not recognized by some people; others do not recognize our state; third ones recognize neither our people nor our Macedonian name, which is holy and Christian.*

We should face the truth. Macedonia and the Macedonian Orthodox Church do not have any quarters to be cut up any longer, and there is nothing else to be taken away. If we allow that to happen, then Macedonia and the Macedonian Orthodox Church will be depersonalised. Do we have a way out?

We are a biblical country and biblical people, and our Church has got an apostolic succession. We were praised and placed on the highest pedestal by God, by being cradled in the bosom of the book of eternity, in the book of wisdom over wisdom, in the Holy Scripture – the Bible (where our name is mentioned for more than thirty times).

That gift and that honor and fame given to us by God could not be taken by anyone if we don't let them to. No one can be stronger than God. God and the historical justice and truth are on our side. Whatever God has created to live, it will live and exist forever. We have to surpass ourselves and make efforts, through the holiness of our mother Church, to preserve the eternity both of our homeland and of our Macedonian people that have suffered so much.

KS: *This year the Macedonian believers, priests, monks and archpriests of the Macedonian Orthodox Churches are going to celebrate two exceptionally important dates related to the existence of our Church – 40 years of its renewal, and 240 years of the abolishment of the Ohrid Archbishopric. Could you illustrate that thorny path?*

METROPOLITAN KIRIL: *Without renewing the autocephaly of our Holy Church in 1967 we could not have talked about such impressive results. Today, we all a living body and soul of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, all of us who are homogeneous by spirit and blood, no matter where in the world we live.*

Therefore, from all those holy days we should underline the celebration of the 40th anniversary of our autocephalous Church of St. Clement, commemorating at the same time however the tragic event that happened 240 years ago. In that way, we are going to learn how the Macedonian people, Macedonian Orthodox Church and our homeland can live in happiness, in comfort and in a state of prosperity.

Our ancestors had given what was most precious to them, their lives, for our spiritual and national freedom, and therefore we should be filled with love and



truthfulness in order to preserve our freedom. Let freedom and sovereignty of Macedonia, as well as the autocephalous status of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, be our holy and testamentary obligation. Freedom, be it of the state or of the church, is hard to be earned and it is even harder to be preserved.

Let us build, and let us not knock Macedonia down; let us make it more beautiful, and let us not make it ugly, since we have to keep it safe in such a state it was given to us by God – abounding with all its beauties.

Therefore, not a single act from the discussions thus far with the Serbian Orthodox Church cannot be more valid for us, as a Church, than the 1958 Decision adopted by the Macedonian Orthodox Church, and the 1959 Decision of the Bishops' Council of the Serbian Orthodox Church, as well as the decisions and resolutions of the highest bodies and authorities of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, including also the historical 1967 Decision on full renewal of the autocephaly of the Ohrid Archbishopric personified as the Macedonian Orthodox Church.

We have got our Macedonian sovereign state whose highest authority and highest legislative body of the Assembly give their full support to the autocephalous status of the Macedonian Orthodox Church that has been confirmed in several resolutions adopted thus far. In this context, we have got a piece of free Macedonian sky; Macedonian army and police.

We have got our people's avantgarde pastors, our monasticism, our guilds, our numerous ancient churches and monasteries that are eternal focal points and guardians equally of the church-spiritual identity and of the Macedonian national identity. More important, we have our holy saints, and our holy men a well that "God has recognized and canonized, while the sinful human factor does not recognized the Church within whose borders they lived".

KS: *The schismatic is secretly making friends abroad. What else could be expected?*

MITROPOLITAN KIRIL: *Our enemies will not stop booming like thunder with their distorted historical untruths. They tread on the holiness of the canon laws. They are prisoners of their own hegemonism, but they blame us calumniously for striving for hegemony. We know how and in what way the Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC) was given our current dioceses when the Kingdom of the Slovenes, Croats and Serbs was established.*

The Serbian Church paid 1,500,000 French gold coins to get the eparchies of the Ohrid Archbishopric. Why and of whom should we be ashamed? If we had not renewed our ancient and glorious Ohrid Archbishopric and made it independent in 1958, and if we had not made it autocephalous in 1967, that is personified today as our living and efficient Macedonian Orthodox Church of St. Clement, we could not have enjoyed the all precious accomplishments mentioned above.

That is why we had to accomplish our holy task and to remove the great historical injustice done against our people and against our Holy Church. Otherwise, we



could have still run around the world like frightened and headless chickens without their setting hen-mother.

Should we still continue to have trust and allow foxes to take care of chickens, and wolves to take care of lambs? No! A foreign shepherd does not take care of your flock of sheep! He kills and robs them. That is why we have to answer the question – what do we need in order to survive and exist as an autocephalous church?

Archpastors, pastors, the clergy, monks and nuns, people, believers, holy places, churches and monasteries, church-cultural and educational centers, the highest scientific and educational institutions, free country and a sovereign state. We have got all precious stones strung on the immortal pan-national St. Kliment's necklace that make us more proud and more honest believers and wholeheartedly devoted children to our dear and tormented homeland – Macedonia.

KS: Yet, the SOC defends its positions making use of the canonical rules!?

METROPOLITAN KIRIL : The SOC is inventing its own canons. The canon laws are known and it is also known what they prescribe for a church to get an autocephalous status. First, we should know that it is not about the first proclamation of the autocephaly of our Church (it had existed as an autocephalous Ohrid Archbishopric until 1767). It was our duty to renew its autocephalous status. As a Holy Synod, we made efforts then, and we are also making efforts now, not to deviate from the canons of the Eastern Orthodox Church at all.

It means that everything we did in regard to the renewal of our Holy Church in 1968 and in 1967 was done in compliance with the holy canons. In the history of the establishment of the eastern orthodox churches, the national sovereignty of any people was essential prerequisite for a church autocephaly; an autocephaly church belongs to an independent sovereign state.

For example, when Patriarch Konstantin IV gave autocephaly to the Polish Orthodox Church in 1925 he wrote down in the "Tomos", "I was guided by the provisions of the Holy canons which set forth that any church organization should adapt to the political and social forms (IV Ecumenical Council, 17 rule and VI Ecumenical Council, 38 rule)".

I am going to repeat – in 1959 we got autonomy from the SOC. What do they want now? They wanted and still want that it should be like it used to be in the past, they want to restore the situation as it was before 1941. I would like to underline that the SOC does not have the right to interfere in the diocese of our Holy Church, and even less to threaten or to strip of power anyone within the system of the MOC. Such decisions are null and void.

We settled all accounts with the SOC in 1958, and especially in 1967. Therefore, we have to conclude that all its activities have been aimed at discrediting our Holy Church, not at finding mutual understanding to overcome the imposed problem which is political. Otherwise, how are we to understand the message of Bishop



Atansije Jevtić, "When I meet at least one Macedonian on the Stone Bridge in Skopje, then we shall give Macedonia a church".

Let us not be taken in by any provocations and let us forbid spies, traitors, renegades and thieves erode our Holy Church. First of all, we must believe in our pan-Macedonian justice and truth, in our God-loving people, because if we live with God and with our faith and people, then even the most inveterate enemies shall have to accept our truth and recognize our MOC, which has been successfully active for five decades. We have to underline that there were other churches that had to wait longer than we do, but were finally recognized and that they managed to confirm their autocephaly.

I do believe that our people, in our homeland and in the diaspora as well, that our truth, our feeling, our instinct, not to say our 'fanaticism', our persistence and strength of mind for a century-long existence have always been very strong, so that the Macedonian soul and insubordination cannot be broken by anyone. We are going to make our confession only to the righteous Judge that is one of a kind – to our Savior Jesus Christ, Head of the Holy Church.

Let God wise us up and lead us on the path of salvation for our full reconciliation, unity, respect and sincere faith.

Let the God of peace and love be here with all of us, now and forever, at all times and for all eternity. Let us welcome the Feast of Feasts and the Holiest Day of all holy days - the holy Resurrection of Christ – the Easter holiday most splendidly. The care for Macedonian stable families and exemplary youth is our foundation for an all-inclusive prosperity of our homeland and of our Holy Church

Let the Easter blessing of God be with all of us and let us say very loudly, together with all heavenly hierarchy, 'Jesus Christ has risen from the dead, he has conquered death 'by death', and he has given life to those in their graves!'

Let us sing, 'Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, goodwill among men'.

CHRIST IS RISEN, HE IS RISEN INDEED!

The Monograph "Metropolitan Kiril"

SERMON OF METROPOLITAN KIRIL AT THE CHURCH OF ST. CLEMENT OF OHRID, ON PLAOSNIK, 2007 (9)

The Holy Bishops Synod of the Macedonian Orthodox Church held a session in the premises of the Macedonian Archbishopric in Skopje, on 21 June 2007. At this session, a Decision was adopted that Metropolitan Kiril of Polog and Kumanovo is to be awarded the highest church ranking recognition *"The Medal of St. Clement of Ohrid, of the first order"*. This order was introduced for the first time five years ago on the occasion of the consecration of the *Church of St. Clement of Ohrid* on Plaošnik, in Ohrid.

Metropolitan Kiril of Polog and Kumanovo officiated the solemn evening religious service, held at the Church of St. Clement of Ohrid on Plaošnik, in a joint service with archimandrite Nektarij, prior of the *Monastery of St. Naum*, archimandrite Partenij, prior of St. Bigor Monastery, assistant Dositej, monk, as well as with the clergy of the Ohrid Diocese in the presence of many believers from Macedonia and the diaspora. In his sermon, Metropolitan Kiril said:

"In the life of any man created by God, there are events that remain permanently in their memory. We are called upon, by the motherly voice of our Holy Church, to come together in our Macedonian and pan-Slavic ancient Ohrid today and tomorrow. The occasion is great and significant for all of us – the children of biblical Macedonia regardless of where we live.

These days, we all share the joy and happiness about the rare historical event of vital importance for the confirmation of our centuries-old existence in these Macedonian regions and all over the globe. This bright jubilee is a living testimony that, being biblical Macedonian people, we can live and create in full statehood and church-spiritual freedom.

Forty years have past since the great historical act when God inspired and wised us up, so that on 17 July 1967, the Holy Synod of the Macedonian Orthodox Church adopted an important Decision on the renewal of the full autocephaly of the ancient and glorious Ohrid Archbishopric, personified today as the Macedonian Orthodox Church of St. Clement.

In that way, we removed the great and hard injustice done to the Ohrid Archbishopric in 1767, when its vitally important circulation of the blood was cut off by the heterodox Ottoman authority. Starting from the fact that a countless unsuccessful attempts were made for the renewal of the normal life of our Holy Church since its abolishment



in 1767, and taking into consideration the requests of our national avantgarde clergy of 1943, 1945 and 1946 and of our God-loving orthodox people in the fatherland and the diaspora, we felt that the voice of our faithful people was the voice of God too.

That's why we listened to it! Then, beaming with joy and inspired by God and by the wisdom and the protection obtained by praying to St. Clement and St. Naum, the Ohrid-miracle workers, that are eternally living before God, the Holy Synod of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, renewed in 1958, headed by Archbishop Dositej and the most reverend metropolitans Klement, Naum and Meto dij, as well as my modest personality, in the morning, at the Church of St. Mary in Ohrid, adopted and signed the historical Decision on full renewal of the autocephaly of our Holy Church.

Immediately after that, we headed to the cathedral church of St. Sofia where the members of the highest legislative body – Bishops' Council, were waiting for us. Upon the presentation of our detailed report and the announcement of the Synod's Decision, it was welcomed with loud cheering, great delight and joy, and it was unanimously approved by all members.

This event was a call to all of the Macedonian people for a full national and spiritual reconciliation and unification. This historical Decision, announced by Archbishop Dositej, was accompanied by the tolling of the church bells of all churches and monasteries in the fatherland and in the diaspora, where the joy of the victory of the Macedonian church justice and truth was meteorically transmitted.

With this historical act, the great divine pan-national Macedonian truth began to shine which was a strong guarantee that the God-loving Macedonian people can, on a church level too, enjoy and be happy about the full church-spiritual freedom given by God, and that they can transform it into deeds that would be a confirmation of their deep Orthodoxy. In that way, we got rid of the two-century deprivation of our rights and spiritual subjugation.

We put our signatures on this historical Decision with sublime spiritual and pan-national patriotic trembling and great admiration, because we knew that this Decision was blessed by God.

At that moment, we were convinced that we were fulfilling the promises, and the holy testaments and messages of all those virtuous Macedonian sons and daughters of the church of this world and of heavenly church of Christ, the promises of all Macedonian saints, teachers, educators, and of a pleiad of fighters and supporters of national and church freedom. One thinker, inspired by God, has said, "Freedom is eternal, but it should be constantly conquered". By its renewal, we have revived our Holy Church and we have brought its splendour and soul back.

We are not going to allow the fruitful Macedonian trunk of St. Clement be cut, at any price. The Church belong to us all, and we are obliged to protect it. We should constantly watch over the freedom we have earned, and we should unselfishly upgrade it and invest in its development and growth.

If one people, one church, one state are deprived of their name, it is the same as if they were deprived of their soul, thus taking their life away. Our life and our existence are in our hands.



The name, independence and autocephaly of our Holy Church are our foundations. We have returned their dignity and honor by merciless self-sacrifice and efforts and we must not allow that they be given up to some wicked voracious appetites.

Since our Church is alive and organized, we rightfully hope that the dignitaries of the sister-orthodox churches shall be overwhelmed by love and soberness, and that in the near future we shall be sitting at a joint eucharistic dining table as really equal children before God.

This historical even helped us to experience the new resurrection of our pan-national, church spiritually living and working in our fatherland and in the diaspora.

The fruits of its creative work since 1967 onwards, through its organized life, are impressive. During a longer period, we experience a real renaissance resurgence in spite of considerable difficulties and great temptations we face.

The perseverance of the most sublime values earned for one's people as a result of the achieved freedom, requires deep wisdom, unity and responsibility, especially in time of hardships.

"The great people are always greatest in hard times, while they proved themselves to be strongest when they conquer a victory again". The full renewal of our Holy Church helped us to attain a full spiritual awakening and a real national awareness. It has played an impressive role in the diaspora on this level.

Let us thank God that we have risen like a phoenix from the ashes, once more. It is a rare occasion on behalf of all those who had moved to the divine church and on our own behalf, to express gratitude, with great respect, to our Macedonian authorities, to the esteemed international peace-making factors, and to the media for their engagement to provide news and information about the positive events and accomplishments of our Holy Church during its four-decade autocephalous life.

Gratitude to all our scientific and educational institutes and institutions. To all zealous workers, generous donors and supporters of our Holy Church. To all religion communities for their brotherly relations and cooperation related to our established church justice and truth.

Therefore, let us continue live and create devotedly, following the example of our virtue ancestors, creators of lasting works for our Holy Church, our noble people and fatherland, so that they can live and create for us and with us forever.

May our anniversary celebrations be happy and everlasting!

May God of peace and God of love be with us all, now and forever, in all times and for all eternity. May God bless and protect our Holy Church, our fatherland, and our people that love Him.

May God give lasting peace and well-being among all peace-loving and justice-loving peoples and countries all over the world.

The Monograph "Mitropitan Kiril"

ORDER OF THE FATHERLAND FOR THE CENTURY - OLD EXISTENCE (10)

The Macedonian Orthodox Church was awarded, the "Order of the Republic of Macedonia" in compliance with the Decree issued by President Branko Crvenkovski, at the cathedral Church of *St. Sophia* in Ohrid, on 10 June 2007. This highest-ranking state decoration was awarded to former president Kiro Gligorov and Boris Trajkovski posthumously.

At the solemn celebration, attended by the members of the Holy Synod, representatives of the Government and of the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia, and of a number of institutions, as well as representatives of the religious communities, of the diplomatic corps, believers and supporters of the church from Macedonia and the diaspora.

Addressing those present, President Crvenkovski, inter alia, said:

The existence of the Church is above time and history, yet the history and fate of the Church are intertwined and intrinsically tied with the history and fate of the people and of the state.

The history of our Macedonian nation is a history of hardship and suffering. It is a history of foreign rulings and dominations, history filled with negation and assimilation, enormous sacrifices and great tragedies. Our Macedonian Orthodox Church has shared the same history.

Upon its fully-fledged autocephaly in 1967, there were conditions created for free organization of the internal Church life. The Church educating institutions were restored – the Seminary and the Theological Faculty – continuing the enlightener's mission of the Ohrid School of Clement.

They have become people's spiritual schools, preparing the clergy to serve their people and God, instead of being used in defending foreign interests. This year, the Theological Faculty celebrates its 30th anniversary, 30 years of continuous affirmation of the modern Macedonian theological thought.

In 1990, the Holy Bishops Synod of published the Macedonian translation of the Holy Scripture, by which the Macedonian language has become part of the biblical languages, while the Bible has become and everlasting testimony of the existence of the Macedonian language and literacy.

The establishment of the Macedonian Church Communities in the United States of America, Canada and Australia and later in Europe has united the Macedonian



diaspora, serving as a teacher and a faithful guardian of the Macedonian national and cultural identity, especially among the younger generations. Our Church has given outstanding contribution to building bridges between the Republic of Macedonia and our emigration.

Esteemed Guests, Dear Friends,

In light of all said thus far and many other things today unmentioned, I have decided and hereby present the highest-ranking state decoration "Order of the Republic of Macedonia" to the Macedonian Orthodox Church.

Thus, on behalf of all our citizens, I pay tribute and respect to all passed and present clergy of the Macedonian Orthodox Church: Archbishops, metropolitans, priests, monks, Orthodox Christian believers, for they have all, within their possibilities and fulfilling their duties, laid a brick in the Macedonian Orthodox Church of today and its historic accomplishment. on this August occasion, I should like to remember the restorer of the Ohrid Archdiocese, His Beatitude Dositej, the first Head of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, last year marking the centennial of his birth.

Undertaking upon himself the demand of his nation for an autocephalous people's Church, standing at its helm in times of trouble, he made the decisive steps at the following events: first autonomy in 1958 and then fully-fledged autocephalous Church in 1967.

Dear Guests,

Our Church would not have been truly Macedonian if it had not shared the fate brought by all that carries the attribute of Macedonian: nation, language, identity, culture... which means to be negated, coerced, and suppressed. Regretfully, these are things that have not been entirely left to the past; and still persist.

A nation or a church cannot be invented. One can only invent the non-existent, the fictitious. And only those that tenaciously keep their eyes shut cannot see the existence of our Macedonian nation, state and church.

This Church is for the people and with its people. It has persevered because it is of the people, because it is the expression of the will of a nation that makes and wants its Church to be what it is – Macedonian.

Your Beatitude, Archbishop of Ohrid and Macedonia, Eminences Metropolitans and priest, dear believers,

To carry the trait of Macedonian is hard, yet it also brings joy and pride. Congratulating you the grand jubilee, I present my wishes that in times to come, as always throughout history, you continue bearing with pride and dignity this cross – the cross of the autocephalous Macedonian Orthodox Church.



Receiving the Order, His Beatitude Archbishop Stefan said among other things:

This decoration is an Order whose merit and joy we should experience all together – with the all children of the Macedonian Orthodox Church. It is awarded to the Macedonian Orthodox Church as an institution, but in essence, this decoration belongs to all its members, since our Church is not simply an institution, but a living organism – the body of Christ consisting of all members of the Church...

We receive and perceive this Order as a valuable contribution to the marking of the 40th anniversary of the renewal of the autocephaly of our Holy Church, but as well as a recognition for the place and activity of our Holy Church, and, generally for its role in the life of the Macedonian Orthodox people throughout during the centuries and today.

The Church, which is honored to enjoy this historical privilege, was born on the basis of the sermons of Holy Apostle Paul and the love for God of the wise Emperor Justinian; it was growing up through the deed of Holy Cyril and Methodius; it was established through the enormous archpastoral activity of St. Clement and the accomplishments of St. Num; it is guarded by the care of the numerous priests and monks that originate from our people and are chosen by God.

The Holy Bishops Synod of the Macedonian Orthodox Church held a session in the premises of the Macedonian Archbishopric in Skopje, on 21 June 2007. At this session, a Decision was adopted that Metropolitan Kiril of Polog and Kumanovo is to be awarded the highest ranking church recognition "The Medal of St. Klement of Ohrid, of the first order". This order was introduced for the first time five years ago on the occasion of the consecration of the Church of St. Klement of Ohrid in Plaošnik, in Ohrid.

SERMON OF METROPOLITAN KIRIL AT THE CHURCH OF ST. KLEMENT OF OHRID

14 July 2007

Metropolitan Kiril of Polog and Kumanovo officiated the solemn evening religious service, held at the Church of St. Clement of Ohrid on Plaošnik, in a joint service with archimandrite Nektarij, prior of the Monastery of St. Naum, archimandrite Partenij, prior of St. Bigor Monastery, assistant Dositej, monk, as well as with the clergy of the Ohrid Diocese in the presence of many believers from Macedonia and diaspora.

In his sermon, Metropolitan Kiril said:

"In the life of any man created by God, there are events that remain permanently in their memory.

We are called upon, by the motherly voice of our Holy Church, to come together in our Macedonian and pan-Slavic ancient Ohrid today and tomorrow. The



occasion is great and significant for all of us – the children of biblical Macedonia regardless of where we live. These days, we all share the joy and happiness about the rare historical event of vital importance for the confirmation of our centuries-old existence in these Macedonian regions and all over the globe. This bright jubilee is a living testimony that, being biblical Macedonian people, we can live and create in full statehood and church-spiritual freedom.

Forty years have past since the great historical act when God inspired and wised us up, so that on 17 July 1967, the Holy Synod of the Macedonian Orthodox Church adopted an important Decision on the renewal of the full autocephaly of the ancient and glorious Ohrid Archbishopric, personified today as the Macedonian Orthodox Church of St. Clement. In that way, we removed the great and hard injustice done to the Ohrid Archbishopric in 1767, when its vitally important circulation of the blood was cut off by the heterodox Ottoman authority.

Starting from the fact that a countless unsuccessful attempts were made for the renewal of the normal life of our Holy Church since its abolishment in 1767, and taking into consideration the requests of our national avantgarde clergy of 1943, 1945 and 1946 and of our God-loving orthodox people in the fatherland and the diaspora, we felt that the voice of our faithful people was the voice of God, too. That's why we listened to it!

Then, beaming with joy and inspired by God and by the wisdom and the protection obtained by praying to St. Clement and St. Naum, the Ohrid-miracle workers, that are eternally living before God, the Holy Synod of the autonomous Macedonian Orthodox Church, renewed in 1958, headed by Archbishop Dositej and the most reverend metropolitans Klement, Naum and Metodij, as well as my modest personality, in the morning, at the Church of St. Mary in Ohrid, adopted and signed the historical Decision on full renewal of the autocephaly of our Holy Church. Immediately after that, we headed to the cathedral church of St. Sofia where the members of the highest legislative body – ACN Council, were waiting for us.

Upon the presentation of our detailed report and the announcement of the Synod's Decision, it was welcomed with loud cheering, great delight and joy, and it was unanimously approved by all members. This event was a call to all of the Macedonian people for a full national and spiritual reconciliation and unification.

This historical Decision, announced by Archbishop Dositej, was accompanied by the tolling of the church bells of all churches and monasteries the fatherland and in the diaspora, where the joy of the victory of the Macedonian church justice and truth was meteorically transmitted.

With this historical act, the great divine pan-national Macedonian truth began to shine which was a strong guarantee that the God-loving Macedonian people can, on a church level too, enjoy and be happy about the full church-spiritual freedom given by God, and that they can transform it into deeds that would be a



confirmation of their deep Orthodoxy. In that way, we got rid of the two-century deprivation of our rights and spiritual subjugation.

We put our signatures on this historical Decision with sublime spiritual and pan-national patriotic trembling and great admiration, because we knew that this Decision was blessed by God. At that moment, we were convinced that we were fulfilling the promises, and the holy testaments and messages of all those virtuous Macedonian sons and daughters of the church of this world and of heavenly church of Christ, the promises of all Macedonian saints, teachers, educators, and of a pleiad of fighters and supporters of national and church freedom.

Then, we assumed a solemn and testamentary obligation that we have renewed the glory of the Ohrid Archbishopric with firm conviction that it would be always preserved and would be handed over to future generations as an expression of the fullness of our church-national Macedonian unbreakable unity.

One thinker, inspired by God, has said, „Freedom is eternal, but it should be constantly conquered“. By the renewal, we have revived our Holy Church and we have brought its splendour and soul back.

We are not going to allow the fruitful Macedonian trunk of St. Clement be cut, at any price. The Church belong to us all, and we are obliged to protect it. We should constantly watch over the freedom we have earned, and we should unselfishly upgrade it and invest in its development and growth.

If one people, one church, one state are deprived of their name, it is the same as if they were deprived of their soul, thus taking their life away. Our life and our existence are in our hands. The name, independence and autocephaly of our Holy Church are our foundations. We have returned their dignity and honor by merciless self-sacrifice and efforts and we must not allow that they be given up to some wicked voracious appetites.

Since our Church is alive and organized, we rightfully hope that the dignitaries of the sister-orthodox churches shall be overwhelmed by love and soberness, and that in near future we shall be sitting at a joint eucharistic dining table as really equal children before God.

This historical even helped us to experience the new resurrection of our pan-national, church-spiritual living and working in our fatherland and in the diaspora. The fruits of its creative work since 1967 onwards, through its organized life, are impressive. During a longer period, we experience a real renaissance resurgence in spite of considerable difficulties and great temptations we face.

The perseverance of the most sublime values earned for one's people as a result of the achieved freedom, requires deep wisdom, unity and responsibility, especially in time of hardships. "The great people are always greatest on hard times, while they proved themselves to be strongest when they conquer a victory again". The full renewal of our Holy Church helped us to attain a full spiritual awakening and a real national awareness. It has played an impressive role in the diaspora on this level.



Let us thank God that we have risen like a phoenix from the ashes, once more. It is a rare occasion on behalf of all those who had moved to the divine church and on our own behalf, to express gratitude, with great respect, to our Macedonian authorities, to the esteemed international peace-making factors, and to the media for their engagement to provide news and information about the positive events and accomplishments of our Holy Church during its four-decade autocephalous life.

Gratitude to all our scientific and educational institutes and institutions. To all zealous workers, generous donors and supporters of our Holy Church. To all religion communities for their brotherly relations and cooperation related to our established church justice and truth.

Therefore, let us continue live and create devotedly, following the example of our virtue ancestors, creators of lasting works for our Holy Church, our noble people and fatherland, so that they can live and create for us and with us forever.

Let our anniversary celebrations be happy and everlasting!

Let God of peace and God of love be with us all, now and forever, in all times and for all eternity.

Let God bless and protect our Holy Church, our fatherland, and our people that love Him.

Let God give lasting peace and well-being among all peace-loving and justice-loving peoples and countries all over the world.

His Beatitude Stefan

Archbishop of Ohrid and Macedonia

THE CHURCH-NATIONAL DEED IS GOING ON

A sermon delivered at the formal academy on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the renewal of the autocephaly of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, held in the Church of *St. Sofia* in Ohrid, on 14 July 2007

In this current year of 2007 the Macedonian Orthodox Church is marking its important anniversary. With the religious service and spiritual academy this evening, as well as with the divine liturgy to be held tomorrow morning, we celebrate, modestly and prayerfully, the event that took place 40 years ago when the renewal of the ancient autocephaly of the Ohrid Archbishopric as autocephalous Macedonian Orthodox Church was proclaimed in compliance with the Decision adopted by the Synod on 17 July which was unanimously approved by the members of the Convocation held on 18 July.

Looking at that event from the long perspective of four decades, I will assert that the members of the 1967 Synod of the Macedonian Orthodox Church and the members of the Third Convocation made a righteous decision and a decision which is pleasing to God, a patriotic and church-loving decision!



By that act they had satisfied the two-century long desire of the Macedonian Orthodox people, the desire which was present in many spiritual, national and cultural activities and events, but which was always clearly emphasized and recognizes as a desire and a need to underline and confirm diversity in unity, and unity in diversity with others, as well.

The Church is not only inseparable from the life of any people, but it does have, especially for our people, an irreplaceable – leading role. We need to look at our past, just briefly, and to see what we do possess by having it, and what we would not have possessed if we have not had it. If we leaf through our history – what would be left of it without our church history?

If we look at the ancient literature – what kind of value and permanence would it have without our church literature? If we have a good look at ancient art and architecture – what artistically valuable would we have without our church art and church architecture? And, finally, what could we have had and what could have left of us without our Holy Church?!

Precisely that Holy Church of ours, of Ohrid and Macedonia, deeply present and built-in our spiritual and Macedonian memory, is the reason for us to be aware that by having it, we have got everything, otherwise, as Pričev would say it – we would be orphans without it!

Neither birth nor death, neither baptism nor wedding ceremonies, neither joy nor sorrow, would be there for our people if they were not carried out by the Church and at Church. Our people have gone to bed with their faith in God and with their hope in their Church, and woken up as well with the same hope. And thanks to that attachment, such christianised persons among our people could be born: confessors and priests, defenders and protectors of our orthodox faith.

Because of love for this Church, many were those who resorted to fight and sacrificed themselves in order the glory and dignity of the ancient Ohrid Archbishopric be restored. The archpriests and all those who participated at the Convocation 40 years ago had the same feelings and attachment to the Mother Church.

Here tonight, but also tomorrow and in the course of this whole year, we are going to give recognition and to express our boundless appreciation precisely to their faith and to their devotion to our holy Church, but as well to all supporters of the idea for renewal of the autocephalous status of the ancient Ohrid Archbishopric.

Macedonia is a country of promoters and righteous men, a country of lovers of truth and lovers of justice – which all together make as a country of a great people! What we have gone through and withstood, let me be forgiven, only we – the Macedonians – could have managed to, and only we are able to do it. – Nine centuries without our state, nine centuries of being slaves and subjugated, nine centuries crucified, nine centuries – a whole eternity, yet still alive and still with God!



We were with God when our eyes were taken out – therefore we could see. We kept our faith and therefore even when our heads were cut off - we stood upright. We had our Church in times when we had nothing that belonged to us – therefore we survived.

And when they partitioned and displaced us – we have remained united as a people... And as soon as we got our freedom, national and statehood one – we renewed that Church of ours! And desires and longings usually come true to anyone who believes in God, who holds their hope to God till their end, and patiently confirms and calmly confesses their faith.

Past has confirmed that foreigners and enslavers had brought nothing good to us, nor done any good to us! Was it possible for us to expect that precisely those who had destroyed and abolished our Church would renew it?!

Therefore, all those who participated in the Convocation held four decades ago, listening to the voice and prayers of the people, strongly believed that time had come to correct the injustice and, in given historical moment, to adopt a real Decision by which they proved to be deserving children of their Church and farsighted followers of our famous and virtue predecessors. The question is what kind of result could have been obtained from the 1991 referendum for independent and sovereign Republic of Macedonia if we hadn't renewed our autocephalous Church?!

But, woe betide anyone and any people that look upon the Church only through the prism of history. For this reason, upon the four-decade free activity of our Holy Church, we could say that we have justified the hope and faith of those who participated in that Convocation.

The Macedonian Orthodox Church, thanks to its renewed autocephaly, is creating a new epoch in its annals, demonstrating that it is a real and irreplaceable mother to all of its children. In this period, it is not taking care only of the members of the Orthodox Church in our fatherland, but also of all those Macedonian children scattered all over the world. And our people are our strongest guarantee that we are on the right path. That people of ours have always known and know to judge whether we, as pastors, are walking along the right or wrong way. And that people have known and know how to praise and to reprimand!

His Beatitude

Archbishop Stefan of Ohrid and Macedonia

Stefan

Arhiepiskop Ohridski i Makedonski



GRATITUDE TO THE AUTHOR

On this occasion I would like to underline that the acquaintance, cooperation and friendship with Slave Nikolovski – Katin have dated back to 1969 when I was enthroned Metropolitan of the American-Canadian-Macedonian Orthodox Diocese, in the church of St. Clement of Ohrid in cosmopolitan city of Toronto, Canada. From then onwards, I have been following, with close attention, his fruitful and successful creative activity for which I have expressed my approval on many occasions.

His works have been constantly a subject of analyses and observations of many scientific, cultural and social workers, whose judgement and opinions classify him among the most distinguished experts in many fields, especially in the phenomenon of the Macedonians in the diaspora.

I am grateful to author Slave Nikolovski-Katin, from my soul and heart, for his engagement on this monography on my life path of this world. This work was his challenge that required knowledge, skill, efforts, self-sacrifice, patience and time. However, all that is positive in regard to my personality I owe to the avantgarde clergy with whom I have been working for four decades, and to the Macedonian people in Macedonia and in the diaspora.

In addition, I owe a debt of gratitude to many leaders, national-spiritual enlighteners and other persons, gifted by God, together with whom we have created our deeds during the four-decade activity, friendship, creation and living together. This book presents a part of the comprehensive national-spiritual, church and cultural-educational existence of our brothers and sisters by blood – the Macedonians who have decided to live in democratic states blessed by God – in Australia, Canada and in the USA.

Therefore, with most sincere brotherly feelings of utmost respect filled with prayer, we wish our great creator and writer of so many books in this field, Slave Nikolovski-Katin, that God gives him a life lasting many decades, that he follows the blessing of God in good health during all days of his life, and that he creates many other books similar to this one.

Kiril,

Metropolitan of Polog and Kumanovo

August, 2007

The Monograph "Metropolitan Kiril"



*PART FIVE -
THE RELIGION OF THE
MACEDONIANS*



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THE RELIGION IN ANCIENT MACEDONIA (I)

With its ancient and with millennial-long history, Macedonia is the pride, joy and sorrow, dream and reality of every Macedonian. Its geographic location makes it the crossroads of various civilizations, religions, traditions, and customs. It is no coincidence that the paths of many tradesmen and caravans passed here, and for many military expeditions, armies, winners and losers it was the battleground for many centuries. It means that every stone, every lump of black earth, every river and mountain speak of the turbulent history of Macedonia. Even today, Macedonia continues hiding in itself many secrets from the past, which will probably be a challenge for future generations.

About the historical development of Macedonia from ancient time up today, a large number of both foreign and domestic authors have written from ancient times up to the present. Some authors have tried to distort the Macedonian story, while others have presented the historical facts about Macedonia and the Macedonian people too easily. Macedonia has been a country of turmoil, but also a country of beauty and mystery where the strong survived war, famine, conquerors, insults and empires; preserving their name at the same time.

Macedonia is a Holy and Biblical land. Since the glorious times of Philip and Alexander of Macedonia, during the reign of Rome, the Byzantines and the great migrations of the Slavs to the south, During this long and rich period only two nations, two peoples have chosen the name of this country as an integral part of their identity – the ancient Macedonians and the present-day Macedonians..

In the rich history of Europe, it is hard to find a people like the Macedonian one who suffered so many upheavals during their national establishment. It is hard to find another people in the world who had so turbulent history, as well. Every single storm struck them. There was no war that failed to strike them. Each misfortune that took place in those areas put Macedonia in the very center, while the Macedonians received the first blows. Following their destiny in the last thirteen centuries, it could be said that destiny was history to many peoples, while for the Macedonians, history was their destiny.

Religion had an important role not only in the private and public life of the Argaed Royal house but also in the general Macedonian population, which was preserved in tradition.

Macedonian tribes, together with their fellow Eolean tribesmen originating from the huge family of Boreans and Hyperboreans, left their original



Pannonian fatherland and migrated south to where ecological conditions were just right during the Neolithic Period. In the process they brought with them their antropomorphological polylatry of the Pannonian gods. In the previous linguistic, prehistoric and mythological investigations (Škokljević, A. and Škokljević I., 1996 and 1997) it was established that the names that exist in the hydrological system of the Middle Danube Basin in Pannonia are an allegory of the entire mythological system of Homer and Hesiod's "*Theogony*" and "*Cosmogony*" respectively of the Olympic pantheon gods.

The Macedonians and the Aeolians raised their hydrological gods virtually to the highest mountain which they named Olympus; meaning "highly praised" in Macedonian. In addition they built luxurious palaces in the clouds over Mount Olympus and provided them with the best food, nectar and ambrosia in order for the gods to become immortal. From these heights Zeus (or Dias), father of all gods, along with his family of Olympian gods confidently ruled the world. Included among the Olympian gods were Hades, Hera, Poseidon, Ares, Hephaestus, Apollo, Artemis, Aphrodite, Demeter, Hestia and Hermes. Besides these gods there were lesser gods such as Helios, Eos, Leto, Dionysos and others.

Zeus, from his perch on top of Olympus, could see everything, know everything and do everything including hurling lightning bolts, causing snow to fall and raising storms and winds.

Because of their belief in these gods, the Macedonians considered the entire mountain region, between the River Bistritsa (Haliakmon) and the Thracian Gulf in Pieria, to be holy. Macedonians dedicated many of their cities to the gods.

This included the city Dion dedicated to Dias, Petra dedicated to Poseidon, the city Heracleon dedicated to Hera and the city of Pition dedicated to the Apollonian priestess of Delphi. Pieria was also considered important in regard to this because of the mythological kings such as Makedon, Pier, the Pieridites, Egeus and Orpheus who were buried in Pieria.

Cities in other regions of Macedonia were also dedicated to the gods. For example Heraclea (Hera's glory) in Pelagonia was built to honour the goddess Hera. And so were Edonia in Apollonia and Apollonia in Chalcidice. According to what we know from Homer and Hesiod, no other people in the Balkans were as dedicated to religion as were the early Macedonians.

Religion in Macedonia was a cultural, philosophical and historiographic manifestation of the human spirit. It was based on the primordial Lepenski Vir culture and on the mythological content of the onomasiology of the hydrological system in Pannonia. This religion is without a doubt the most sacred and no rival among the world's religions comes close. This is yet another great Macedonian contribution to world civilization.



Regarding the religion practiced in Macedonia, Papastavrou (1972, 496) emphasized that “the religious element of the Olympian gods was imported to Macedonia from Elada during the reign of the Antigonid Dynasty which began with Antigonus Gonatas in 277/6 B.C.”

Papastavrou also hinted that the Macedonians received their polilatro from the following gods: “Favlo (**FauloS**) god of war, goddess Giga (**Guga**) protector of the court, Gazorija (**Gazorja**) goddess of hunting, Zeirena (**Zeirene**) goddess of beauty, Xanth (**Xanthos**) god of light, Tatoe (**Tatoes**) god of dreaming, Daron (**Darwn**) god of health, Areto (**Aretos**) god of strength and power, and Vedi (**Bedu**) goddess of wind, water and protector of the city Edessa.”

Contrary to Papastavrou’s claims, it can be proven historically and through archaeological findings that these gods were present in the lives of Macedonians much earlier than the reign of the Antigonid Dynasty. The city Dion in Pieria dedicated to god Dias, for example, was built by the Macedonian king Achelaus I (413-399 B.C.) in the 5th century B.C. The city Petra, also in Pieria, was dedicated to the god “Poseidon of Petra” of the Diminian culture (5630-4450 B.C.), which belongs to the halkolitic period, was also built by the Macedonians and Aeolians of Pannonia. These cities were not built by the Elini who arrived in Ftiotida as Achaeans around 1400 B.C. or the Dorians who arrived in the region in 1124 B.C.

Evidence, according to Pausanias’s (IX, 30.6) testimonies, suggests that there were numerous monuments in Pieria, such as statues of the Muses and of Orpheus, built there much earlier than they appeared in Elada.

If Orpheus was a disciple of the Argonauts and took part in their expedition in 1225 B.C., according to Eratosthenes, then it follows that the Macedonians did not get their religion from the Hellenic Olympians in the 3rd century B.C., but rather created their own religion which originated even before the Hellenes had arrived in Elada.

According to Thompson (1954, 179), the goddess Athena does not have Hellenic origins. The linguist Mpampinioti (1996, 62) also confirms Athena’s non-Hellenic onomastics. The word “Athena” means “immortal” (where thanatos means death).

Athena was a Pelazgian goddess. The Pelazgians were the original autochthonous inhabitants of the city Athens in Boeotia. Athena came to Boeotia from the north of Thessaly where she was honoured as “Athena of Itonia”. The Aeolians who lived there were descendants of the Minian culture from the Danube Region.

This region later became part of Solun. Here, far way from the Hellenes, Dionysius, “god of Nisa (Niš)”, before the second half of the second millennium B.C., decorated with wreaths of vine and bay leaves and accompanied by his tutor and educator Silen, set off to tour the world.



After touring Thrace and after his incident with Thracian king Likurg, Dionysius went to Kisos where he left a great impression of himself. Since then the citizens of Kisos honoured him as a god, as "Dionysius of Kisos" by throwing festivities in honour of his name. Religious service was carried out by the priestess Teana, daughter of the king of Kisos.

A plant called kisos (bršlen) (evergreen vine) was dedicated to Dionysius because this plant grew abundantly in Kisos. Participants of the Bacchus mysteries and banquets called "kisofoři" were often decorated with wreaths of ivy wrapped around their heads

When king Midas (a mythological king), who owned huge vineyards and produced excellent wine in Macedonia, found out that Dionysius was on tour, accompanied by his teacher Silen, he invited Silen to visit him and teach him the secrets of Dionysius's wisdom.

Midas was already familiar with Orpheus's divine secrets. Silen accepted the invitation and initiated Midas into the "Dionysian Mysteries". This proves that the "Dionysian Mysteries" were first introduced in Macedonia during mythological times, long before ancient times.

According to the Macedonian Dynastic genealogy we have shown that Makedon was Zeus's son. At that time the first king of Athens was Erihton (from the words "erion" meaning fleece or wool and from the word "hton" meaning earth) who emerged from the earth. Erihton was a native Pelazgian (Thomson, 1954, 181). From what we stated above it is clear that mythology and religion, as was understood by the Macedonians (barbarians) at that time, did not come from the south, the Hellenes, the beautiful river "Muses", or during the rule of the 3rd century B.C. Antigonid Dynasty.

The mythology and religion described above first began in Macedonia and then flowed southward to Elada. Furthermore the Divine Pantheon of the time was not located in Parnas, Helikon, or Tayget It was located on the highest mountain in Macedonia, on "Holy Mountain" in Pieria where the thesauri and vaults of the kings were located.

Goddess Leto the Hyperborean, one of Zeus's wives, together with the goddess Eletia arrived in Elada from the north, from Hypeborea located north of the Balkans. They came to assist with the delivery of the twins Apollo and Artemis. Apollo and Artemis spent their childhood in Hyperborea among fellow citizens (Hesiod, Teog., 404 and Herodotus, IV, 32) in order to impart their divine culture to the Hellenes.

Let us call on the words of Hesiod (Teog., 27-28) to sum up the stories about religion in Macedonia: "We know how to tell many lies that are similar to the truth. But, when we want, we also know how to convey the plain truth."

The Author

CHRISTIANITY – THE RELIGION OF THE MACEDONIANS (2)

Macedonia the land of Gojko Jakovleski, alias Gojko Delchev Rafkin – Goce Makedonski occupies a central part of the Balkan Peninsula and has an extremely advantageous position at the conjunction of important roads and highways.

The country is open along the valleys of the Vardar and the Struma to the Aegean Sea, itself a part of the Mediterranean. In the past the *Via Egnatia*, the most important of all the Balkan Peninsular highways, from Durazzo via Elbasan, Ohrid and Bitola to Thessaloniki and Constantinople stretched across Macedonia.

This geographical position placed Macedonia at the crossroad of East and West. All military expeditions were obliged to cross it, and it was the bridge over which passed the developing trade of the time and, together with it, a variety of cultural, religious and other influences. Macedonia was one of the first regions to be touched by Christianity. It was also one of the first areas to receive the Christian faith and it was through it that Christianity spread to the West.

Otherwise, starting from the ancient period up to now Macedonia is and will be the place where different civilizations and religions have intersected. Thus, Christianity appeared many centuries ago in these Balkan areas, that is, from the time when Paul the Apostle came to Macedonia. It is mentioned as a land at several points also in the Bible.

And, if we throw a historical glance starting from the ancient times of Alexander the Great, through to the Roman and Byzantine times, through the great migrations of the Slav people to the south, and than during the Ottoman period, Macedonia was a crossroads of nations, civilizations, cultures, languages and religions.

Through this long and important period of time, only two nations chose the name of this land as a part of their identity – the Ancient Macedonians and the Macedonians today.

Christianity is a monotheistic religion based on the life, teachings and deeds of Jesus Christ, as recounted in the New Testament. Having 2.5 billion believers, Christianity is the largest religion in the world. Originally Christianity is akin to Judaism, with which it shares much sacred texts and early history. The



Hebrew Bible, known in Christian doctrine as the Old Testament is common both religions. Christianity is considered an Abrahamic religion, along with Judaism and Islam.

Christianity is the largest and most important religion in the Republic of Macedonia with approximately 65% believers of the entire population. Of the total Christian population, about 95% belong to the Orthodox Christians, 3% are Protestants, while 1.2% are Catholic Christians. First to preach the gospel in Macedonia was the apostle Paul, where the first Christian communities and churches were founded at the time. According to the New Testament, the first resident of Macedonia to adopt Christianity was St. Lydia Macedonian.

It should be noted that according to tradition the formation of the Ohrid Archbishopric - as the successor of the Archdiocese of Justiniana Prima along with its missionaries, the brothers Cyril and Methodius of Thessalonica, St. Clement of Ohrid, and St. Naum of Ohrid - has played the biggest role in the Christianization of the population in the Republic of Macedonia and in the Macedonian Diaspora.

At the time of Tsar Samuel, the Ohrid church was raised to the rank of Patriarchate, and in 1767 it was abolished. At the end of World War II, the Macedonian Orthodox Church was founded as a successor of the Ohrid Archbishopric.

In addition, the invention of the first alphabet by Cyril (Constantine) of Thessaloniki, a man famed for his rare learning at that time, was a historical watershed for all the Slav peoples. The alphabet itself and the first translations of the liturgical books marked the term of the three languages theory and the introduction of the Slav language into the ranks of the civilized language, Latin, Greek and Hebrew, and from then the word of God was spread in Slavonic, so people began to write in the Slavonic alphabet and in the Slav language.

Inevitably, the creation of a Slav alphabet was of prime importance for the Macedonian people. First and foremost because the brothers Constantine (whose monastic name was Cyril) and Methodius were from Thessaloniki, in Macedonia, and yet more especially because the first books written in Slavonic were in the language of the Macedonina Slavs. Evidently, Constantine and Methodius could not use any language other than that of the Slavs who lived in their birthplace, Thessaloniki.

The arrival of St. Clement of Ohrid in Macedonia is also of a great importance for the first Slavonic alphabet, because the moment of destiny had come when the Macedonian Slavs found themselves able to be educated by their own teachers in their mother tongue. In addition to other missionary activity, in a period of only seven years, three thousand and five hundred students passed through Clement's university.

This was a true renaissance of the Macedonian Slavs. Here they were not merely confirmed in the Macedonian faith but even received a varied higher



education since, in addition to theology, a whole series of other subjects was taught at Clement's university including preaching in Slavonic, singing, civil and ecclesiastical history, natural science, philosophy, medicine and languages.

However, the most important thing was that the work of translation carried on here, together with transcription, constituted an entire literary school.

Ohrid became the centre from which Slav literacy and literature spread to all the Slav peoples. At the same time Ohrid became a true center of Christianity – "The Slav Jerusalem" as it is still known today.

The arrival of Sr.Naum of Ohrid in Macedonia as a replacement for Clement of Ohrid in the schools throughout Macedonia created the conditions for Clement to devote himself entirely to the organisation of the church and to literary work. Actually, Clement and Naum united once again, continued the work of their teachers yet more vigorously.

The death of St.Clement on July 16, 916 was a great misfortune for the nation. However, numerous disciples continued the work of Clement and Naum, headed by the church whose foundations had been laid by Clement of Ohrid. This period was characterised by a growth of monasticism, as well as extensive building of churches and monasteries throughout Macedonia.

There is insufficient information available about church affairs during the period from the death of St.Clement of Ohrid to the creation of the Archbishopric of Ohrid – the Patriarchate. However, the coronation of Samuil was connected with the proclamation of an southomous church with its seat at the capital of Prespa where ecclesiastical activity was more developed than elsewhere in Samuil's empire. The center of religious life till the proclamation of Samuil as Emperor had been on the island of Achill in Lake Prespa.

At the opening of the XI century Samuil transferred his capital from Prespa to Ohrid where the remains of Samuil's fortress are still to be seen. Naturally the seat of the Archbishopric was moved at the same time as the capital was transferred and the Archbishopric remained in the same place until the abolition in 1767. Here, once the patriarchate had been proclaimed, Samuil was anointed Emperor by the first Patriarch of Ohrid.

The Author

CENTURIES - OLD CHRISTIAN PROCESS IN MACEDONIA (3)

During the last few decades, the Macedonian Orthodox Church (MOC) has been, is, and most probably will be the topic of discussions, polemics, arguments, even attacks by the church institutions of the neighboring countries and wider, who are trying to prevent and postpone its entry into the family of the equal church organization of orthodoxy. At the same time there are attempts to dispute the historical canonical foundations of the entire life of the Macedonian Orthodox Church.

A large part of the propaganda and media machinery has been engaged in the pressures, isolation, and negation of the MOC and its legitimate existence. Its aim is to distort and suppress historical facts from the past and present, which is done in order to bring into question the basic characteristics of the Macedonian Orthodox people, its church institution, and its truth as a people that has existed for centuries, which has retained orthodoxy and for almost six hundred years has its own sovereign and independent state – the Republic of Macedonia.

At the same time, it seems that certain circles and individuals of the orthodox churches in the neighboring countries have forgotten how they achieved independence and the right to their own national church. They suppress the eight century old existence of the Ohrid Archbishop, whose essential nucleus from its establishment until its illegal abolishment represented Christians from every part of Macedonia.

They suppress the centuries-old activities of the Macedonians during the 19th and 20th centuries for renewal of the Ohrid Archbishop, which means a denial of the continuity of this institution within the Macedonian Orthodox Church as legitimate representative of all orthodox believers in Macedonia and the entire Macedonian people in the Diaspora.

It is a fact that even after international recognition of the Republic of Macedonia and its membership in the UN organizations, the autocephaly of the Macedonian church continues to be negated. This can be seen as an attack upon the Christianity of the Macedonian people.

Therefore, it is necessary to point out – together with the historical truth of the Macedonian people – the canonical and historical foundations of the



Macedonian Orthodox Church, and its continuity as part of the world cultural treasury.

For more than a millennium, the Macedonian Orthodox Church, as the Ohrid archbishop, has lived spiritually through its protector, St. Clement of Ohrid. During the 9th century he opened the ways for cultural rebirth of the Macedonian Slavs whose Christian beginnings relate to the missionary work of St. Apostle Paul.

The work of the Salonika brothers, Saints Cyril and Methodius, and their achievements have been strengthened and many times multiplied by their most distinguished disciples St. Clement and St. Naum in Macedonia, in their churches and schools on the coast of the Lake Ohrid. Literacy, based on the language of southern Morava, and the books translated to the first all Slavic literary tongue, were saviors to the entire Slavic people, and European culture in general. St. Clement of Ohrid was elected first Slavic episcop, while his Velicka eparchy in Macedonia is the spiritual Christian foundation on which Macedonian Slavs could build their church hierarchy.

Thus, with a spiritual school in Ohrid, and 3,500 disciples – students, St. Clement of Ohrid educated people in Macedonia and the wider region. Toward the end of the 10th century even the Russians were converted with his holy books in Cyrillic.

Tzar Samoil built his empire on Macedonian land, with capitals in Prespa and Ohrid, relying mainly on the Macedonian Slavic ethos in organizing his spiritual and autocephalous church organization. For almost two centuries the great diocese of the Ohrid archbishopate, inherited from the time of Samoil, was retained within the boundaries of the Byzantine Empire.

During the Byzantine Empire, and under Bulgarian and Serbian rule in the 13th and 14th centuries, the Archbishopate of Ohrid enjoyed the reputation of one of the leading and oldest Orthodox Church institutions in the Balkans. Even the learned archbishops of Ohrid, Greek by descent, showed great respect for the missionary work of St. Clement and St. Naum, and toward their teachers, St. Cyril and St. Methodius.

Their monasteries on the coast of Lake Ohrid were considered to be the greatest shrines of the archiepiscopal city because the relics of these saints and teachers rested here. Traditions of the founders of the Ohrid church were also nurtured here. Hence, the archbishops of Ohrid left behind inspiring pages devoted to St. Clement of Ohrid, praising him as their own spiritual father.

During the middle ages and the Ottoman Empire the Macedonians expressed their spiritual and intellectual potentials through the activities of the Ohrid archbishopate.



The nurturing of church literature, architecture, and every kind of applied art related to iconography and liturgy, has been highly evaluated by world scholars. This is proof that works of the highest artistic level were created in Macedonia at the time, which not only enriched Macedonian, but the world treasury of art and culture, too.

The centuries-old Christian life of the Macedonians, from the time of St. Clement through the long history of the Ohrid archiepiscopate, until the time of its rebirth in the 19th century, all contributed toward the creation of art masterpieces with a universal significance, with exceptional esthetic value and deep humanistic message.

Thus, important works of art, the pride of the human race, were created in the churches and monasteries in Macedonia. The icons in Ohrid, frescoes in St. Sofia, Nerezi, Kurbinovo and Nagoricani, the architecture, constructors, and works of applied art, are included in every anthology of important works of the time. These works illustrate the original characteristics and features related to Macedonian cultural tradition and signify a huge contribution to Slavic-Byzantine cultural and spiritual relations.

Macedonia is the cradle of the iconography of Slavic teachers and the presence of several hundred portraits of St. Clement and his contemporaries. This is evidence enough of the cultural continuity of Macedonian tradition since the oldest of times. The question that emerges is this: Why is not the presence of these saint apostles of Slavic literacy not so emphasized in other peoples as it is in Macedonia? The answer would be, because their work took place among the Macedonian Slavs, and because their work survived due to their life and belief throughout the centuries.

Macedonian spiritual space was never shut. Instead, orthodox spiritualists, writers, and artists, always followed noble humanistic currents which were founded on Christ's learning and on the traditions of St. Clement's church. Specific occurrences in the history of Macedonian culture include ornamental decorations as well as Glagolic and Cyrillic inscriptions from the Ohrid School, made in Kratovo and Slepche in the period 10th – 16th century.

Many Macedonian artists gave their contributions to the neighboring Balkan peoples. For instance, Christopher Zhefarovitch from Doiran, was the most distinguished artist in the development of art in Serbia during the 18th century, while the great builder, Andreja Damjanov from the Veles area, was invited throughout the Balkans to carry out the most sophisticated church constructions. The Mijacki wood-carvers also enjoyed the reputation of leading masters in the Balkans for quite a long time.

A specific construction and art culture was established in Macedonia even after the Ohrid archiepiscopate was abolished, particularly during the struggle of church-school communities to have services in the church-Slavic tongue.



During this, in every part of Macedonia hundreds of churches were built of Macedonian stone, of Macedonian timber, with Macedonian tiles, with a Macedonian heart and soul. Most often, these churches have monumental dimensions and a basilical form to remind of the greatness of the old church glory.

The renaissance period in Macedonia brought a specific iconography, with special emphasis on Slavic Macedonian saints, their hagiographies, and Slavic literacy in the Balkans.

All of the above is evidence of the great contribution of the Macedonians in the cultural and spiritual growth of orthodoxy in the Balkan and world artistic treasure. For this reason, the Macedonian Orthodox Church and the Macedonian people express their concern over the allegedly special rights of certain neighboring orthodox churches to the ancient Macedonian Christian shrines.

It is impossible to understand how the works of the builders, painters, carvers and writers of church books, created for centuries in the past on Macedonian ground, could be declared as non-Macedonian. It is surprising that the church founders and donations of Feudal rulers in the course of the 14th century, restoration and adaptation of older churches during the early Christian, Slavic, and Byzantine period, are also declared as foreign.

They have forgotten that the old church-founder principles of donating symbolize deep respect and prayer of the gift-givers toward the old Macedonian shrines, and respect for the holy traditions of the Ohrid archiepiscopate.

We need to emphasize that the donation to a church does not represent the property of the church but a prayer for the salvation of the donator. The principle of church-founding as gift to the Ohrid archiepiscopate as well as other churches represents a worship and not feudal ownership for the amateur masters of the Middle Ages.

Christian works in Macedonia are the works of its builders and painters; every Macedonian citizen is their owner, while every well-intending person worships their spiritual and artistic value – everyone who believes in the human values of faith, love, and peace among all people. Church monuments in Macedonia truly were holy places for bringing together Christians from every Balkan country and the world.

For this reason, the Macedonians now protect them using the most modern scientific methods, guard them and care for these structures which are constantly open and accessible to the world, while craftsmen and donators communicated through these structures in accordance with their spiritual virtues.

Macedonians have never treated the works of our creators in other countries as our possession, but rather as a natural circulation of cultural values and good religious relations among Christians and other believers.

Macedonians built spiritual and cultural shrines with a strong will, love, and faith toward orthodoxy. In order to survive in this Balkan environment, for



about ten centuries the orthodox people in Macedonia helped each other with the other nations in the Balkans and the wider region. Offering each other a Christian hand helped them survive slavery, assimilation, persecution, and injustice. The Macedonian survived and will survive for as long as the world keeps turning and the Sun keeps shining because the Macedonian nation is biblical, with a great Christian soul, faith, hope, and love for its church.

Macedonian people - regardless of which part of Macedonia they came from and established a home in the countries across the oceans and in other European countries, as well as other distant parts of the world - represent an inseparably significant part of the entire mosaic of Macedonian truth.

The bond that the Macedonians in the Diaspora maintain with their native land, Macedonia, is constant, sincere, humane, nostalgic, and Macedonian. The bridges they build between the Republic of Macedonia and their second homeland are two-way, fruitful, open, and very important in the overall life and work between the people and the countries.

By all means, the Macedonian churches and church communities in the Diaspora are among the most significant, long lasting and many sided nurturers and maintainers of the Macedonian spiritual wealth of Macedonian tradition, of the cultural and historical heritage, and of all that is Macedonian.

The church - as the most significant, and in many ways characteristic institution of the Macedonians in the Diaspora - fulfills a very noble spiritual and national mission. This is especially emphasized in the countries across the ocean and the European countries, where the church has a special role and significance in the Macedonian communities. The national and religious is maintained with great passion, and the life of the Macedonian language, tradition, customs, and folklore is nurtured at these all-Macedonian centres.

The Author

A RELIGIOUS PICTURE OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA (4)

From the glorious times of Alexander the Great (Alexander the Macedon), through Roman and Byzantine rules, through Ottoman and other rules, as well as the partitions, Macedonia has been at a crossroads of civilizations, cultures, languages and peoples. Throughout this long and rich passage of time, only two peoples have chosen the name of this land to be inseparable of their identity – the Ancient Macedonians and the Macedonians of today. Macedonia is a historical and geographical area whose name originates from the classical period. It is mentioned as a land at several points in the Bible.

Therefore many travel writers have experienced Macedonia as a biblical country. Macedonia was a place where different civilizations and religions came into contact.

Therefore, the Christianity emerged here very early. This is stated by a number of archaeological discoveries of numerous Christian churches and episcopal cathedrals. Christianity has deeply rooted and well organized in Macedonia since the very beginning.

Actually the Christianity penetrated into Macedonia in the apostolic time, preached firstly by the Holy Apostle Paul in Philippi and Thessalonika (Solun), and from these centers it is spreader to the northwest. The Roman municipal town Stobi, situated at the outset of Erigon (Crna Reka) into Axios (Vardar), near the main road from Aegeium to the north, connected also with the Adriatic Sea by Via Egnatia through Heraclea (near Bitola), was an important administrative and ecclesiastic center.

Before the comings of the Turks in the late 14th century, Macedonia was a land of renaissance, of fascinating art, of rich medieval literature, a symbol of civilization. The Ottoman Turks would push back the movements of time and a long struggle for survival would ensue. The Macedonian people would be under the Turkish rule to the beginning of the 20th century, to 1912, when Macedonia would mark the liberation from the Turkish rule, yet it would also mark its tragic partition by Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia, and later Albania.

However, during World War II, the Macedonians achieved freedom, and at that time in one part of their territory, Vardar Macedonia, which would constitute the People's Republic of Macedonia, later Socialist Republic of Macedonia and since 1991 the Republic of Macedonia. After centuries of subjugation, a people were to treat firmly on to the scene of the 20th century.



The Macedonian language would culminate the process of standardization and becoming one of the official languages of the Former Yugoslavia. A literature would flourish and would attract the attention of the European and the world literary scene. Yet in the parts of Macedonia still within the territories of Greece and Bulgaria, a continuous denial of Macedonian identity, language and culture would still be the dominant attitude.

Massive migration, marking one of the greatest exoduses of the 20th century would follow, which would disperse the Macedonians throughout the world – from Anatolia to Austria, from the countries of Eastern Europe to Uzbekistan, from Germany and Sweden to Canada, the USA and Australia.

The date of 1994 Census of the population, households, dwellings and agricultural holding in the Republic of Macedonia, were prepared and realized by the Republic Statistical Office, and the Census Commission, with international experts and foreign financial support of the European Commission through PHARE Program and the European Council. The Census was performed in the presence of the International census observing commission, and the results of the population and religion belonging are as follows:

	Total	Orthodox	Catholics	Protestants	Moslems	Atheists
Macedonians	1.295.965	94.8	0.3	0.1	1.2	1.3
Albanians	433.013	0.0	0.2	0.0	98.2	-
Turks	75.212	-	-	-	97.9	0.1
Roma	43.707	1.8	-	0.1	91.6	0.1
Serbs	40.228	95.6	0.1	-	0.3	1.1
Moslems	15.418	-	-	-	98.0	0.1
Total	1.935.034	66.3	0.4	0.1	30.0	0.3

(The total population is slightly lower than the official total population of the country for about 10.000 inhabitants, because the non-enumerated population of the municipality of Debar (the town is near Macedonian-Albanian border) is excluded. No estimation has been made for that population, according to the mother tongue, religious affiliation, and citizenship. It should be also mentioned that the data of 1991 Census about the confessional membership of the population in Macedonia are approximate, because some of the Albanian population in Macedonia which is almost Islamic, guided by their nationalistic parties, abstained from the official Census. However, according to the data of 1944 Census of the nationality, 433.013, or 22.66% of the population in the Republic of Macedonia is Albanians.)



In the Republic of Macedonia legally exist and act 25 churches, religious communities and religious groups, out of which the Macedonian Orthodox Church is the oldest, the biggest and the most numerous one. This is due to the number of believers (1.355.415), the religious objects (more that 2.000, churches, monasteries and other projects, as well as about a hundred churches and church communities, in Australia, The USA, Canada, the European Union and other countries. The Islamic community and the Catholic Church are also numerous, the Jewish community is one of the oldest, and the Protestant churches and some other small religious groups are present in Macedonia.

Lately, especially after the democratic elections in the Republic of Macedonia, greater presence and strengthening of the so-called small religious communities and small religious groups is presented. The greatest numbers of the religious communities are the Protestant churches, but there are also religious communities of Muslim and Indy religion.

The following churches, religious communities and religious groups exist and are registered in the Republic of Macedonia:

- 1. Macedonian Orthodox Church**
- 2. Catholic Church**
- 3. Islamic Religious Community**
- 4. Jewish community**
- 5. Evangelical-Methodist Church**
- 6. Christian-Adventist Church-The Seventh Day Adventists**
- 7. The Head Office of the Main Board of the Christian-Adventists Church**
- 8. Baptist Church**
- 9. Christian Community of the Jehovah's Witnesses**
- 10. Evangelical Congreshian Church**
- 11. Islamic Taricates Religious Community**
- 12. New Apostolic Church**
- 13. Satya Sai Baba Center**
- 14. Evangelical Church**
- 15. Vishna Religious Community**
- 16. Pra-Christian Community-Universal Life**
- 17. Christian Pentecostal Church**
- 18. The Church of God**
- 19. The Christian Religious Group- New Life**
- 20. Bectash Community**



- 21. The Christian Church-Sermon of Hope**
- 22. The Religious Group Christian Church-Voice of God**
- 23. The International Church of Christ**
- 24. Independent Church of Christ**
- 25. The Church of Christ –Mild News**

Macedonia is a religious pluralistic country, where side by side with the Macedonian Orthodox Church; there coexist other Christian confessions, Islam, and Judaism. In the period from 1945- 1991, the religion in Macedonia was formally allowed to some extent, but it was always under control, while after 1991, the religious communities gained their total freedom.

In that period the religious liberty in the Republic of Macedonia, as well as in other republics of Yugoslavia differed comparing with the other Eastern European socialist. However, changes that have taken place in the Eastern and Western parts of the world, with the liberation from the political oppression, liberty of conscience and religion, freedom, integration processes and other church contacts are now reality not only in Macedonia, but also in other countries.

After the democratic election on September 8, 1991, and after bringing of the new Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, the religious life and the religious freedom got a constitutional basis of existing and acting. Thus, according to the Article 19 of the Constitution: "The freedom of the religious confession is guaranteed and the right to express one's faith freely and publicly, individually or with others is guaranteed.

It is also written in the Constitution that the Macedonian Orthodox Church and other religious communities and groups in the Republic of Macedonia are separate from the state and equal before the law. Also, the Macedonian Orthodox Church and other religious communities and groups are free to establish schools and other social and charitable institutions, by a way of a procedure regulated by a law.

There is an interconfessional coexisting and collaboration among the Christian churches in the state. Thus, the Holy Synod of the Macedonian Orthodox Church maintains good relations with all Christian churches and other religious communities. This is especially realized in the joint work of version of the Macedonian translation of the Bible. The translation of the New Testament into the standardized literary Macedonian language began immediately after the World War II, and appeared in 1951, published by the British and Foreign Bible Society. In 1990 the whole Bible was printed also in Macedonian language by the British and Foreign Bible Society.



A new revised edition of the Bible is expected to come out this year. According to the data of the 1994 Census of the Populations, Households, Dwellings and Agricultural Holdings in the Republic of Macedonia,¹ prepared and realized by the Statistical Office and the Census Commission, with international experts and the financial support of the European Commission through the PHARE program and the European Council, and in the presence of the International Census Observing Commission, the results confessional belonging are as follows.

From the total population of 1,935,0342, 1,884,031 had declared their religion as being the following:

- 1. Orthodox 1,283,689 or 66,3%**
- 2. Moslem 581,203 or 30,0%**
- 3. Catholic 7,405 or 0,4%**
- 4. Protestant 1,215 or 0,1%**
- 5. Jewish 288 or 0,0%**
- 6. Atheist 5,641 or 0,3%**
- 7. Other religion 2,786 or 0,2%**
- 8. Unknown 1,804 or 1,1%**
- 9. Christian 28,400 or 4,9%**

In the Republic of Macedonia 19 (nineteen) churches, religious communities and religious groups legally exist and act of which the Macedonian Orthodox Church predominates. This is due to the number of worshippers (1,355,415, with seven dioceses in Macedonia), religious structures (about 1,700 churches, monasteries and other structure), as well as about 70 churches and church communities in three dioceses, one in Australia, one in the USA and Canada and one in the West-European countries).

The Islamic community and that of the Catholic church is also numerous, the Jewish community is one of the oldest in Macedonia, then the Protestant church and some other small religious communities and groups are present in the state.

Lately, especially after the democratic elections in the Republic of Macedonia, there has been a greater presence and strengthening of the religious communities and small religious groups. The most numerous are the religious communities of the Protestant church but there are also religious communities of the Moslem and Indy religion. Due to:

1. The data of the 1991 Census about the confessional membership of the population in Macedonia are approximate, because some of the



Albanian population in Macedonia, which is almost wholly Islamic, guided by their nationalistic parties, abstained from the official Census. However, according to the data of the 1944 Census of the Nationality, 433,013 or 22,66% of the population in the Republic of Macedonia is Albanian.

2. The total population is slightly lower than the official total population of the country by about 10,000 inhabitants, because the nonenumerated population of the municipality of Debar (the town is near the Macedonian-Albanian border) is excluded.

No estimation was made for that population neither according to the mother tongue, religious affiliation or citizenship. Small Religious Communities and Groups in the Republic of Macedonia 93the duration of their existence and registration, the religious communities in the Republic of Macedonia may be divided into two groups.

The first group includes those religious communities which existed and were registered before the disintegration of the Yugoslav community (the SFR of Yugoslavia), while those which exist and are registered with the Ministry of Internal Affairs after the Republic of Macedonia became an independent, sovereign, separate, democratic and free state belong to the second group.

The following churches belong to the first group:

- the Evangelical-Methodist Church
- the Christian-Adventist Church - the Seventh Day Adventist
- the Christian Community of Jehovah's Witnesses
- the Baptist Church
- the Church of Christ's Brothers, and
- the Pentecostal Church.

The following churches belong to the second group:

- the Congregational Church
- the Head Committee of the Christian-Adventist Church
- the Evangelical Church
- the Pra-Christian Church
- the New Apostolic (Evangelical) Church
- the Islam Taricates Community
- the Islam Bectash Community
- the (Ancient) Vishna Religious Community - "Hare Krishna")
- the Satya Sai baba - Centre (Universal life)



Macedonia is religious by a democratic country, where side by side with the Macedonian Orthodox Church other Christian confessions (the Catholic Church, as well as various Protestant denominations), then Islam and Judaism coexist. In the period from 1945-1991 religion in Macedonia was formally allowed to some extent, but it was always under state control, while after 1991 religious communities gained total freedom. In that period (1945-1991) freedom at religion in the Republic of Macedonia, as well as in the other republics of Yugoslavia differed greatly, which compared similarly with other Eastern European socialist countries.

However, changes that have taken place in the Eastern and Western parts of the world, with the liberation from political oppression, freedom of conscience and religion, integrational processes and other contacts are now a Reality.

After the democratic elections on September 8, 1991 and after the new Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia went into effect religious life and freedom of religion got a constitutional basis. Thus, according to Article 19 of the Constitution: freedom of religious confession is guaranteed: and the right to express one's faith freely and publicly, individually or with others is guaranteed.

The Constitution also states that the Macedonian Orthodox Church and other religious communities and groups in the Republic of Macedonia are separate from the state and equal before the law, and that the Macedonian Orthodox Church and other religious communities and groups are free to establish schools and other social and charitable institutions through a procedure regulated by law.³

Taking into consideration these determinations, the importance of religion, as well as the number of religious communities and religious groups in the Republic of Macedonia, the need for a new law, which would regulate all questions connected with freedom of religion, appeared.

One of the main aims of preparing such a Law is to regulate the relations within the sphere of the confessions in the Republic of Macedonia, according to civilisational achievements and international standards which regulate this subject.⁴ Thus, it is expected that this Law will regulate the freedom of religious confession and its expression within the Macedonian Orthodox Church and other churches, religious communities and groups.

The new Law is further intended to regulate their registration, operation, religious instruction and religious schools. In addition a Law for the establishment of important religious holidays, prepared by the Ministry of Labour of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia is also in procedure. In the last few years, this Ministry has set aside, as a non-working day one day for Christmas and one for Easter for the Christians, and one day for Bayram and Ramazan, for the Moslems.



According to the number of worshippers, religious structures, priests and religious administrators, the so-called small religious communities and religious groups in the Republic of Macedonia are considerably smaller than the Macedonian Orthodox Church, the Islamic community and the Catholic Church. However, they are more active in publishing religious materials, missionary work, visiting their fellow believers in their homes, care for old people and children, developing humanitarian activities, recruiting new believers, organizing seminaries, meetings and other religious manifestations. In the Republic of Macedonia the so-called small religious communities do not have schools for the training and education of preachers; therefore they send their students to school and faculty centres out of state. Then, the graduate students are immediately employed as preachers, professionals, or laymen. They are very active and often travel and attend various international meetings held both in the state and abroad.

Concerning interconfessional coexistence and collaboration among the Christian churches, it should be mentioned that the Holy Synod of the Macedonian Orthodox Church maintains good relations with all existing Christian churches and other religious communities. This is especially realized in the joint work on the revision of the Macedonian translation of the Bible.

The translation of the New Testament into the standard literary Macedonian language, published by the British and Foreign Bible

Society began immediately after World War II and appeared in 1951. In 1990 the Bible was printed in its entirety in the Macedonian language by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

This paper also refers to the role, characteristics and historical development of a certain number of religious communities which are to be found in the Republic of Macedonia. That concerns, first of all, the Evangelical-Methodist Church.

1. THE EVANGELICAL-METHODIST CHURCH

The Evangelical-Methodist Church in the Republic of Macedonia is an independent church and is a part of the World General Christian Church, believing that God, as the Master of the church, calls for all Christians to be together in the spheres of church life. It is organized and works within the frames of the World Association of the Methodist Church, the number of its believers being 50 million on a global scale.

The first Evangelical movements on the Balkan Peninsula, as well as in Macedonia, date from the previous century. These were the first Protestant activities on a religious basis when Macedonia was under Ottoman rule. In fact, Evangelical activity in Macedonia began with the opening of "Rofert's College" in Constantinople (Istanbul) in the mid 1800's, a round 1850 to be more exact.



Evangelical missionaries of the Protestant college spread throughout Macedonia, in the beginning their activities centered on visiting prisons and on negotiations with Turkish officials for the release of prisoners.

Thanks to a number of Evangelical missionaries led by Dr. Albert Long, many prisoners were released Turkish prisons. The missionary activity of the Evangelists in this period also included the delivery of sermons and the distribution of the Bible and other Christian literature. With spreading of the Evangelical religion and its help given on the territory of Macedonia, a few hospitals, elementary and high schools, such as the High schools in Thessalonika (Solun) and Bitola, were established. In fact, the Evangelical mission started in Thessalonika and began to spread to gruner part of Macedonia, where Evangelical church communities were soon organized in the villages of the Strumica and Radovish district, as well as in some towns.

The activity of the legendary Miss Helen Stone, who was kidnapped by the detachment of Jane Sandanski in Pirin Macedonia in order to call the world's attention to the activities of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Liberation Organization, is also worth mentioning. This case served as a starting point for the publication of number of articles all over the world, and for writing of the screenplay for the famous Macedonian film - Miss Stone, which has been shown all over the world during the last twenty years. The first Conference of the Methodist Church in Macedonia was held on May 11 and 12, 1895.

After the Balkan Wars and the division of Macedonia among Greece, Bulgaria and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, as well as after the First World War, the activity of the missionaries of the Methodist Church on the territory of Macedonia became more difficult because politics was interwoven into their work. In that period the Evangelical missions who were working in Macedonia joined with the missions of the Methodist Church in northern Yugoslavia in 1922 at the annual conference in Vrbas. Since then the united church in Macedonia has been called the Evangelical-Methodist Church.

Today, the Evangelical-Methodist Church in Macedonia consists of eleven religious units (churches) located in Skopje, Prilep, Bitola, Kochani, Radovish, the village of Raklish (the region of Radovish), Strumica, as well as the villages of Veljusa, Murtino, Monospitovo and Koleshino. The preachers who work in the Evangelical-Methodist Church are employed in the churches, and they give sermons, do the baptizing, perform marital and funeral ceremonies.

The preachers are educated in the centres of the Church, mainly in Austria, Germany and England, because the Evangelical-Methodist Church in the Republic of Macedonia is a part of the Conference of Middle and Southern Europe, with its headquarters in Zurich, which has about 2,500 believers.

Concerning the activities of the Evangelical-Methodist Church, its good cooperation, with the Macedonian Orthodox Church and other churches and



religious communities should be emphasized. Within the Church Sunday school for children special programs for young married couples and choir are organized. The Church also publishes a monthly magazine "The Way of Life", a women's magazine "Charisma" and the annual calendar with quotations from the Bible.

2. THE CHRISTIAN-ADVENTIST CHURCH

The Christian-Adventist Church in the Republic of Macedonia is a part of the International Adventist family, with a joint head office in Washington, the USA. Adventism in Macedonia began to spread at the end of the 19th century, as a second Protestant movement, after the Evangelical one. In 1880 Mr. Andreas Zefrid, as a representative of the British and Foreign Bible Association from America together with his wife arrived in the city of Skopje. He was the first Adventist preacher, while his son Johanes, who was born in Macedonia, was the first student to enroll at the Adventist Theological Faculty in the City of Fridensau, Germany.

While the preacher Zefrid was in Skopje in 1880, Dr Garabeth Yeram, a doctor of medicine, Armenian by nationality, also started his Adventist activity in Strumica. He worked there several years as a doctor, with the military where he did charity work for the poor. Dr Garabeth Yeram lived in Macedonia for about thirty years. During that time he made many friends in Strumica and Radovish, where he had spread Adventism with the help of a young group of Adventist. He is considered the founder of the first Adventist Church in Thessalonika.

Dr Garabeth Yeram had impressed a larger group of young people in the region of Strumica, who accepted the Adventist religion. Among them was a young teacher from Strumica, Miss Atina Dimova. According to the documents of the Christian-Adventist Church in Macedonia, in 1990 Atina Dimova had decided to leave the teaching profession and to take up medical work.

That same year she was baptized according to the Adventist rules and then she started to study medicine at the Adventist Medical Faculty in Battle Creek in the USA. Then in 1907 she returned from the USA where she was one of the most respected Adventists of the Adventist Church in Skopje during her life.

In 1923 the Adventist Church in Macedonia was established by the preacher Albin Moshnik from Slovenia who had come to Macedonia and baptized seven persons according to the Adventist rules in the city of Prilep. That marked the beginning of organized life of the official Adventist Church. In the period between World War II and the independence of the Republic of Macedonia in 1991, i.e. the period when the Republic of Macedonia was a part of the SFR of Yugoslavia, the Christian-Adventist Church was organized on the level of a Secretariat as a part of the Southern Church District with its headquarters in Nish.



After 1991 it was constituted as an independent organizational unit, headed by its Committee but within the International Adventist Church, closely connected with the headquarters in London and Washington.

However, due to certain subjective and objective reasons, there was a misunderstanding between the preachers and the believers of the Christian-Adventist Church, and the Churches divided into two religious communities: one called the Christian-Adventist Church - the Seventh Day Adventist, led by the preacher Georgi Trajkovski and the other, the Head Committee of the Christian-Adventist Church led by the president Blagoja Nikolovski. The separation of and antagonism between the two groups, however, seem to have been the result of unsolved legal and property questions, as well as financial reasons.

The Christian-Adventist Church in the Republic of Macedonia is organized in about ten church communities. The services are performed by five or six professional preachers from Macedonia. It is supposed that the total number of believers, together with their families, is about 400, out of which 300 are baptized according to the Adventist rules.

Concerning the activities of the Adventist Church, it should be mentioned that the charitable organization ADRA, which is a part of the International organization ADRA, works within the Church. Its activities consist of collecting and giving help to the needy, especially to the poor and surviving families of various disasters. Also, the publishing house "The Signs of the Time" and the corresponding Biblical School work within the frame of the Christian-Adventist Church in the Republic of Macedonia.

3. THE BAPTIST CHURCH

The Baptist Church is one of the smaller religious communities in the Republic of Macedonia. It belongs to the group of Protestant Churches and to the International Association of Baptists as an independent, autonomous church of the Macedonian Baptists. According to some incomplete data, the first Baptists in Macedonia, arrived at the end of the last and the beginning of this century, being active, at first in the bigger city centres, such as Thessalonika, Bitola and other places.

Today, the Baptist Church has a temple of worship in Radovich, which is legal and has existed for quite some time, and one in Skopje, located in private owned house which had been bought ten years ago on the name of the Baptist Church, and was turned into a church where Dr. Ivan Grozdanov is the main preacher. Dr. Grozdanov comes from an old Baptist family; his father Strahil Grozdanov is considered to be one of the founders of the Baptist Church in Macedonia.

He was a preacher for forty years, and his grandfather had done same job. The number of worshipers in the Republic of Macedonia is considered to be



about a hundred. The publishing activity of the Baptist Church is insignificant. They often receive literature from abroad, and from time to time they publish the magazine "Rainbow" in Macedonian. Among other activities of the believers of the Baptist Church is translation work. Church and religious books are translated and later distributed among the believers in the Macedonian language in order to familiarise the members with their religion.

4. THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

In the Republic of Macedonia there also exists the Christian Community of Jehovah's Witnesses. This religion has been present on this territory since 1930 when the first group of Jehovah's Witnesses established and held a gathering in the village of Veljusa, in the region of Strumica. Then, after the World War II in 1959 a gathering was also held in the village of Koleshino (in the region of Strumica), while in Skopje the first group was established in 1969 and the first gathering was held in 1976.⁷

According to some data the Christian Community of Jehovah's Witnesses in the Republic of Macedonia has about 200 active members. They have registered religious structures in Skopje, Kochani and Koleshino, and non-registered points in other cities and villages in the country. The services in the religious structure of these communities are performed only by laymen, as they do not have professional preachers. It should be mentioned that Jehovah's Witnesses serve in the Army of Macedonia without their employing weapons.

One of their greater activities is publishing work. They distribute the law to homes and other objects. They translate their literature into English and other languages, while the magazine "The Guard Tower" is printed in the Macedonian language. It is believed that the Christian Community of Jehovah's Witnesses in the Republic of Macedonia is considered to be very mysterious and a kind of confined religious group. Its often are aggressive in the spreading of their ideas when they visit homes,

schools and other public places.

Today, in the Republic of Macedonia the so-called small religious communities, such as the Church of Christ's Brothers, the Congregational Church, the Pentacostal Church, the Evangelical Church, the Pra-Christian Church and the New Apostolic Church, which are part of the Protestant churches, exist as of recently.

They are registered and legally function on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia. The number of their believers is very small and ranges from 5 to 50 members.

The Author



IN EFESUS AND IN THE HOUSE OF THE HOLY MOTHER OF GOD (5)

It was the morning of a warm and pleasant day when the Sun had just risen over the Asian part of Istanbul, and the plane had taken off for the East, towards Izmir. We continued our flight on the iron bird ("Boeing 747") of Turkish Airlines. In less than an hour we were in the three-and-a-half million city of Izmir. This metropolis is situated in the bay that bears its name and spans over its lowlands and the surrounding hills.

It appears as though the regions of Dolna Reka, Veles and other regions of Macedonia have moved to Izmir and its surroundings. There are large numbers of these Turkish citizens from Macedonia, amongst which the greatest in number are the Macedonian Muslims. There are more of them in Turkey than there are in Macedonia.

This is what we were informed, because according to some unofficial statistics, there are from 300 to 500 thousand Turkish citizens from Macedonia living only in Izmir and the surrounding cities. There are people from Vranovtsi and Orizari, near Veles, from Skudrine, from Zhupa and Debar, from near Pehchevo, Delchevo, Shtip, and other places in Macedonia.

They all have a good life in democratic Turkey, which has accepted them as honest, kind, and good-hearted people. Many of them have become famous and respected businessmen, intellectuals, doctors, shop owners, and loyal citizens of their second fatherland, Turkey. At the same time, these Turkish citizens from Macedonia love and respect Turkey, but their grandfathers' land, Macedonia, too, which they carry in their hearts and in their souls.

During our visit with Steve Pliakes of Turkey, we organised a visit to the city of Selchuk and the ancient city of Ephesus. In Selchuk we visited the City Museum where many exhibits from Ephesus and other localities in Anadolia and the coast region are displayed. The museum is an unavoidable stop for visitors to this part of Turkey.

We continued towards the well known, ancient treasury of Ephesus, situated less than 200 kilometres south of Izmir, 20 kilometres north of the summer resort, Kushadasi. Ephesus, the famous city of the past and the present, is situated at the foot of Mt. Bilbil, Koressos, where the Kaister River enters the Aegean Sea, and on the lowland region near the sea.

This significant ancient city is first mentioned in the middle of the 7th century BC. Ever since its foundation it has played an important role in the Anatolian region. Because of this, it was often attacked and conquered. It was under Persian, Spartan rule. In 334 Alexander of Macedon conquered the city and the strategic military area surrounding the city of Ephesus. Ephesus was under authority of the Roman Empire and was a major city of the Asian province at the time.

According to many, Ephesus was God's chosen place, where the Holy God Mother and St. John spent the last days of their life. Namely, the house of the Holy Mother of God is found very close to Ephesus, on the western side of Mt. Bilbil. The Church of *St. John*, one of the composers of the Bible, reaches high over the present-day city.

At the same time, one of the seven churches in Asia, where St. John found his inspiration for religion, was in Ephesus.

The history of Ephesus records that, in AD 262, the Gothic destroyed the city together with the Temple of Artemis. The city never again regained its previous state of magnificent growth and development.

It is also very significant for Ephesus that in AD 431 the Third ecumenical Council was held in the house of the Holy Mother of God. This council accepted the Holy Mother of God as Mother of God Jesus Christ.

During our visit to Ephesus we saw numerous structures and objects from the long history of this significant ancient locality. We visited the remains of the Temple of Artemis, Trajan's Fountain, the Marble Road, the Stadium, and other structures.

However, the visitor is especially impressed by the great theatre, it being an exceptional experience. It is situated in a recess of the western side of the hill. Its size, expanse and magnificence gives one the feeling, and takes him in his thoughts many centuries far from the present. We were told here that in recent years Luciano Pavarotti, Julio Iglesias, and many other world famous artists presented their artistic qualities there before several thousand guests at this theatre.

Our visit to the house of the Holy Mother of God aroused in us a special feeling of excitement, which transformed into peace. It feels as though one is somewhere in Macedonia, in one of the monasteries of the Macedonian Orthodox Church.

The picturesque area where the house of the Holy Mother of God was built reminds the visitor of the areas taken as models for the construction of Christian monasteries around the world. And here, according to the customs, after bowing in the church, leaving the temple and washing with the holy water, according to customs and beliefs, the visitor becomes an "ad`ija" (pilgrim.). Thus, Steve Pliakes and I became pilgrims.

The area attracts with its beauty and scenery, while the church represents a place where thousands of Christians and Muslims come to bow and to pray. It



appears that this year the church will be most visited on 15 August, when the largest gathering to celebrate the third millennium of Christianity will be held. On this occasion thousands of believers, Christians, Muslims, and others are expected to visit the house of the Holy Mother of God.

According to written documents we know that St. John brought the Holy Mother of God to Ephesus during the fourth or fifth year, immediately after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The house on Mt. Bilbil, planned and constructed by St. John, is at 420m above sea level.

According to the tales the house was discovered by the German nun, Anna Katerina Emerich, who devoted her entire life to God. She was paralysed and made spiritual connection with the Holy Mother of God. The documents claim that, while in a trance, she had a vision that the Holy Mother of God was buried somewhere near the church.

This was confirmed by some Lazarian priests, who in 1891 discovered the location of the house where the Holy Mother of God spent the last days of her life. Thus, it was discovered that the cross-shaped building and dome were ruined, but were later restored.

During our visit to the house of the Holy Mother of God we were familiarised with many details relating to the discovery of the temple, as well as the visits and respect of both Christians and Muslims towards this spiritual centre.

The large statue in the garden of the church giving one the feeling that the Holy Mother of God welcomes guests and those of good intent with widespread arms, leaves one with a special impression. On the other hand, the statue of the Holy Mother of God found in the apse was erected about a hundred years ago and represents a magnificent structure before which everyone bows and pays respect to the Mother of Jesus Christ.

During the evening hours we returned to Izmir where we stayed at the exclusive hotel of "*Ephesus*" situated in the centre of the city and is of a high category. The city, though, whose Turkish name is Izmir, is also known by the name of Smirna. It is a major seaport in Asia Minor, on the coast of the Aegean Sea, and is the third largest city in Turkey. Smirna is an old Ionic settlement which was renewed in the 4th century BC.

During the Roman Empire and Byzantium, Izmir was one of the largest cities in Asia Minor. Its history claims that the city had been under the rule of the Tatars, who devastated it. Later it was under the rule of the Greeks, who built it and turned into Greek, and in 1922 it was freed by the Turks, headed by Kemal Ataturk. This significant seaport and strategic land location has been an important NATO base since 1952. This visit to the metropolis of Izmir and the House of the Holy Mother of God will remain for us forever.

Monograph "*Steve Pliakes*"



A MACEDONIAN RELIGIOUS POSTCARD (6)

It is a fact that the Macedonian people have managed to ensure their continuation despite all forms of pressure for their assimilation. This is yet another proof that this people, being a Biblical one, have managed to confront and endure any conquests, oppressions, and denials. Macedonia is one of the countries in the world that has got so long and ancient history. Again, it is an irrefutable fact that when Europe was in darkness it was enlightened only by the torch of the Macedonian culture. Among other things, St. Clement's University of Ohrid was shining as a symbol of the oldest civilization on the continent.

Starting from the 4th century onwards, Christianity has prevailed in these areas. This is confirmed by the archeological findings and by the great number of Christian churches, episcopal cathedrals, basilicas, baptisteries and other sacral facilities of huge dimensions that prove that Christianity has been rooted deeply and organized well in Macedonia since its very beginning up to the present times.

One of the historic episode that took place in Macedonia at that time was the creation of the first alphabet by Saint Cyril of Solun (Thessalonica) that had a historically significant role for all Slavic peoples.

As a result, the first translations of religious books to Old-Slavic, i.e. to the Old-Macedonian language, marked the period when this language, with its alphabet, was ranked among the dominant languages of that time - Latin, Hellenic, and Jewish - on equal footing. Ever since that episode, the God's word began spreading in our language as well, and people began writing and reading books written in the Pan-Slavic, i.e. Old-Macedonian alphabet and language.

Undoubtedly, this event was of epochal significance for the Macedonian people. First, because the brothers Saints Cyril and Methodius came from Solun, Macedonia, and second, because the first books written in the Old-Macedonian-Pan-Slavic language were written in the language spoken by the Macedonian Slavs. Obviously, Saints Cyril and Methodij could not use any other language but the language that the Macedonians living in their city - Solun were speaking.

Another episode which was epochal for the Macedonians took place at the beginning of the 11th century when the Macedonian Czar Samuil moved his

capital first to Prespa, and then to Ohrid. Witness to this are the remnants of his fortresses that we still see today as a permanent mark of our glorious past. Ohrid was also a center of the Ohrid Archbishopric until it was abolished in 1767. Namely, along with the declaration of the Patriarchate it was no coincidence that Czar Samuil was declared to be Emperor by the first Ohrid patriarch.

Until the arrival of the Ottomans to the Balkans in the 14th century, Macedonia was experiencing big progress in the area of construction. Witnesses to this are the numerous medieval churches and monasteries, which are now a part of the treasury of the European and world culture. It was no coincidence that the Ottomans did not abolish the autocephalous status of the Ohrid Archbishopric immediately, but they also showed tolerance towards the Christian faith.

After their occupation of Ohrid in 1408, entire Macedonia found itself occupied by the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, not only the Ottomans didn't limit the independence of the Ohrid Archbishopric, but they also increased its power in order to weaken the Patriarchate in Constantinople. In spite of this, however, the expansion of the feudal system in the Ottoman Empire objectively meant weakening of the Ohrid Archbishopric.

In the midst of the difficult situation in which they found themselves, the Macedonian people and their church were under constant pressure of the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the Catholic propaganda of Rome. The Patriarchate used various methods to Hellenise the Macedonian people and destroy their church which was embodied in the Ohrid Archbishopric. To achieve this, the Patriarchate did not choose means or methods to impose itself upon the church authorities of the time. As a result the Patriarchate abolished the Ohrid Archbishopric in 1767, inflicting in that way great harm upon the Macedonian Christian population.

Even though the Balkan Wars (1912-1913) meant some form of freedom for Macedonia from the Ottoman slavery, they in fact brought the country a new subjugation. Macedonia was tragically partitioned by Greece, Bulgaria, and Serbia, and later by Albania, followed by even worse conditions and discrimination for the Macedonian people.

Not only was the Macedonian nation denied, but also the use of the Macedonian language was forbidden, especially in Aegean Macedonia where strict penalties were imposed upon those who dared to speak Macedonian. Macedonia was colonized within Serbia which was later to grow into the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes under the Yugoslav monarchy.

Once again, the Macedonians were denied their national identity, and their language was repressed. The Macedonians who live in Bulgaria, in Pirin Macedonia, shared a similar destiny as well.



The age-old fight of the Macedonian people for their national and social freedom, for justice and truth, especially their active involvement in the anti-fascist coalition, enabled them to acquire, after WWII, their sovereign state that has got its national institutions and an array of cultural communication with the world.

The Macedonian language became an official language of the Republic of Macedonia that is well-known and acknowledged in the world. It is studied at many universities on several continents, and it contributes to the spreading of the values of the Macedonian culture and their inclusion in the common treasury of the world culture. Unfortunately in the parts of Macedonia that are still within Greece and Bulgaria the well-known attitudes to deny the Macedonian identity and truth are still in effect.

After its liberation, the Republic of Macedonia, as a whole, has experienced substantial rise in the fields of education, culture and agriculture, as well as social life in general. However the phenomenon of immigration –village town and going abroad to earn for living. Was a turbulent time.

Macedonia was proclaimed as People's Republic of Macedonia in 1944 within the boundaries of the former Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia. Not many years afterwards, it was renamed Socialist Republic of Macedonia.

However, when the socialist block collapsed in 1989, the Yugoslav republics opted for their independence. As a result, Macedonia was constituted as a separate, independent and sovereign state - Republic of Macedonia following the referendum held on 8 September, 1991. In those starry moments, the Republic of Macedonia became a member of the United Nations and a permanent member of many other international organizations.

The period since the achievement of the independence of the Republic of Macedonia – 8th September, 1991 – thus far has been fulfilled with construction of a great number of monuments from the history of the Macedonian people and Macedonia since the ancient times. The 8th of September is one of the most significant dates for the continuation, progress and future of the Macedonians and of the Republic of Macedonia as a whole.

The Author



THE MACEDONIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH (7)

As soon as the Macedonian state was liberated and declared the People's Republic of Macedonia, the Macedonian Orthodox people organized themselves on a church and national scale. Thus, on the basis of the historical and canonical rights they gained their own Macedonian Orthodox Church with their own people's clergy.

With this aim an Initiative Committee was formed to organize the church as a national institution, and church bodies were also formed for the Macedonian territory. Later, at the First Macedonian Church and National Assembly, held on 4 March, 1945 in Skopje, a Resolution was adopted which began the issue regarding autocephaly of the church.

At the same time as the proclamation of the Macedonian state and the accomplishment of its national, political, social, and spiritual freedoms, the Macedonian Orthodox people also demanded and wished to accomplish full spiritual and church affirmation.

At the Second Church and National Assembly held during the period 4 – 6 October, 1958 a decision was reached to renew the ancient Ohrid Archbishopric. It was to be named the Macedonian Orthodox Church, and was to have supreme church bodies. The first Constitution of the independent Macedonian Orthodox Church and some other Acts were also adopted then.

This meant constitution of the church as a spiritual, national, and religious institution of the Macedonian state and the Macedonian people. The news of the restoration of the Ohrid Archbishopric was greeted with joy not only by the Macedonian people in the fatherland but also by every Macedonian dispersed throughout the world since after the constitution of the Macedonian state, the restoration of the Ohrid Archbishopric in the face of the Macedonian Orthodox Church meant, and still means a great moment in the fulfillment of the ideals for national and church freedom of the Macedonian people.

Following the restoration of the Ohrid Archbishopric in 1958, and declaration of autocephaly in 1967, the Macedonian Orthodox Church made a strong breakthrough among the Macedonian emigrants in the transatlantic countries.

This was particularly felt among the Macedonians in Australia, Canada, and the USA, as well as those Macedonian citizens temporarily or permanently residing in the western European and other countries.

The very act of restoring the Ohrid Archbishopric was reason, basis, and encouragement for establishment and construction of a large number of Macedonian Orthodox churches, monasteries and church communities, as well as numerous associations in the new environments throughout the Diaspora.

The Macedonian Orthodox churches and church communities in the Diaspora were constituted on legal grounds. They are organized on religious grounds and fulfill the function of Macedonian national, social, humanitarian, cultural, educational, literary, sports, and other kinds of institutions.

In order to realize their activities the churches and church communities have, above all, been given the wide support of the authorities in their respective countries and of their mother *St. Clement's Church* in the Republic of Macedonia.

Their establishment outside of Macedonia greatly contributed to raising to a higher level of the awareness, understanding, closeness, and love for joint living. At the same time the national identity, language, faith, customs, and traditions of the Macedonian emigrants were retained in their new environments.

This was confirmed among the majority of Macedonians, regardless of which part of Macedonia, or what kind of travel documents they came from, whether temporarily or permanently, to the USA, Canada, Australia, European Union, or to other countries.

Through these significant spiritual and cultural and educational centers and through their membership in these churches the Macedonian emigrants received documents as proof for their being Macedonians. Their christening, wedding, and death certificates, as well as other necessary documents are official and legal before the democratic authorities and administration in the new communities.

Until the Second World War, and as a result of the undefined status of the Macedonian Orthodox Church in Macedonia, the emigrants carried with them the spirit of the Ohrid Archbishopric, despite the effects of the situation in the Balkans.

Hence, in their content the church communities in the transatlantic countries were typically Macedonian as the funds for construction of the buildings in most cases came from Macedonians, especially from those that came from the Aegean part of Macedonia.

Unfortunately, these churches had been lead under the canonical and spiritual jurisdiction of the neighboring Orthodox churches, of which the majority was influenced by the organization known as MPO (Macedonian Patriotic Organization.)

This was the case with the so-called Macedonian – Bulgarian Orthodox churches of *St. Cyril and Methodius*, *St. George*, and *Holy Trinity* in Toronto, the churches of *St. Nicolas* in Fort Wayne, *St. Cyril and Methodius* in Lorain, *St. Cyril*



and *Methodius* in Melbourne, and others. Once the Macedonians had built them, they were taken over by several Bulgarians and placed under the jurisdiction of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church.

At the same time, a certain number of churches built, or helped by the Macedonians are under the jurisdiction of the Greek and Serbian Orthodox Churches. This is the case with the *St. Dimitrija Church* and *St. George Church* in Toronto and *St. Lazar* in Detroit. On the other hand, in recent times some churches have called themselves *Eastern Orthodox Churches* or *Orthodox Church of America*. Such is the *St. Clement of Ohrid Church* in Detroit, built in 1964.

However, the constitution of the People's Republic of Macedonia and the declaration of autocephaly of the Macedonian Orthodox Church were events of fundamental significance for the Macedonian emigrants. This opened the process of establishment of authentic Macedonian organizations, Macedonian churches and church communities, literary, entertainment, sports clubs, and other kinds of associations. These represent the most significant and largest meeting places of the emigrants from every part of Macedonia.

We know that a large part of the emigrants are Macedonians from the Aegean part of Macedonia. Like all Macedonians, they too, enjoy every national and social freedom in their new environments. On the other hand, in their native country, in the Aegean and Pirin part of Macedonia, and in Albania they do not enjoy even the basic human rights proposed in the declarations and other Acts of the United Nations.

In their own country they are negated as a people, they are the subject of assimilation, denationalization, and systematic emigration from their native hearths.

Between the two World Wars the authorities in USA and Canada did not register the Macedonians' religious structures as Macedonian institutions because even in their own country they did not have an autocephalous church at the time. Thus, according to their travel documents the Macedonian emigrants could not register as Macedonians.

There, too, their national identity was negated, which is all part of the historical objective reality of the Macedonians in the Diaspora. For this reason in their new environments in the past a certain number of Macedonians satisfied their church, family, matrimonial, traditional, cultural, and similar needs at the other orthodox churches. These included Bulgarian, Greek, Serbian, Russian, Ukrainian, Syrian, and other orthodox churches, as well as buildings of the Catholic, or Anglican Church and some Protestant churches.

However, after the Second World War the Macedonian emigrants began getting together in their own Macedonian communities with great enthusiasm. Here they began satisfying their national, spiritual and cultural needs,



customs and traditions brought with them from their "stari kraj" (native place, back home) as they often refer to their native hearths in Macedonia.

And Macedonia is the country which, despite the distance between them, they constantly carry within their hearts and are proud of.

As a result of this love of Macedonia the idea was born to establish a church council in the Diaspora, in Melbourne more precisely. The first Macedonian Orthodox Church outside of the Macedonian borders, *St. George's*, was dedicated here.

This is how this event was described in the newsletter of the Church Board in Melbourne: *"The Macedonian emigrants in Melbourne, led by the ideas of the glorious Ilinden fighters for national and church liberation, at the same time having this right in democratic Australia, to freely express their national feeling, a large meeting was held on the 14 May, 1956 and a decision was reached to build a church center...we are forced to build our own church.*

Due to the numerous difficulties we are experiencing with foreign churches: the inability to understand foreign languages, the inability to express our troubles and difficulties, while the priests of other nationalities are not familiar with our religious customs, and if any of them are familiar, they tendentiously wish to divert them to their own customs, all with specific aims and purposes..."

St. George's Church in Melbourne was the first Macedonian church on the Australian Continent, and the Macedonian Diaspora in general, that was blessed by a Macedonian bishop in a joint service with Macedonian priests. For all the Macedonians in Melbourne and Australia this event was of particular importance and represents the foundation stone to the organized establishment and construction of a large number of Macedonian Orthodox churches in the Diaspora.

As a result of this their number has been increasing constantly so that at present there are about seventy active churches and church communities and monasteries with the three eparchies of the Macedonian Orthodox Church: the American – Canadian, Australia – New Zealand, and the European eparchy.

These eparchies provide conditions for an increasing affirmation of the entire national and cultural heritage and modern progress of the Church and the Macedonian nation in general.

Through their activities the eparchies represent a live bridge of friendship between Macedonia and the countries in which the Macedonian emigrants reside.

The role and positive attitude of the Macedonian believers and the clergy in those Macedonian church institutions in the Diaspora are also of huge significance.



As soon as the *St. George's Council* was established in Melbourne, initiatives began for organization of Macedonian Orthodox churches and church councils on the North American Continent. Strong national feelings and awareness were aroused among the Macedonian emigrants in the USA and Canada.

As a result of this in Columbus, Ohio, the first church council was established as early as 1958. Later, on 14 October, 1962 the foundation stone was placed, and one year later, in June, the *St. Peter and Paul's Church* in Garry, Indiana was dedicated. On 5 April, 1964 in Toronto the foundation stone was placed for the *St. Clement of Ohrid Church*, dedicated on 15 April, 1965.

This church is above all a beautiful sample of Christianity and at the same time one of the largest and most impressive churches the Macedonians have in the Diaspora.

The Macedonian Orthodox churches and church communities are cultural, educational, folklore, literary, and sports centers at the same time. These are places that continue to nurture the Macedonian tongue, religion, traditions, and customs. They are the working places of ethnic folklore groups and clubs which are true ambassadors of the rich Macedonian folklore.

At the same time these churches are places where the young generations of Macedonian descent can gather and socialize. The various clubs, such as the women's club, the folklore, literary, sports, and other clubs have developed numerous activities. The role of these church communities is of immense value in the enrichment of the overall activities of the Macedonian emigrants representing an inseparable part of the rich cultural living of Macedonia, with which they maintain constant and permanent relations.

Thus, before the global public and in the communities where they live, the Macedonian emigrants show their Macedonian belonging with much pride. Even more so, thanks to the multicultural policy, the Macedonian emigrants nurture their national traditions with great enthusiasm and inspiration; they present their rich folklore; they sing their folk songs in public places, and dance their beautiful Macedonian folk dances.

In fact, in their new environment they affirm the Macedonian name, cultural and historical past, and present. At the same time, the multicultural programs are themselves reason for expansion of the collaboration and emancipation of the emigrants in many areas of living. This especially applies to culture, literature, sport, the issues and problems of education, radio and television, social and humanitarian aid, and other areas.

Therefore, it is rightfully said that the Macedonian Orthodox churches and church communities in the Diaspora are an expression of Macedonian unity and directly contribute to the affirmation of the Macedonian people. In fact, through the cultural and educational, religious and national forms of gathering in the Macedonian Orthodox churches and church communities



the Macedonians went beyond the narrow forms of acting and are affirming themselves as an important ethnic group in their new environments.

Generally in the USA there are about twenty Macedonian Orthodox churches, church communities, and monasteries, these being the following: *St. Peter and Paul* in Crown Point, Indiana; *Assumption of Saint Mary* in Columbus, Ohio; *St. Prophet Ilija* in Cincinnati; *St. Clement of Ohrid* in Lorain; *St. Nikola* in Kenton; *St. George* in Syracuse, New York; *St. Martyr Dimitrija* in Rochester, *St. Clement of Ohrid* in New York, *St. Cyril and Methodius* in Buffalo; *St. Mary* and *St. George of Kratovo* in Detroit, Michigan; *St. Cyril and Methodius* in Cider Grove, *St. George Monastery* in Randolph, *St. Nikola* in Totowa, New Jersey; *St. Cyril and Methodius* and *St. Petka* in Chicago, Illinois; *St. Mary* in Los Angeles, California; while in the process of establishment are the following: *St. Naum of Ohrid* in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; *St. Dimitrija* in Miami, and *St. John the Baptist* in Tarpon Springs, Florida.

In Canada there are ten Macedonian Orthodox churches, church communities, and monasteries, of which the following: *St. Clement of Ohrid* in Toronto; *St. Prophet Ilija* in Mississauga; *St. Dimitrija Solunski* in Markham; *St. Nedela* in Ajax; *St. Naum Ohridski* in Hamilton; *St. Nikola* in Windsor; *St. Mary* in Cambridge, all in Ohio; while the following are being established presently: *St. Nikola* in Unionville; *St. Ilija* (monastery) in Toronto, Ontario; and *St. Atanasij* in Faber Ville, Laval, Quebec.

In Australia there are more than thirty Macedonian Orthodox churches, church communities and monasteries, of which the following: *St. George and St. Mary* in Epping; *St. Clement of Ohrid* (monastery) in King Lake; *St. Prophet Ilija*, in Foots Cray; *St. Nikola* in Preston; *St. Dimitrija Solunski* in Springville; *Assumption of St. Mary* in St. Albans; *St. John the Baptist* in Geelong; all in Victoria; *St. Cyril and Methodius* in Roseberry; *St. Nikola* in Cabramatta; *St. Petka* in Rockdale; *St. Prorok Ilija* in Queenbean; *St. Clement of Ohrid* in Port Kembla; *St. Mary* in Hamilton (Newcastle) all in New South Wales; *St. Mary* in New Farm (Brisbane) Queensland; *St. Naum of Ohrid* in Adelaide (Findom), South Australia; the centre of the united Macedonian community of *St. Nikola* in Northern Perth, and the Macedonian community centre of *St. Nikola* in Perth, Western Australia.

At the same time, after designating Metropolitan Petar as authorized arch-priest of the Australian Eparchy about ten new Macedonian Orthodox churches were established. These are the following:

The Australia – New Zealand Metropolitan Preston; *St. Mary's Church* in Sydenham; *St. Christ's Resurrection* in Carlton; *The Macedonian Orthodox Monastery of St. Clement of Ohrid* in Rocklin; *St. Zlata Meglenska* in Veriby; *St. Petka* in Mill Park; *St. John the Baptist* in Geelong; *The Macedonian Orthodox Center of St. Clement of Ohrid* in Port Kembla; *St. Petka* in Kembla Grange; *The Macedonian*



Orthodox Center of St. Holy Mother of God in Brisbane; *St. Nedela* in Gold Coast; and the *Assembly of the Macedonian Saints' Church* in Auckland, New Zealand.

In the countries of the European Union and other countries the following Macedonian Orthodox churches and church communities have been established:

St. Cyril and Methodius in Goteborg, Sweden; *St. Naum of Ohrid* in Malmo; *St. Clement of Ohrid* in Copenhagen, Denmark; *St. Spas* in Lacen, Hanover, Germany; *St. Holy Trinity* in Munich; *St. Gjorgi Kratovski* in Hamburg; *St. Cyril and Methodius* in Stuttgart; *St. Nikola* in Mainz; *St. Cyril and Methodius* in Dortmund; *St. Clement of Ohrid* in Berlin; *St. Dimitrija* in Allen, *St. Archangel Mikhail* in Billefeld; *St. Atanas* in Nierenberg; *St. Mary* in Biblingen, Sindenfilgen; *St. Archangel Mikhail* in Eshvailer, Achen; *St. Nikola* in Ingolschtadt; and *St. Dimitrij* in Hurt. In Switzerland: *St. Naum of Ohrid* in Spreitenbach; and *St. Mary* in Tichino. In France: *St. Clement of Ohrid* in Paris. In England: *St. Archangel Mikhail* in London.

In the Netherlands: *St. Stefan*. In Italy: *St. John the Baptist* in Torino. In Austria: *St. Naum of Ohrid* in Vienna, and there are ongoing efforts to establish Macedonian Orthodox churches in Belgium and the other countries of the European Union. In Croatia: *St. Zlata Meglenska* in Zagreb; *St. Naum of Ohrid* in Split; and *St. Jovan Osogovski* in Pula. In Slovenia: *St. Clement of Ohrid* in Kranj and Ljubljana. In the South African Republic: *St. Naum of Ohrid* in Cape Town, and in other places and countries.

Following the independence of the Republic of Macedonia and its becoming a sovereign and independent state, and the decline of the Enver regime, conditions became more favorable for greater closeness of the Macedonians mostly in the Republic of Albania, and in the other neighboring countries.

Thus, in Albania there was restoration and renovation of the Macedonian Orthodox churches in Mala Prespa, Golo Brdo, and other towns and villages where there is a Macedonian population.

There was also massive christening of the Macedonian Christian population as well as establishment of associations of the Macedonian Christians and Macedonian Muslims, the majority of which live in Golo Brdo, Prespa, Korcha, Tirana, and other places in Albania. In a large number of places that have a Macedonian population, particularly in Mala Prespa, the MOC plays an important role in everyday life.

Thus, a large number of churches and monasteries were restored and reconstructed with the help of donations from business owners, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, and especially individuals and Macedonian Orthodox Churches and organizations abroad. These churches were blessed by metropolitan Petar and a rich church life takes place there.



The following are among the more significant churches: *St. Vasilij* in the village of Leska, *St. Gyorgi* (St. George) in Dolna Gorica, *St. Gyorgi* in Globochani, *St. Marena* in Tuminec, *St. Nestor* and *St. Gyorgi* in Vrbnik, *St. Arangel* in Pustec, in Cerje, Zrnovsko, and Shulin.

Construction of a Macedonian Orthodox church, *St. Zlata Meglenska*, began in the village of S'potsko, near Edessa (Voden), which is also where the founder, archpriest Nikodim Carknias comes from. Construction of the church is supported by a large number of Macedonian emigrants in the Trans Atlantic countries who come from Aegean Macedonia. In other places in Aegean Macedonia also efforts are being invested toward construction of churches which would be under jurisdiction of the Macedonian Orthodox Church.

In Bulgaria, too there are efforts to build new churches for the Macedonians in the Pirin part of Macedonia, which would be under the jurisdiction of the Macedonian Orthodox Church. Similar efforts are being made in Voyvodina, where a large number of Macedonians live.

It is expected that these intentions and age old desires of the Macedonians in the neighboring countries will be fulfilled with the emerging of the new democratic processes being transferred from the countries of the European Union. This will resolve the injustice inflicted upon the Macedonian people and Macedonian Orthodox Church by its sister Orthodox churches.

The Aurhor





MACEDONIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH AND ITS RELATIONS WITH THE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES (8)

The Macedonian Orthodox Church has been and probably will continue to be the target of discussions, arguments, and even attacks of the church institutions in the neighboring countries and wider, who are trying to prevent, or postpone its joining the family of the equal Orthodox Church organizations.

In so doing an entire propaganda and media mechanism has been engaged to conduct pressure, isolation, and negation of the Macedonian Orthodox Church and its legitimate existence. Its aim is to distort and hide historical facts from the past and the present. The purpose of this write-up is to bring into question the essential characteristics of the Macedonian Orthodox people, its church organism and its truth as a people that possesses its own independent and sovereign state – the Republic of Macedonia.

In the name of the truth we need say that certain circles and individuals of the sister Orthodox churches in the neighboring countries seem to have forgotten their own way to their independence and right to their own national church. In doing so they hide the fact that the Ohrid Archiepiscopate has existed for eight centuries and that its basic nucleus, from its establishment till its illegal closure, had represented the Macedonian Christians from every part of ethnic Macedonia.

At the same time they fail to mention the centuries old movements of the Macedonians (during the XIX and XX centuries) for restoration of the Ohrid Archiepiscopate, which disputes the continuity of this institution in the face of the Macedonian Orthodox Church as a legitimate representative of every Macedonian believer in Macedonia and the entire Macedonian people in the Diaspora.

The fact that at present, even after international recognition of the Republic of Macedonia and its membership in the UN, there is continuing negation of the autocephaly of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, this can be regarded as an attack on the Christianity of the Macedonian people. Therefore, together with the historical truths of the Macedonian people it is also necessary to point out the historical and canonical foundations of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, its continuity as part of the world cultural heritage; to lighten the

unprincipled efforts of previous rulers – conquerors of Macedonia, to impose foreign spiritual hierarchy and to usurp its cultural and church wealth, all created throughout its millennium old spiritual living.

For more than a millennium the Macedonian Orthodox church, in the face of the Ohrid Archiepiscopate, has lived spiritually with its protector Saint Clement of Ohrid. In the ninth century he opened the ways to the cultural renaissance of the Macedonians who had migrated to Macedonia toward the end of the sixth century where they met with the already Christianized native Macedonians whose Christian beginnings are linked to missionary work of St. Apostol Pavle (Apostle Paul) and his followers.

When the holy deed of the Solun brothers, Saints Cyril and Methodius, failed in Velika Moravia, what it had achieved was saved, strengthened, and many times multiplied by their most distinguished disciples, St. Clement and St. Naum, in Macedonia, in their churches, shrines, and schools alongside the shores of Lake Ohrid.

Thus, this literacy, created on the basis of the South Macedonian tongue and the books translated to the first Slavic speaking literary tongue, were the saviors of the entire Slavic speaking people, and even the European culture as a whole. St. Clement of Ohrid had been chosen first Slavic speaking bishop about 1,100 years ago. His Great Eparchy in Macedonia is a spiritual Christian foundation on which the Macedonians could build their church hierarchy. Thus, with 3,500 students at the Ohrid spiritual school, St. Clement of Ohrid educated the people in Macedonia and further, while the holy books written in Cyrillic were used to Christianize even the Russians toward the end of the X century.

Czar Samoil founded his state on Macedonian soil with the Capital in Prespa and Ohrid, depending on the Macedonian ethos above all to organize his spiritual and autocephalous church organization. The very fact that after the defeat of Samoil's descendents in 1018 the Byzantine Emperor recognized and set the rights of the autocephalous Ohrid Archiepiscopate, shows the respect that this church institution had, with a jurisdiction covering the most part of the Balkans and within the borders of Samoil's state. For almost two centuries the great diocese of the Ohrid Archiepiscopate, inherited from Samoil's age, was maintained within the borders of the Byzantine Empire.

During the Byzantine Empire, as well as under the authorities of the Bulgarian and Serbian states during the XIII and XIV centuries, the Ohrid Archiepiscopate enjoyed respect as one of the leading and oldest church institutions in the Orthodox ecumenical order. Even the most educated Ohrid archbishops, who were Greek (Hellen), treated the missionary activities of St. Clement and St. Naum, their teachers St. Cyril and St. Methodius, and the seven martyrs, with greatest respect.

Their monasteries along the shores of Lake Ohrid were considered to be the greatest shrines in the archiepiscopal city because they were the resting



places of the relics of these saints and teachers, and here they nurtured the traditions of the founders of the Ohrid church. Thus, the Ohrid archbishops had left behind them inspirational pages devoted to St. Clement of Ohrid, praising him as their spiritual father.

This attitude was confirmed at the time when the Serbian Orthodox church was rejected by the Tsarigrad patriarchate in 1346 as a result of the acceptance of a patriarchate title. The Ohrid Archiepiscopate then mediated investing efforts in Tsarigrad to resolve the dispute and to regulate relations between Tsarigrad and Serbia, thus succeeding in the resolution. This confirmed the good and correct relations between the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Ohrid Archiepiscopate.

At the same time, during the Middle Ages and the Ottoman Empire, the Macedonians expressed their spiritual and intellectual potentials through the activities of the Ohrid Archiepiscopate. The nurturing of church literature, architecture, and every kind of fine and applied arts linked to iconography and liturgy is ranked very high in world science. It has been assessed that masterpieces for their time were created in Macedonia, and these works of art enrich not only Macedonian but the world treasury of art and culture in general.

During the Ottoman domination the Ohrid Archiepiscopate legalized its activities and expanded its diocese significantly during the XV and XVI century, not only throughout Macedonia but abroad as well. At this time the Serbian and Bulgarian Orthodox Churches were abolished, and the Ohrid jurisdiction was expanded over a number of their eparchies. However, many Ohrid leaders made efforts to organize a union for liberation from the Ottoman rule, which led to some archbishops finding themselves in exile, jails, and emigration.

The Pek Patriarchate was restored in 1557 and it included the Northern Macedonian territories and Western Bulgaria. For this reason the Serbian rulers adapted their title to the new situation. Because of the jurisdiction over parts of Macedonia and Bulgaria they showed that the Pek Patriarchate was not just a church of the Serbian people.

The Ohrid leaders did the same thing previously, during the XVI century, authorizing that they were authorized for Serbia and the other parts of the Balkans. During the Austro – Turkish wars, following the Karposh Uprising joint alliances were formed among the Balkan Christian leaders for joint action in the liberation from Ottoman slavery between the Macedonians, Greeks, orthodox Albanians, Vlachs, and other Christians, on which mutual negotiations had been held.

A movement for the restoration and liberation from Turkish rule appeared in the Ohrid Archiepiscopate during the XVIII century. This rise was met with resistance in the fanariotic circles in Tsarigrad who had a great influence over the activities of the Celestial Patriarchate, while a strong feeling of closeness to their spiritual throne grew within the Ohrid Church.



The people wished to retain the historical continuity and greatness of Ohrid calling upon the annexations of the *fanariotis*, who on the other hand wished to abolish the autocephaly and Archiepiscopate, and to have it join the Tsarigrad Patriarchate. In 1767 Arsenij, the last Archbishop of Ohrid had to withdraw before the influential circles. Hence, the abolishment of the Ohrid Archiepiscopate one year after the abolishment of the Pek Patriarchate was explained by its financial difficulties and material weakness.

The centuries old Christian living of the Macedonians from the time of St. Clement through the long history of the Ohrid Archiepiscopate till the time of the renaissance in XIX century, all contributed to the creation of masterpieces of universal significance, with exceptional esthetic value and deep humanistic message. Thus, in the churches and monasteries of Macedonia significant works of art were created with which humanity can be proud of.

The icons in Ohrid, the frescos of St. Sophia, Nerezi, Nagoricani and Kurbinovo, the architecture, constructors, and the works of applied arts, all enter the anthology of significant achievements of their time. These works contain original characteristics and features connected to Macedonian cultural tradition and they represent a major contribution to Macedonian and Byzantine cultural and spiritual relations.

Macedonia is the cradle of iconography of the All Slavic speaking teachers and the presence of several hundred portraits of St. Clement and his contemporaries. This is sufficient evidence of the cultural continuity of the traditions of the Macedonians from most ancient times till the present day. The question is why is the presence of these apostles of Slavic speaking literacy not so strongly emphasized with the other peoples as it is in Macedonia? This would be because their activities took place among the Macedonians and because their work became part of their living and beliefs throughout the centuries.

Macedonian spiritual space was never closed. Instead, Orthodox spiritualists, writers and artists, were always involved in the noble humanistic currents based on Christ's learning and the traditions of *St. Clement's Church*. Ornamental decorations as well as Glagolic and Cyrillic transcripts from the Ohrid school and created in Kratovo and Slepce during the period from X to XVI centuries are also specific occurrences in the history of Macedonian culture.

Many Macedonian artists also made their contribution to the neighboring Balkan peoples. Thus, many Macedonians took part in the development of art in Serbia and Bulgaria during the XVIII century and were involved in every Balkan environment to build the most complicated church structures. At the same time the *Mijachki carvers* enjoyed the respect of leading masters in the Balkans for a long time.

A specific construction and arts culture developed in Macedonia even after the abolishment of the Ohrid Archiepiscopate, especially in the struggle of the church and school communities for performing church services in the



Macedonian tongue. Thus, hundreds of churches were built throughout Macedonia, made of Macedonian stone, with Macedonian wood, Macedonian brick; with Macedonian soul and heart....

All of these churches most often have monumental dimensions and a basilical shape in order to remind one of the greatness of the ancient church glory. The renaissance period in Macedonia brought with it a specific iconography within orthodoxy, with a special emphasis on the native Macedonian saints, their hagiographies, and on All Slavic speaking literacy.

All of this confirms that Macedonians made a huge contribution to the cultural and spiritual being of orthodoxy in the global arts treasure. For this reason the Macedonian Orthodox Church and the Macedonian people are shocked by the alleged special rights of certain orthodox churches to the ancient Christian Macedonian churches.

It is incomprehensible that the works of the builders, carvers, icon painters, and writers of church books, all created for centuries throughout the past on Macedonian soil, could all be declared as non – Macedonian. It is a surprising fact that throughout the long presence of the feudal rulers throughout the XVI century, the gifts of the church founders and individuals at the time given for renovation or reconstruction of the older churches of the Early Christian and Byzantine period, are all being declared as foreign.

In so doing they forget the ancient church founder's principles that these gifts signify deep respect and prayer of the gift givers toward the ancient Macedonian churches and admiration of the holy traditions of the Ohrid Archiepiscopate. We need emphasize that the donation to a church does not represent a possession of the church, but instead, a prayer for salvation of the donator.

The church founder's gift within the Ohrid Archiepiscopate, as in the other churches, represents admiration and not feudal possession of the amateur rulers of the Middle Ages. Christian monuments in Macedonia are the works of its builders and carvers, they were owned by every citizen of Macedonia, while their spiritual and artistic value was admired by every well intentional person, everyone who believed in the human values of love and peace among people. Church monuments truly were holy places for coming together the Christians from every Balkan country and the world.

Macedonians have never treated the works of their creators in other countries as their own possession, but instead as a natural circulation of the cultural values and religious relations. The Macedonian people built spiritual and cultural shrines with a strong desire, love, and faith toward orthodoxy.

In order to survive in these Balkan regions the orthodox people in Macedonia, throughout a period of about ten centuries, helped each other with the other nations, lent each other a Christian hand, and so survived slavery and assimilation, persecution, and injustice. He survived and will survive for as



long as time runs and the world turns, for the Macedonian nation is Biblical, with a huge Christian soul, with faith, hope, and love of God and himself.

All Orthodox churches should finally face the truth in the eye and accept the objective reality that since 1958 the Macedonian Orthodox Church has lived and created independently according to the learning of the holy fathers and teachers of the Church, based on its Constitution and in the spirit of the Celestial and other assemblies and the pure Orthodox faith.

The inconsistent attitude of the Orthodox churches toward the Macedonian Orthodox Church and their ignoring its church reality, all inflicts great damage not only within the Macedonian Orthodox Church, but to the holy orthodoxy in general.

It is a fact that the Macedonian people now live in their own sovereign, independent state – the Republic of Macedonia, which is internationally recognized. This was requested by the Macedonian people and citizens of the Republic of Macedonia and they voted for total sovereignty including independence of the church.

The Macedonian Orthodox Church has lived an active independent life as a true domestic church, satisfying the spiritual needs of its believers in the country and abroad. Therefore, the Macedonian Orthodox Church and the Macedonian people must not be left alone in the winds of the Balkans, the crossroads of many faiths, nations, and religions.

Unlike the relations of the Macedonian Orthodox Church with its neighboring sister Orthodox churches, it nurtures good relations and collaboration with the Catholic, Anglican, Evangelist, Methodist, Lutheran, Adventist's, and other churches, as well as with the Jewish, Islamic and other religious communities in the world. In the last forty years it has nurtured particularly good relations with Vatican and the Catholic Church in Rome.

This collaboration was especially intensified in 1969 at the 1,100th Anniversary of the death of the Macedonian and all Slavonic educator, Saint Cyril of Solun. An idea was born then that on the 24th May every year in Rome in the name of the Macedonian people respect would be paid to St. Cyril and his epochal deed.

A ceremony takes place at the famous basilica of San Klemente, the place of the modest grave of Saint Cyril of Solun. The ceremony takes place in the presence of a state delegation of the Republic of Macedonia, of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, representatives of the Holy See of the Italian state and religious institutions, organizations and associations, journalists and other public and cultural workers, friends of Macedonia, foreign tourists, church choirs, and believers from Macedonia who come to attend or to participate in this rare and significant event. In 1970 this was permanently inscribed in Macedonian and Latin on a copper commemorative plaque, expressing the veil of time past.



A similar manifestation is held every year in honor of St. Methodius in Elvangen, Germany. These manifestations are now known as “Macedonia in honor of St. Cyril and Methodius.”

These ecumenical relations with the Macedonian Orthodox Church caused the Vatican certain difficulties in their relations with the Serbian, Bulgarian, and Greek Orthodox Churches. Some circles among these churches condemn the Vatican because of its good relations with the Macedonian Orthodox Church especially since Pope John Paul II has had the custom for a number of years to express his Christmas and Easter greetings in Macedonian as well as the other languages. They interpret these relations and meetings in Rome as breaking away of the Macedonian Orthodox Church from orthodoxy, forgetting that Vatican cannot but accept ecumenical dialogue with those Orthodox churches which wish to have such dialogue.

It is true that arguments between the Macedonian Orthodox Church and the neighboring sister churches will continue, which is nothing new in the history of the Orthodox Church. This is a “normal” step in recognizing the autocephaly of another church.

Thus, in their solidarity to the Serbian church other Orthodox churches refrain from acknowledging autocephaly of the Macedonian Orthodox Church even though they know quite well that many of them, including the Serbian Orthodox Church itself had to survive the same experiences and expectations before they were acknowledged their independence. At the same time, there is no Orthodox

Church that negates the existence and truth about the Macedonian Orthodox Church. However, there are Orthodox churches who continue to postpone official recognition of the Macedonian Orthodox Church because of obvious and understandable political reasons, submitting to the interests of their countries and governments.

The Greek and Bulgarian churches do not recognize existence of the Macedonian nation so that they would not have to, as a consequence of this, recognize the existence of a Macedonian minority on their territory. Other Orthodox churches do not wish to enter a formal conflict with the Serbian Orthodox Church because this issue does not touch them directly.

The historical problem of the Macedonian Orthodox Church is extremely clear. It is one of the ancient local churches in the Balkans, headed by the Ohrid archbishop. It was founded and created by St. Clement of Ohrid, one of the disciples of St. Cyril and Methodius. At the same time all of these churches know that there is no returning once the autocephaly process has begun. Unfortunately, such is the history of the Orthodox churches not only in the Balkans but throughout the world.

The Aurhor



HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE MACEDONIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH-OA (9)

Starting from the ancient period up to now Macedonia was, is and will be the place where different civilizations and religions have intersected. Thus, Christianity appeared many centuries ago in these Balkan areas, that is, from the time when Paul the Apostle came to Macedonia. It is mentioned as a land at several points also in the Bible. And, if we throw a historical glance starting from the ancient times of Alexander the Great, through to the Roman and Byzantine times, through the great migrations of the Slav people to the south, and than during the Ottoman period, Macedonia was a crossroads of nations, civilizations, cultures, languages and religions. Through this long and important period of time, only two nations chose the name of this land as a part of their identity – the Ancient Macedonians and the Macedonians today.

Macedonia occupies a central part of the Balkan Peninsula and has an extremely advantageous position at the conjunction of important roads and highways. The country is open along the valleys of the Vardar and the Struma to the Aegean Sea, itself a part of the Mediterranean. In the past the *Via Egnatia*, the most important of all the Balkan Peninsular highways, from Durazzo via Elbasan, Ohrid and Bitola to Thessaloniki and Constantinople stretched across Macedonia.

This geographical position placed Macedonia at the crossroad of East and West. All military expeditions were obliged to cross it, and it was the bridge over which passed the developing trade of the time and, together with it, a variety of cultural, religious and other influences. Macedonia was one of the first regions to be touched by Christianity. It was also one of the first areas to receive the Christian faith and it was through it that Christianity spread to the West.

In addition, the invention of the first alphabet by Cyril (Constantine) of Thessaloniki, a man famed for his rare learning at that time, was a historical watershed for all the Slav peoples. The alphabet itself and the first translations of the liturgical books marked the term of the three languages theory and the introduction of the Slav language into the ranks of the civilized language, Latin,

Greek and Hebrew, and from then the word of God was spread in Slavonic, so people began to write in the Slavonic alphabet and in the Slav language.

Inevitably, the creation of a Slav alphabet was of prime importance for the Macedonian people. First and foremost because the brothers Constantine (whose monastic name was Cyril) and Methodius were from Thessaloniki, in Macedonia, and yet more especially because the first books written in Slavonic were in the language of the Macedonian Slavs. Evidently, Constantine and Methodius could not use any language other than that of the Slavs who lived in their birthplace, Thessaloniki.

The arrival of St. Clement of Ohrid in Macedonia is also of a great importance for the first Slavonic alphabet, because the moment of destiny had come when the Macedonian Slavs found themselves able to be educated by their own teachers in their mother tongue. In addition to other missionary activity, in a period of only seven years, three thousand and five hundred students passed through Clement's university.

This was a true renaissance of the Macedonian Slavs. Here they were not merely confirmed in the Macedonian faith but even received a varied higher education since, in addition to theology, a whole series of other subjects was taught at Clement's university including preaching in Slavonic, singing, civil and ecclesiastical history, natural science, philosophy, medicine and languages. However, the most important thing was that the work of translation carried on here, together with transcription, constituted an entire literary school. Ohrid became the centre from which Slav literacy and literature spread to all the Slav peoples. At the same time Ohrid became a true center of Christianity – *“The Slav Jerusalem”* as it is still known today.

The arrival of St. Naum of Ohrid in Macedonia as a replacement for Clement of Ohrid in the schools throughout Macedonia created the conditions for Clement to devote himself entirely to the organisation of the church and to literary work. Actually, Clement and Naum united once again, continued the work of their teachers yet more vigorously. The death of St. Clement on July 16, 916 was a great misfortune for the nation. However, numerous disciples continued the work of Clement and Naum, headed by the church whose foundations had been laid by Clement of Ohrid. This period was characterised by a growth of monasticism, as well as extensive building of churches and monasteries throughout Macedonia.

There is insufficient information available about church affairs during the period from the death of St. Clement of Ohrid to the creation of the Archbishopric of Ohrid – the Patriarchate. However, the coronation of Samuil was connected with the proclamation of an southern church with its seat at the capital of Prespa where ecclesiastical activity was more developed than elsewhere in Samuil's empire. The center of religious life till the proclamation of Samuil as Emperor had been on the island of Achill in Lake Prespa.



At the opening of the XI century Samuil transferred his capital from Prespa to Ohrid where the remains of Samuil's fortress are still to be seen. Naturally the seat of the Archbishopric was moved at the same time as the capital was transferred and the Archbishopric remained in the same place until the abolition in 1767. Here, once the patriarchate had been proclaimed, Samuil was anointed Emperor by the first Patriarch of Ohrid.

Before the coming of the Turks in the XIV century, Macedonia was a land of rebirth, with rich artistic medieval churches and monasteries, especially in the Ohrid and Prespa regions, which today are symbols both of Macedonian culture and of a world civilization. However, in the last decade of the fourteenth century Macedonia was already under Ottoman rule. The Ottomans did not encroach upon the autocephality of the Ohrid Archbishopric.

In their conquests, they showed tolerance towards the Christian faith. After the capture of Skopje in 1392 and of Ohrid in 1408 the whole of Macedonia fell under the sway of the Turkish Empire. Since, according to the traditions of Islam, the Christians were "People of the Book", the Osmanlis treated them tolerantly to begin with. A short time after the conquest of the Balkans there were four autocephalous churches within the boundaries of the Turkish Empire: the Patriarchates of Constantinople, Trnovo, Pech and the Archbishopric of Ohrid.

After the conquest of Ohrid and Macedonia, the Osmanlis not only did not limit the independence of the Ohrid Archbishopric, but in order to weaken the authority of the Patriarchate of Constantinople they even increased its power. However, the strengthening of the feudal system in Turkey meant the weakening of the Archbishopric, due to heavy material levies and the worsening on the Christians position in Macedonia.

All of this tended to strengthen separatist movements in various regions, to which also contributed the opposed interests of Constantinople and Rome. This in turn touched Turkish interests and the government threw heavier and heavier burdens on the Christians. Thus, in their struggle with the Christian population the Turks introduced compulsory conversion to Islam. This, at the end of the XVI and the beginning of the XVII century, led to mass conversions to Islam in the Tikvesh, Kichevo and Debar regions as well as in Razlog and Bregalnica.

In the difficult situation in which the Archbishopric of Ohrid found itself during the Ottoman occupation, the Macedonian people and the Archbishopric itself were under constant pressure from the Patriarchate of Constantinople, on the one hand, and Catholic propaganda on the other. Where as Catholic propaganda was directed towards the spreading of Catholicism, the Patriarchate of Constantinople was following a variety of aims. In addition to its attempts to hellenise the Macedonian nation it had as its main aim the destruction of the Archbishopric of Ohrid.



Exploiting every possible means, entering into every conceivable form of intrigue with the Ottoman authorities, the Patriarchate of Constantinople managed to inflict its heaviest blow on the Macedonian people by initiating the abolition of the Archbishopric of Ohrid in 1767. The difficult position in which the Balkan peoples found themselves when subjected to the Ottoman Empire was complicated by the interference and intrigues in Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Using its influence with the Sublime Porte, the Patriarchate of Constantinople succeeded in securing the abolition of the Serbian Patriarchate of Pech in 1766 and the Macedonian Archbishopric of Ohrid in 1767. Here again, taking advantage of the financial difficulties which the two churches found themselves in, as a result of heavy taxes and other levies imposed on them, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, applying for their abolition, promised the Ottoman authorities that it would pay the debts. In fact the object of this dirty trick was to achieve the expansionist aim of the Patriarchate of Constantinople which wished to dominate completely all the Orthodox churches within the Balkan boundaries of the Ottoman Empire.

This is confirmed by the inclusion of the dioceses of Pech and Ohrid in the Patriarchate immediately after their abolition as autocephalous institutions. Moreover, the abolition itself was uncanonical since it was done by an act (*irade*) of Sultan Mustafa III and not by the appropriate ecclesiastical convention.

The Patriarch of Constantinople, Samoïl, decided to deliver a final blow to the Ohrid Archbishopric. He convinced the Ottoman authorities that the Ohrid Bishops were the enemy of the Ottoman Empire and asked the authorities in Constantinople to call in Arsenij regarding the debts of the Archbishopric.

In Constantinople, under the pressure of the Ottoman authorities, and the detained bishops of the Ohrid Archbishopric who supported the abolition of the Archbishopric, Arsenij submitted his written resignation on May 17, 1767. His resignation marked the abolition of the Ohrid Archbishopric. The Patriarch Samoïl, with the help of influential Greeks and Turks, arranged a Sultan's decree that abolished the Ohrid Archbishopric, and its bishoprics were joined to the Constantinople Patriarchy. The Sultan's decree forbade any appeals against the abolition of the Archbishopric, and any protest was rendered impossible.

During the Byzantine empire, and under Bulgarian and Serbian rule in the 13th and 14th centuries, the Ohrid Archbishopric enjoyed the reputation of one of the leading and oldest orthodox church institutions in the Balkans. Even the learned archbishops of Ohrid, Greek by descent, showed great respect for the missionary work of St. Clement and St. Naum, and toward their teachers, St. Cyril and St. Methodius. Their monasteries on the coast of Lake Ohrid were considered to be the greatest shrines of the archiepiscopal city because the



relics of these saints and teachers rested here. Traditions of the founders of the Ohrid church were also nurtured here. Hence, the archbishops of Ohrid left behind inspiring pages devoted to St. Clement of Ohrid, praising him as their own spiritual father.

During the middle ages and the Ottoman empire the Macedonians expressed their spiritual and intellectual potentials through the activities of the Ohrid Archbishopric. The nurturing of church literature, architecture, and every kind of applied art related to iconography and liturgy, has been highly evaluated by world scholars. This is proof that works of the highest artistic level were created in Macedonia at the time, which not only enrich Macedonian, but the world treasury of art and culture, too.

The centuries-old Christian life of the Macedonians, from the time of St. Clement through the long history of the Ohrid Archbishopric, until the time of its rebirth in the 19th century, all contributed toward the creation of art masterpieces with a universal significance, with exceptional esthetic value and deep humanistic message.

Thus, important works of art, the pride of the human race, were created in the churches and monasteries in Macedonia. The icons in Ohrid, frescoes in St. Sofia, Nerezi, Kurbinovo and Nagoricani, the architecture, constructors, and works of applied art, are included in every anthology of important works of the time. These works illustrate the original characteristics and features related to Macedonian cultural tradition and signify a huge contribution to Slavic-Byzantine cultural and spiritual relations.

Macedonia is the cradle of the iconography of Slavic teachers and the presence of several hundred portraits of St. Clement and his contemporaries. This is evidence enough of the cultural continuity of Macedonian tradition since the oldest of times. The question that emerges is this: Why is not the presence of these saint apostles of Slavic literacy not so emphasized in other peoples as it is in Macedonia? The answer would be because their work took place among the Macedonian Slavs, and because their work survived due to their life and belief throughout the centuries.

Macedonian spiritual space was never shut. Instead, orthodox spiritualists, writers, and artists, always followed noble humanistic currents which were founded on Christ's learning and on the traditions of St. Clement's church. Specific occurrences in the history of Macedonian culture include ornamental decorations as well as Glagolic and Cyrillic inscriptions from the Ohrid school, made in Kratovo and Slepche in the period 10th -16th century.

Many Macedonian artists gave their contributions to the neighbouring Balkan peoples. For instance, Christopher Zhefarovitch from Doiran, was the most distinguished artist in the development of art in Serbia during the 18th century, while the great builder, Andreja Damjanov from the Veles area, was



invited throughout the Balkans to carry out the most sophisticated church constructions. The *Mijacki* wood-carvers also enjoyed the reputation of leading masters in the Balkans for quite a long time.

A specific construction and art culture was established in Macedonia even after the Ohrid Archbishopric was abolished, particularly during the struggle of church-school communities to have services in the church-Slavic tongue. During this, in every part of Macedonia hundreds of churches were built of Macedonian stone, of Macedonian timber, with Macedonian tiles, with a Macedonian heart and soul. Most often, these churches have monumental dimensions and a basilical form to remind of the greatness of the old church glory. The renaissance period in Macedonia brought a specific iconography in orthodoxy, with special emphasis on Slavic Macedonian saints, their hagiographies, and Slavic literacy in the Balkans.

All of the above is evidence of the great contribution of the Macedonians in the cultural and spiritual growth of orthodoxy in the Balkan and world artistic treasure. For this reason, the Macedonian orthodox church and the Macedonian people express their concern over the allegedly special rights of certain neighbouring orthodox churches to the ancient Macedonian Christian shrines.

It is impossible to understand how the works of the builders, painters, carvers and writers of church books, created for centuries in the past on Macedonian ground, could be declared as non-Macedonian. It is surprising that the church founders and donations of Feudal rulers in the course of the 14th century, restoration and adaptation of older churches during the early Christian, Slavic, and Byzantine period, are also declared as foreign.

They have forgotten that the old church-founder principles of donating symbolizes deep respect and prayer of the gift-givers toward the old Macedonian shrines, and respect for the holy traditions of the Ohrid Archbishopric. We need emphasize that the donation to a church does not represent the property of the church but a prayer for the salvation of the donator.

The principle of church-founding as gift to the Ohrid Archbishopric as well as other churches represents a worship, and not feudal ownership for the amateur masters of the Middle Ages. Christian works in Macedonia are the works of its builders and painters, every Macedonian citizen is their owner, while every well-intending person worships their spiritual and artistic value - everyone who believes in the human values of faith, love, and peace among all people.

Church monuments in Macedonia truly were holy places for bringing together Christians from every Balkan country and the world. For this reason, the Macedonians now protect them using the most modern scientific methods, guard them and care for these structures which are constantly open and accessible to the world, while the craftsmen and donators communicated



through these structures in accordance with their spiritual virtues. Macedonians have never treated the works of our creators in other countries as our possession, but rather as a natural circulation of cultural values and good religious relations among Christians and other believers.

Macedonians built spiritual and cultural shrines with a strong will, love, and faith toward orthodoxy. In order to survive in this Balkan environment, for about ten centuries the orthodox people in Macedonia helped each other with the other nations in the Balkans and the wider region. Offering each other a Christian hand helped them survive slavery, assimilation, persecution, and injustice. The Macedonian survived and will survive for as long as the world keeps turning and the Sun keeps shining because the Macedonian nation is biblical, with a great Christian soul, faith, hope, and love for its church.

The Balkan Wars (1912-13) marked the liberation of Macedonia, but, at the same time the Busharest Treaty of August 10, 1913 marked the tragic partition of Macedonia among Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia. With the Bucharest Treaty, the present Republic of Macedonia had become a part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians (SHS) in which, unfortunately, the Macedonians were not recognized as a separate nation, and were denied their national identity, language, church... In addition, after the uniting of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in December 1, 1918, the question was raised concerning the uniting of the orthodox churches within the framework of the new state into one unique Serbian Orthodox Church of the Kingdom.

Then, in March 1920, on the basis of the agreement between the Kingdom of SHS and the Patriarchy of Constantinople a decision was made by which a blessing was given for the eparchies of Vardar Macedonia (at that time called South Serbia) as well as the eparchies of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to be under the umbrella of a united Serbian Orthodox Church.

However, this situation only lasted twenty years. During the Second World War, through active participation in the antifascist war, the Macedonians obtained political, social and freedom for their Church in one part of their territory, in Vardar Macedonia. In 1944, the People's Republic of Macedonia

was declared within the framework of the Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia. Not many years later this was renamed the Socialist Republic of Macedonia, still within Tito's Yugoslav federation of republics. When the communist blok collapsed from 1989 onwards, the Yugoslav republics also went their separate ways and Macedonia was constituted in 1991 as a separate, independent and sovereign state – the Republic of Macedonia.

Since the 1944's the Macedonian language became the codified and official language of the People's Republic of Macedonia and one of the three languages in Yugoslavia. That was the time when the literature developed and called the



attention of the European and the world literature scene; that's the time when Macedonian cultural, spiritual, religious, social and political life developed.

The Macedonian Orthodox Church a significant role in gathering Macedonians within and outside the country. Therefore, the Macedonian people in its centuries – long struggle for its own state, national and cultural freedom and independence was at the same time struggling for the independence of its Orthodox Church.

The history of the Macedonian people in the last thousand years has always been closely linked to that of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, the Archbishopric of Ohrid. In the absence of a state of their own, the Macedonians established a certain national independence for a long period of time through Ohrid and its Archbishopric. It is the church that nurtured in its bosom a large part of the cultural and artistic activity of the Macedonian people, above all through the building of churches and monasteries.

The National Liberation War of the Macedonian people during the Second World War was not only aimed at national and social liberation, but also at solving the problem of the Macedonian Orthodox Church. In 1943 the first clerical assembly on the free territory in West Macedonia was held in the village of Izdeglavje.

In the autumn of 1944, a part of Macedonia was completely liberated. The newly created Macedonian state had become a fully equal member of New Yugoslavia. Therefore, the Orthodox flock and the Macedonian clergy held the First National Church Assembly in 1945, which passed the decision for the formation of a Macedonian Orthodox Church through the reestablishment of the Ohrid Archbishopric.

In 1959, the Episcopal Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church approved the resolutions of the Second Church Assembly of the Macedonian Orthodox Church held in Ohrid (4th-6th October, 1958) about the separation of the Macedonian Orthodox Church as an independent church, with the newly-elected head – the Archbishop of Ohrid and Metropolitan of Macedonia, Dositej. The representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church headed by the patriarch German took part in the investiture of the new Macedonian Bishop Clement.

The Third National Church Assembly of the Macedonian Orthodox Church was held on July 18th, 1967, in Ohrid, when it was decided to proclaim the independence of the Macedonian Orthodox Church and to have the Archbishop of Ohrid and Macedonia, Dositej, to head it. The diocese of the Macedonian Orthodox Church coincided with the boundaries of the Macedonian national state – SR Macedonia.

The last Constitution of the Macedonian Orthodox Church was passed in 1974, according to which the Macedonian Orthodox Church shall govern and arrange its ecclesiastical affairs independently, in churches. The Macedonian



Orthodox Church has its coat of arms, its flag, and Macedonian is the official language.

The church-eparchy bodies and administrative organs of the Macedonian Orthodox Church are: 1. the Archbishop, 2. the Holy Episcopal Synod, 3. the Archbishop's Religious Court, 4. the eparchies, six in the Republic of Macedonia and three in overseas and European countries (the American-Canadian, the Australian and the European eparchy) governed by the bishops helped by the archpriest deputies in the cities of the eparchy. The basic units of the territorial division are the parishes led by the priests.

The Holy Episcopal Synod is in charge of religious and educational activities and of the publication of religious literature, as well as the education of the clergy and the monks.

At present the head of the Macedonian Orthodox Church is the Archbishop of Ohrid and Macedonia, Stefan, who was elected and enthroned on in Ohrid, the ancient capital of the Ohrid Archbishopric.

The history of the Macedonian Orthodox Church is closely connected to the history of the Macedonian people. They have existed together for centuries, and simultaneously suffer and fight against the assimilation, denationalization and the injustice towards the Macedonian people on the Balkans and on the other places all over the world. The Church has played a first-rate role for the Macedonian people during the difficult periods of slavery. Therefore, it is said that the Church has been the base of the national recognition and cradle of the renaissance of the Macedonians in a longer period.

The Macedonian Orthodox Church plays an important role in gathering of the Macedonians, both in the state and in the world. It is especially stressed by the constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, after the restoration of the Archbishopric of Ohrid in 1958 and after the proclamation of its autocephality in July 1967.

The Macedonian Orthodox Church made a strong penetration among the orthodox Macedonians in the state and among the numerous Macedonian emigration in the overseas countries – the USA, Canada and Australia, as well as among the Macedonians, in the West-European countries.

The Macedonian Orthodox Church as an autocephalous one is a part of the Holy Ecumenical Apostolic Church. It preserves the dogmas, canons and unity of the liturgy with the Eastern Orthodox Church and has a unique organization of the independent management of the church activities. It also protects the Bible (the Holy Scriptum), the rules of all ecumenical and indigenous Councils, as other autocephalous orthodox churches do, and discards all other schismatic teachings. It is steered in accordance with the Bible, the Holy Traditions, the Apostolic Rules and the Constitution of the Macedonian Orthodox Church.



According to the recent knowledge, the Macedonian Orthodox Church has about 2.000 religious objects only in the Republic of Macedonia; churches, monasteries, small churches, chapels, theological educational institutions libraries and other administrative buildings, and more than 70 churches and monasteries are located in the USA, Canada, Australia and the European countries.

A great number of the churches and the monasteries originate from more than ten centuries and present important historical and cultural-educational monuments of the Macedonian people and Macedonia.

The Macedonian Orthodox Church has a Secondary theological school in Skopje. The instruction at the school lasts for five school years. Within the Macedonian Orthodox Church more than twenty years successfully works the Theological faculty "*St. Clement of Ohrid*". Although the Macedonian Orthodox Church permanently insists on it, the Theological faculty is not a part of the "*St. Cyril and Methodius*" University in Skopje. Each year about 50 full-time and part-time students are being enrolled in this educational institution.

The organization and the activity of the Macedonian Orthodox Church take place within its Constitution which enables good and correct relations between the Church and the state. The Church develops its activities, mostly on religious-spiritual plan, for what in a recent time the number of believers and visitors in the churches is increased, especially in the larger cities.

During the last few decades, the Macedonian Orthodox Church (MOC) has been, is, and most probably will be the topic of discussions, polemics, arguments, even attacks by the church institutions of the neighbouring countries and wider, who are trying to prevent and postpone its entry into the family of the equal church organization of orthodoxy.

At the same time there are attempts to dispute the historical canonical foundations of the entire life of the Macedonian Orthodox Church. A large part of the propaganda and media machinery has been engaged in the pressures, isolation, and negation of the MOC and its legitimate existence.

Its aim is to distort and suppress historical facts from the past and present, which is done in order to bring into question the basic characteristics of the Macedonian orthodox people, its church institution, and its truth as a people that has existed for centuries, which has retained orthodoxy and for almost six hundred years has its own sovereign and independent state - the Republic of Macedonia.

At the same time, it seems that certain circles and individuals of the orthodox churches in the neighbouring countries have forgotten how they achieved independence and the right to their own national church. They suppress the eight-century old existence of the Ohrid Archbishopric, whose essential nucleus



- from its establishment until its illegal abolishment - represented Christians from every part of Macedonia.

They suppress the centuries-old activities of the Macedonians during the 19th and 20th centuries for renewal of the Ohrid Archbishopric, which means a denial of the continuity of this institution within the Macedonian orthodox church as legitimate representative of all orthodox believers in Macedonia and the entire Macedonian people in the Diaspora.

One of the important regulations of the Church is the registration, the work and the activities of the Macedonian Orthodox Churches and Church communities outside the state. It is performed on legal basis, because these spiritual centres are also religious, national, social, humanitarian, cultural, educational and sports institutions.

For realization of their activities, these communities have got a wide support, first of all, by the governments of the appropriate countries and the Mother St. Clement Church. The foundation of these Macedonian Orthodox Church communities abroad has a great contribution to the determination of the national identity of the Macedonian emigrants in their new surroundings, no matter which part to Macedonia they originate from.

Through these big spiritual, cultural and educational centers, through the priests in the church parishes, the Macedonian immigrants also get documents which testify about their determination as Macedonians, such as: birth, marriage and death certificates and other necessary acts which are officially and legally recognized by the appropriate legal administration.

Within the most of the church communities are organized internal Sunday schools where the mother's Macedonian language is being learned, the national history, geography and religion instruction. Also, in the church communities is developed the system of sections, such as: the literary, folklore, sports, cooking and others. A great number of newspapers, magazines, bulletins and other publications are being printed, and TV and radio hours which play priceless role in the enrichment of the whole activities of the Macedonian emigrants are broadcasts.

The Author





MACEDONIAN ORTHODOX CHURCHES AND CHURCH COMMUNITIES IN THE DIASPORA (10)

It seems that Macedonian millennial existence looks like a long, rare and almost incredible story, nestled in the annals of originality and eternity. The examples of such endurance of a people who went through such turbulent amplitudes through the centuries are very rare. Rare are the examples of a country like Macedonia, which is so rich in cultural and civilization virtues and peculiarities of historical and epic values.

Macedonia as an ethnic and social entity crossed and went through the stages of denial, exhausting disadvantage of dividing and tearing of long and bloody revolts and battles, that is, until the moment when Macedonia, like a Phoenix stepped on the historical stage and became an integral and respected part of the great European world and universal family.

The endless, long and hard road is also filled with the glossy pages of Macedonian endurance and hardness, as Biblical Macedonia went through a maze of stubborn disobedience, to be finally established and confirmed as a nation, unfortunately, by the middle of the XX century. And, as a people of European profile, located in the heart of the Balkans, on the territory of ancient Macedonia, where old cultures and Roman civilization left numerous marks and Christianity and Islam have long fought for prevalence.

The Macedonian people have survived despite all kinds of pressures, threats and old disfiguring, managing to be saved, thanks to its cultural consolidation. Although the benevolence of the fate usually avoided Macedonia, its centurial exhausting struggles, uprisings, rebellions and obstinacies taught the Macedonian people to successfully overcome the harsh school of survival and led to the final nation-state form.

Between the two World Wars the authorities in Australia, Canada, USA, European states, and other countries of the Diaspora did not register the Macedonians' religious structures as Macedonian institutions because even in their own country they did not have an autocephalous church at the time. Thus, according to their travel documents the Macedonian emigrants could not register as Macedonians.

There, too, their national identity was negated, which is all part of the historical objective reality of the Macedonians in the Diaspora. For this reason in their new environments in the past a certain number of Macedonians satisfied their church, family, matrimonial, traditional, cultural, and similar needs at the other orthodox churches. These included Bulgarian, Greek, Serbian, Russian, Ukrainian, Syrian, and other orthodox churches, as well as buildings of the Catholic, or Anglican Church and some Protestant churches.

However, as a result of the love of Macedonia the idea was born to establish a church council in the Diaspora, in Melbourne more precisely. The first Macedonian Orthodox Church outside of the Macedonian borders, *St. George's*, was dedicated here. This is how this event was described in the newsletter of the Church Board in Melbourne:

"The Macedonian emigrants in Melbourne, led by the ideas of the glorious Ilinden fighters for national and church liberation, at the same time having this right in democratic Australia, to freely express their national feeling, a large meeting was held on the 14 May, 1956 and a decision was reached to build a church center... we are forced to build our own church due to the numerous difficulties we are experiencing with foreign churches: the inability to understand foreign languages, the inability to express our troubles and difficulties, while the priests of other nationalities are not familiar with our religious customs, and if any of them are familiar, they tendentiously wish to divert them to their own customs, all with specific aims and purposes..."

St. George's Church in Melbourne was the first Macedonian church on the Australian Continent, and the Macedonian Diaspora in general, that was blessed by a Macedonian bishop in a joint service with Macedonian priests. For all the Macedonians in Melbourne and Australia this event was of particular importance and represents the foundation stone to the organized establishment and construction of a large number of Macedonian Orthodox churches in the Diaspora.

As a result of this their number has been increasing constantly so that at present there are about eighty active churches and church communities and monasteries with the four eparchies of the Macedonian Orthodox Church: the American - Canadian, Australia - New Zealand, Sydney - Australian and the European eparchy.

These eparchies provide conditions for an increasing affirmation of the entire national and cultural heritage and modern progress of the Church and the Macedonian nation in general. Through their activities the eparchies represent a live bridge of friendship between the Republic of Macedonia and the countries in which the Macedonian emigrants reside.



The role and positive attitude of the Macedonian believers and the clergy in those Macedonian church institutions in the Diaspora are also of huge significance.

As soon as the *St. George's* Council was established in Melbourne, initiatives began for organization of Macedonian Orthodox churches and church councils on the North American Continent. Strong national feelings and awareness were aroused among the Macedonian emigrants in the USA and Canada. As a result of this in Columbus, Ohio, the first church council was established as early as 1958.

Later, on 14 October, 1962 the foundation stone was placed, and one year later, in June, the *St. Peter and Paul's Church* in Garry, Indiana was dedicated. On 5 April, 1964 in Toronto the foundation stone was placed for the *St. Clement of Ohrid Church*, dedicated on 15 April, 1965. This church is above all a beautiful sample of Christianity and at the same time one of the largest and most impressive churches the Macedonians have in the Diaspora.

The Macedonian Orthodox churches and church communities are cultural, educational, folklore, literary, and sports centers at the same time. These are places that continue to nurture the Macedonian tongue, religion, traditions, and customs.

They are the working places of ethnic folklore groups and clubs which are true ambassadors of the rich Macedonian folklore. At the same time these churches are places where the young generations of Macedonian descent can gather and socialize.

The various clubs, such as the women's club, the folklore, literary, sports, and other clubs have developed numerous activities. The role of these church communities is of immense value in the enrichment of the overall activities of the Macedonian emigrants representing an inseparable part of the rich cultural living of Macedonia, with which they maintain constant and permanent relations.

Thus, before the global public and in the communities where they live, the Macedonian emigrants show their Macedonian belonging with much pride. Even more so, thanks to the multicultural policy, the Macedonian emigrants nurture their national traditions with great enthusiasm and inspiration; they present their rich folklore; they sing their folk songs in public places, and dance their beautiful Macedonian folk dances.

In fact, in their new environment they affirm the Macedonian name, cultural and historical past, and present. At the same time, the multicultural programs are themselves reason for expansion of the collaboration and emancipation of the emigrants in many areas of living. This especially applies to culture, literature, sport, the issues and problems of education, radio and television, social and humanitarian aid, and other areas.



Therefore, it is rightfully said that the Macedonian Orthodox churches and church communities in the Diaspora are an expression of Macedonian unity and directly contribute to the affirmation of the Macedonian people. In fact, through the cultural and educational, religious and national forms of gathering in the Macedonian Orthodox churches and church communities the Macedonians went beyond the narrow forms of acting and are affirming themselves as an important ethnic group in their new environments.

Generally in the USA there are twenty one Macedonian Orthodox churches, church communities, and monasteries, these being the following: *St. Peter and Paul* in Crown Point, Indiana; *Assumption of Saint Mary* in Columbus, Ohio; *St. Prophet Ilija* in Cincinnati; *St. Clement of Ohrid* in Lorain; *St. Nikola* in Kenton; *St. George* in Syracuse, New York; *St. Martyr Dimitrija* in Rochester, *St. Clement of Ohrid* in New York, *St. Cyril and Methodius* in Buffalo; *St. Mary* and *St. George of Kratovo* in Detroit, Michigan; *St. Cyril and Methodius* in Cider Grove, *St. George Monastery* in Randolph, *St. Nikola* in Totowa, New Jersey; *St. Cyril and Methodius* and *St. Petka* in Chicago, Illinois; *St. Mary* in Los Angeles, California; while in the process of establishment are the following: *St. Naum of Ohrid* in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; *St. Dimitrija* in Palm Beach Gardens, and *St. John the Baptist* in Tarpon Springs, Florida.

In Canada there are ten Macedonian Orthodox churches, church communities, and monasteries, of which the following: *St. Clement of Ohrid* in Toronto; *St. Prophet Ilija* in Mississauga; *St. Dimitrija Solunski* in Markham; *St. Nedela* in Ajax; *St. Naum Ohridski* in Hamilton; *St. Nikola* in Windsor; *St. Mary* in Cambridge, all in Ohio; while the following are being established presently: *St. Nikola* in Unionville; *St. Ilija* (monastery) in Toronto, Ontario; and *St. Atanasij* in Faber Ville, Laval, Quebec.

In Australia there are about thirty Macedonian Orthodox churches, church communities and monasteries, of which the following: *St. George* and *St. Mary* in Epping; *St. Clement of Ohrid* (monastery) in King Lake; *St. Prophet Ilija*, in Foots Cray; *St. Nikola* in Preston; *St. Dimitrija Solunski* in Springville; *Assumption of St. Mary* in St. Albans; *St. John the Baptist* in Geelong; all in Victoria; *St. Cyril and Methodius* in Roseberry; *St. Nikola* in Cabramatta; *St. Petka* in Rockdale; *St. Prorok Ilija* in Queenbean; *St. Clement of Ohrid* in Port Kembla; *St. Mary* in Hamilton (Newcastle) all in New South Wales; *St. Mary* in New Farm (Brisbane) Queensland; *St. Naum of Ohrid* in Adelaide (Findom), South Australia; the centre of the united Macedonian community of *St. Nikola* in Northern Perth, and the Macedonian community centre of *St. Nikola* in Perth, Western Australia; *St. Mary's Church* in Sydenham; *St. Christ's Resurrection* in Carlton; The Macedonian Orthodox Monastery of *St. Clement of Ohrid* in Rocklin; *St. Zlata Meglenska* in Veriby; *St. Petka* in Mill Park; *St. John the Baptist* in Geelong; The Macedonian Orthodox Center of *St. Clement of Ohrid* in Port Kembla; *St. Petka* in Kembla Grange; The Macedonian Orthodox Center of *St. Holy Mother of God* in



Brisbane; *St. Nedela* in Gold Coast; and the Assembly of the *Macedonian Saints' Church* in Auckland, New Zealand.

In the countries of the European Union and other countries the following Macedonian Orthodox churches and church communities have been established: *St. Cyril and Methodius* in Gothenburg, Sweden; *St. Naum of Ohrid* in Malme; *St. Clement of Ohrid* in Copenhagen, Denmark; *St. Spas* in Lacen, Hanover, Germany; *St. Holy Trinity* in Munich; *St. Gjorgi Kratovski* in Hamburg; *St. Cyril and Methodius* in Stuttgart; *St. Nikola* in Mainz; *St. Cyril and Methodius* in Dortmund; *St. Clement of Ohrid* in Berlin; *St. Dimitrija* in Allen, *St. Archangel Mikhail* in Billefeld; *St. Atanas* in Nierenberg; *St. Mary* in Biblingen, Sindenfilgen; *St. Archangel Mikhail* in Eshvailer, Achen; *St. Nikola* in Ingolschtadt; and *St. Dimitrij* in Hurt. In Switzerland: *St. Naum of Ohrid* in Spreitenbach; and *St. Mary* in Tichino. In France: *St. Clement of Ohrid* in Paris. In England: *St. Archangel Mikhail* in London. In the Netherlands: *St. Stefan*. In Italy: *St. John the Baptist* in Torino. In Austria: *St. Naum of Ohrid* in Vienna, and there are ongoing efforts to establish Macedonian Orthodox churches in Belgium and the other countries of the European Union..

In Croatia: *St. Zlata Meglenska* in Zagreb; *St. Naum of Ohrid* in Split; and *St. Jovan Osogovski* in Pula.

In Slovenia: *St. Clement of Ohrid* in Kranj and Ljubljana, and in the South African Republic: "*St. Naum of Ohrid*" in Cape Town.

Following the independence of the Republic of Macedonia and its becoming a sovereign and independent state, and the decline of the Enver regime, conditions became more favorable for greater closeness of the Macedonians mostly in Albania, and in the other neighboring countries. Thus, in Albania there was restoration and renovation of the Macedonian Orthodox churches in Mala Prespa,

Golo Brdo, and other towns and villages where there is a Macedonian population.

There was also massive christening of the Macedonian Christian population, as well as establishment of associations of the Macedonian Christians and Macedonian Muslims, the majority of which live in Prespa, Golo Brdo, Korch, Tirana, and other places in Albania. In a large number of places that have a Macedonian population, particularly in Mala Prespa, the MOC plays an important role in everyday life.

Thus, a large number of churches and monasteries were restored and reconstructed with the help of donations from business owners, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia, and especially individuals and Macedonian Orthodox Churches and organizations abroad. The following are among the more significant churches: *St. Vasilij* in the village of Leska, *St. Gyorgi (St. George)* in Dolna Gorica, *St. Gyorgi* in Globochani, *St. Marena* in Tuminec, *St.*



Nestor and St. Gyorgj in Vrbnik, St. Arhangel Mihail in Pustec, St. Arhangel Mihail in Cerje, St. Arhangel Mihail in Zrnovsko, and St. Arhangel Mihail in Shulin.

Construction of a Macedonian Orthodox church, *St. Zlata Meglenska*, began in the village of S'potsko, near Voden (Edessa), which is also where the founder, archpriest Nikodim Carknjas comes from. Construction of the church is supported by a large number of emigrants in the Diaspora, especially who come from Aegean Macedonia. In other places in Aegean Macedonia also efforts are being invested toward construction of churches which would be under jurisdiction of the Macedonian Orthodox Church.

In Bulgaria, too there are efforts to build new churches for the Macedonians in the Pirin part of Macedonia, which would be under the jurisdiction of the Macedonian Orthodox Church. Similar efforts are being made in Voyvodina, Serbia where a large number of Macedonians live.

It is expected that these intentions and age old desires of the Macedonians in the neighboring countries will be fulfilled with the emerging of the new democratic processes being transferred from the countries of the European Union. This will resolve the injustice inflicted upon the Macedonian people and Macedonian Orthodox Church - OA by its sister Orthodox churches

The Aurhor





***PART SIX -
WELL - KNOWN
MACEDONIANS IN THE
WORLD***



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ATANAS BLIZNAKOV – THE GREATEST DONOR FROM THE MACEDONIAN DIASPORA (I)

The life of Atanas Bliznakov began on December 15, 1901 in the famous revolutionary village D'mbeni, Kostur Region in the Aegean part of Macedonia. It is the village where a pleiad of Macedonian pre-war revolutionary freedom fighters and intellectuals were born; such as Lazar Pop Trajkov, Lazo Moskov, Lazo Trpovski, Tasko Karadza and others who fought for the affirmation of Macedonian ideals. Atanas was only twenty months old when the Turkish soldiers (asker) entered the village and his mother Doča, holding him in her arms, took him to the mountains to save him from the Turks. Meanwhile his father Ivan, along with other villagers joined the revolutionary detachments which were fighting for the freedom of their native country.

Atanas at age 19, in the prime of his youth, was one of those who had tasted the bitterness of life as an emigrant. In 1920 he left his native soil in search of a better life in the world. From his parent's home he developed awareness that poverty made him leave home, but he also had a distinctive feeling that he was Macedonian, that he was going to remain Macedonian no matter where he would go in the world and that one day he would return to Macedonia.

A new page in the interesting life of Atanas was turned on December 16, 1920 when he arrived in Madison, Illinois, U.S.A., where a Macedonian colony was already established. He became a factory worker there without knowing the English language. After year and a half he moved to Gary, Indiana, a city located near Lake Michigan which was developing into an industrial center. He worked there for 34 years, until he retired, at the Railway Company which was one of the larger companies in the region.

Time passed quickly and, after fifteen years working in this foreign country, he returned to his motherland where he met Slavka, his other half; a beautiful young girl from D'mbeni. They went back to Gary together, this time forever, never to return to their birthplace D'mbeni. Atanas said goodbye to all the good and bad days spent in his birthplace, where more than one thousand Macedonians used to live.

Although Bliznakov spent almost all of his life abroad, he remained connected with the problems of his fatherland till the end of his life. He proved



not to be an ordinary migrant worker, but a person who invested effort to delve into the essence of Macedonian freedom. He took a strong and serious approach to things in general and in that way raised himself beyond the time in which he lived.

During his life, Bliznakov saw the partition of Macedonia as a tragedy and disaster for the Macedonian cause. Therefore he was convinced that, by establishing the *"Atanas Bliznakoff"* Foundation, he would make a valuable contribution to the University of "Sts Cyril and Methodius", to the Macedonian people and, at the same time, would be an incentive and inspiration for future generations of Macedonians in the diaspora and beyond.

The goal of this monograph is to shed light on the life of Atanas Bliznakov, with special emphasis on his donations. This work, which consists of five chapters, each having several parts, is written chronologically and thematically and each part complements and supplements the other.

The first part, which describes the path this donor took in life, has five topics. In the beginning, it gives a short historical account of his birth country, Aegean Macedonia, the country of upheaval, beauty and mystery; at the crossroads of civilizations, cultures, religions, languages and peoples in the past.

The second part titled *"Living and Working in the U.S.A."* outlines the period from his arrival in the U.S.A. until his return to D'mbeni, his marriage to Slavka Bliznakova, their married life, as well as his work and activity at MANS, in the associations of *"Aleksandar Makedonski"* and *"Lazar Pop Trajkov"*, at the Macedonian Orthodox Church of *"Sts Peter and Paul"* in Gary, and others. In fact, this part is an introduction to his forthcoming donations.

The third part is dedicated to the establishment of the Foundation *"Atanas Bliznakoff"*, as well as to its management. Namely, this part describes the most fruitful part of his life and the fulfillment of his life dream: to establish a foundation at the University in Skopje in order to help the Macedonian people in Macedonia by investing his capital in the Foundation to award fellowships to the students of the University *"Sts. Cyril and Methodius"*.

This part abounds with documents, starting with the Decision on Establishing the Foundation *"Atanas Bliznakoff"* at the University of "Sts. Cyril and Methodius" in Skopje, including the list of all students who received fellowships over a period of twenty one years.

The fourth section refers to the honor and glory of the donor and presents the responses and reactions following the establishment of the Foundation, as well as marks its 10th and 20th anniversary and the 90th birthday celebration of Atanas Bliznakov a noble patriot and donor. In addition, this part also describes the last part of his life until his death.

The fifth part of this work is dedicated to the publicist activity of Atanas Bliznakov, to this outstanding Macedonian migrant worker in the U.S.A. who



was really a unique individual with many distinctive characteristics. It should also be stressed that Bliznakov focused his writing towards his fatherland; a place and people for whom he had great patriotism and emotion.

Atanas Bliznakov, together with his wife Slavka, lived in Skopje for more than twenty years (1976-1998). During that time he published two books. The first one titled *"D'mbeni and the revolutionary past of Kostur"* was published by the Publishing House "Misla" in Skopje in 1982, while the second one, *"National political, and cultural activity of the Macedonians in the U.S.A. and Canada"*, was published by the Publishing House "Kultura" in Skopje in 1987.

The second book *"National, political, and cultural activity of the Macedonians in the United States and Canada"* presents the Macedonian immigration, especially the first generation in the U.S. and Canada. In a lively and narrative style he presented the integration of the Macedonian emigrants into the new environment, the establishment of Macedonian associations and clubs, newspapers, organizations and church communities, i.e. parishes.

The book, in fact, is an intersection of history and the development of the Macedonian immigrants in the U.S. and Canada. Bliznakov published many articles in the newspapers in the U.S. and Macedonia, particularly in magazines such as *"Macedonia"*, a journal of the Agency of Immigrants of Macedonia, now the Ministry of Immigration, in the newspaper *"Nova Makedonija"*, *"Vecer"*, *"Studentski zbor"* and also in other newspapers to which he contributed until the end of his life.

In addition, this part also presents the awards and acknowledgement given to donor Bliznakov, a bibliography of published texts, literature and a register of names. This book also contains a large number of photographs, facsimiles of documents from associations in which Bliznakov was a member, as well as letters and other materials aimed at contributing to a more complete illustration of his distinctive and important personality.

The author has made an effort to present the more significant moments in the life of this noble expatriate to keep his memories alive. However, this book will mostly serve the students who held scholarships from the Foundation *"Atanas Bliznakoff"* so they can remember the humane and patriotic work of Atanas Bliznakov who will live on in the history of the University *"Sts. Cyril and Methodius"*, in the history of Macedonian emigration, the Macedonians and the Republic of Macedonia.

The Monograph "Atanas Bliznakov"

35 YEARS OF FORMING THE “ATANAS BLIZNAKOFF” FOUNDATION AND 110 YEARS OF BLIZNAKOV’S BIRTH (2)

The eighteenth day of April 1977 will be written with golden letters in the annals of the foundation “*Atanas Bliznakoff*”. On that day, the 148th plenary session of the Council of St. Kiril and Metodij of Skopje was held and it was a holy moment, a celebration for the Macedonian academic institutions, and a significant event in the life of Atanas and Slavka Bliznakov. In fact, on April 18, 1977 the foundation stone of this charitable organization was laid.

At the session a Decision was adopted on the establishment of the foundation “*Atanas Bliznakoff*”, to provide scholarships for students of the university of St. Kiril and Metodij of Skopje who achieved outstanding results in their studies, but who didn’t have enough money to pay for their education.

Today the Foundation “*Atanas Bliznakoff*”, which celebrates 35 years of its establishment, is the first of its kind in Macedonia, generates great interest among students, the public in the Republic, and Macedonian emigrants overseas. It, above all, is the pride and joy of its donors Atanas and Slavka Bliznakov; a present for the youth and for Macedonia, but also an incentive for other benefactors, no matter where they live, to assist in speeding up economic and cultural development in their country.

This year is also important for the Foundatin, because it has passed a period of 110 year of the birth of the founder Atanas Bliznakov (1901-1998). The person who is one of the most distinguished donors from the Macedonian Diaspora. His name and work are well known among the Macedonians in the Republic of Macedonia and in the Diaspora.

He belonged to the progressive generation of Macedonians on the North American continent, who had spent a long time away from his homeland. He dedicated his life to struggling for freedom and progress for Macedonia and the Macedonian people.

Atanas Bliznakov’s life began on 15 December 1901 in the famous revolutionary village D’mbeni, in Kostur Region, Aegean part of Macedonia. D’mbeni is a village where a pleiad of Macedonian prewar revolutionary freedom fighters and intellectuals such as Lazar Pop Trajkov, Lazo Moskov, Lazo Trpovski, Tasko Karadza and others were born and fought for the affirmation of Macedonian ideals.



Atanas Bliznakov was only twenty months old when the Ottoman (Turkish) Army (asker) entered the village and his mother Doča, holding him in her arms, took him to the mountains in order to save him, while his father Ivan, together with other village dwellers, joined the revolutionary detachments fighting for the freedom of their native country Macedonia.

As a result of the carnage taking place during the Balkan Wars, World War I, and economic hardships and terrible political conditions, a large number of Macedonians, especially from Kostur, Lerin, Bitola, Prespa, Voden Regions, and from other districts of partitioned Macedonia, sought shelter in the entire outside world leaving their hearth and closest and dearest friends and relatives behind.

Atanas Bliznakov, at age 19 in the flower of his youth, was one of those who tested the bitterness of life in emigration. In 1920 he left his native soil and set off to the outside world in a search of a better life. From his parent's hearth he fostered awareness that poverty led him to leave his home, but he also fostered the distinctive feeling that he was a Macedonian, that he was going to remain a Macedonian no matter in which part of the globe he would go, and that one day he would return to his Macedonia.

A new page in Atanas Bliznakov's interesting path of life was turned on December 16, 1920, when he arrived in Madison City, State of Illinois, USA, where a Macedonian colony was already established. There, without speaking any English, he was employed as a factory worker. A year and a half later, he moved to Gary, Indiana, a city located near Lake Michigan, which at that time was developing into an industrial center. There, at the Gerry Railway Company, one of the larger giants in the surrounding region, he worked for 34 years, until the day he retired.

Bliznakov's business activity in the USA consisted mainly of purchasing and selling real estate and shares. In order to invest wisely, Atanas needed skill and knowledge as well as persistently monitoring economic developments – qualities he didn't lack.

Time passed quickly and, after fifteen years of working in the USA, Atanas returned to his motherland Macedonia where he met Slavka Popova, a beautiful young girl from D'mbeni. She was his soul mate, always by his side, for the sixty-three years they were together, encouraging and sharing his ideas and longing together for Macedonia. After getting married they returned to Gary, this time for good, and never again did they go back to D'mbeni, their village of birth.

When asked about D'mbeni, his place of birth, he usually spoke with sadness, especially about the later days when his village became a wasteland after the hustle and bustle of children was replaced by the shrieks of owls and hawks.

Although Bliznakov spent almost his entire life abroad, he remained connected with the problems of his fatherland till the end of his life. He proved to be not only an ordinary migrant worker, but a person who invested his efforts



to penetrate into the essence of Macedonian freedom. His good and righteous ideas, taking a strong and serious approach to things in general, raised him in that way beyond the time in which he lived.

His entire life, Atanas Bliznakov perceived Macedonia's partition as a tragedy, a disaster for the Macedonian cause. He was convinced that, by the establishment of the "Atanas Bliznakoff" Foundation, he would provide a valuable contribution to the University of St. Kiril and Metodij, to the Macedonian people and, at the same time, would give incentive and inspiration to future Macedonian generations in the Diaspora and beyond. Thus, following the example of the virtuous migrant worker Atanas Bliznakov was established the "Petar Stamatoff" Foundation. Petar was from Smilevo, while his wife Jaza from Poland, and they lived in Chicago.

Atanas Bliznakov, together with his wife Slavka, lived in Skopje for more than twenty years (1976-1998). During that time Atanas Bliznakov published two books. The first, entitled *D'mbeni and the revolutionary past of Kostur*, was published by the Skopje Publishing House *Misla* in 1982, and the second book entitled *National, political, and cultural activity of the Macedonians in the USA and Canada*, was issued by the Skopje Publishing House *Kultura* in 1987.

Atanas's goal in publishing the book about his native village D'mbeni was to inform the younger generation about Macedonians, their activities, work, roots and life in Kostur Region, who, not by their own doing, have been scattered all over the world but nevertheless have remained connected, at the level of their souls, with their ancestral homeland.

The second book, *National, Political, and Cultural Activity of the Macedonians in the United States of America and Canada*, tells the story about the Macedonian immigrants, especially about the first generation immigrants in the USA and Canada. In a lively and narrative style he has presented the integration of the Macedonian emigrants into the new environment, the establishment of the Macedonian associations and clubs, newspapers, organizations and church communities.

Atanas Bliznakov has published many articles in newspapers and magazines in the USA and in Macedonia, particularly in magazines such as *Macedonia*, a journal of the Matica of Immigrants from Macedonia and in many newspapers including *Nova Makedonija*, *Vecer*, and *Studentski zbor* to which he contributed till the end of his life.

The period during which Atanas Bliznakov lived and worked in the USA was of great importance to the national struggle of the Macedonian migrants in which he shared their destiny. In the years of struggle starting with Macedonia's partition, the years of oppression that followed, up to the

formation of the independent, democratic and sovereign state – the People's Republic of Macedonia, these Macedonians remained true to themselves.



During the time of political upheaval, Atanas Bliznakov joined the wing of the progressive immigrants which proved to be a significant life changing decision for him. At the same time he became a loyal US citizen and a person with respected achievements in business and in his social life. He was also an active member of the Macedonian-American Peoples League (MAPL) fighting against fascism in order to build a free society, a happier life, and establish permanent peace. The Organization's moral and material support was of significant importance in the period of the Republic of Macedonia's formation.

In other aspects of his life, Atanas Bliznakov was president of the Hospital Committee in Gary, with a mission, as was the case of other North American organizations, to collect funds in order to build a hospital block in the city of Skopje. He was also one of the founders of the associations Alexander the Great, Lazar Pop Trajkov and the *St. Peter and Paul Macedonian Orthodox Church* in Gary.

However, all that they did was not enough to satisfy the desire of Mr. and Mrs. Bliznakov to fulfill their eternal dream of having a free Macedonian state. In 1958, for the first time they came to see the newly liberated state. Then, after ten years, in 1968, after Atanas retired, they came for a second time. In 1976 they came to the city of Skopje in order to live there for the rest of their lives.

Probably the most important day of Slavka and Atanas Bliznakov's lives was the day when the Foundation was formed. Since then, over three hundred students, for a period of 35 years, graduated from the colleges and faculties; while at present, about 50 students from different higher education faculties of the university receive awards. One of the conditions of receiving an award from the Foundation is to study at the University *St. Kiril and Metodij*. Recipients have to demonstrate a financial need to receive support.

The "*Atanas Bliznakoff*" Foundation is the first and only one of its kind in the Republic of Macedonia associated with the University *St. Kiril and Metodij*. It is now worth about 5 (five) million US dollars and is of great interest to the Macedonian people in the Republic of Macedonia and to all the Macedonians in the Diaspora.

The Foundation was the pride and joy of Atanas and Slavka Bliznakov, and a great example of humanitarianism for other people and donors. In brief, allow me as a biographer of his life and work, and as an author of their monograph to say that the "*Atanas Bliznakov*" Foundation is a gift to the *St. Kiril and Metodij* University, to aspiring students, to the Macedonian youth and to all the people in the Republic of Macedonia.

The Monograph "Atanas Bliznakov"

GEORGE ATANASOSKI – A SUPPORTER OF MACEDONIAN FUTURE (3)

This monographic work of the author Slavè Nikolovski-Katin is dedicated to the virtuous Macedonian, a prominent philanthropist, major donor, proven entrepreneur, spiritual devotee and proud member of its biblical nation and Macedonian country - George-Atanasoski. His name is known, recognized, accepted and respected in various fields of life. His name is recognized in the business community here in Macedonia, but mainly in North America and beyond. The truth about George that spans two continents is a multifaceted, intriguing, interesting and very beautiful story emerging from the pages of this wonderful edition thanks to the author's imaginative and subtle approach.

He is a man who always organizes a powerful lobby to nurture and promote the truth about Macedonia, the Macedonian nation and the Macedonian Orthodox Church, with countless examples and facts evident both in the United States where he has lived for decades and in Macedonia from where his roots and his family tree spring.

George Atanasoski rightly deserves a high place in the hierarchical pyramid of people, leading in building friendly and business bridges between the Republic of Macedonia and the United States. Among the immigrant community of our fellow- expatriates he has been active and contributed to positioning the Macedonian ethnicity higher in the multicultural American society, first on the level of organization and activity and then on the level of politics and religion, along with many like-minded people of his generation with immense enthusiasm, success, deliberateness, and tenacity.

George has been and still is one of the pillars in activities organized and undertaken in the struggle for an independent, sovereign and selfgoverned Macedonian state during the key stages, which should be stressed, along that path of endurance and desired grand finale on September 8, 1991, when the dream of many generations became a reality. His messages and words summon power because they are the voice of the people, the voice of truth. The core mission of such devotees and national fighters is to preserve the holiest relics of their nation - the name, language, culture and spirituality, i.e. all the national virtues, but also to help economically. George constantly calls for unity among his nation, stressing that it is a defence of insubordi- nation, the path to overcome many problems, injustice and evil, no matter where they come



from. Unity and joint action are the only way to insubordination, and lead to success for dealing with all the challenges of modern times, and build a strong foundation for the new millennium.

The hero of this book constantly strives and acts for the essential stability and cohesion of the Macedonian community all over ethnic Macedonia, in the Macedonian emigrant colonies, as well as in all other areas vital for the survival and major advances of a nation in peacetime but also in turbulent times. Such prominent businessmen, patriots lovers of their homeland are always guided by this patriotic and holy thought - never ceasing to protect their people, in defense of their identity, and national distinctiveness and independence.

It is not by chance that his dearest and casual acquaintances call him 'legend', which is a quite deserved epithet for Atanasoski who's become one of the elite businessmen and patriotic missionaries. Although his fate was not to live and work at home but to live and work abroad, he contributes to his people in every moment of his life and work. In addition he is consistent in what he says and promises. He is a man of his word when he says that the country should be assisted, and that we have to contribute to the mosaic of all its developmental stages.

Confirmation of this is the fact that he invests in, builds and financially supports the city of Prilep, which he left long ago in order to settle in the United States managing his companies successfully which have become a recognizable brand under Marko's Towers. And of course, wider and higher, as far as the greatest king of all time, the epic hero Alexander the Macedonian can be seen standing as a statue in the center of Prilep. Needless to say this statue was donated by Atanasoski.

The life story of this ambitious Macedonian, George the Great, is being written starting from picturesque Marul, to eternal Prilep and onwards through European countries, as far as New York, and nearby New Jersey, to his final home in sunny Florida in the south of this great continent. As a very young man he left the city under Marko's Towers in search of a different life path, a different future and fortune in distant places. His resourcefulness, industriousness, perseverance and vision have always been his personal hallmarks and trump cards that guided and raised him to where he is today.

Although he left Prilep and Macedonia a long time ago, he's never forgotten them. On the contrary, he used to come back and he still comes back very often to where his roots and nostalgia pull him. He made a very big step in his decision and gesture to build hotel facilities, to raise one of the largest businesses from the bottom, to sponsor sports teams and do other good deeds make an inspiring example of him. The citizens of Prilep appreciate and admire George because he has shown, by his own example, how anyone can love and help their native land and Macedonia.



His maxim translated into action is the same as that of Kennedy - it is not important what your country has done for you, but the most important is what you are going to do for it. Atanasoski is part of the first formation of the World Macedonian Congress, he was a candidate for president of the Republic of Macedonia, President of the political party Macedonian Alliance, an initiator and owner of information outlets *"The Macedonian Sun"* and the TV *"Sun"*. Therefore it is rightfully said that George Atanasoski is a man who is involved in activities that operate and contribute to the well-being of his homeland. He is one of those prominent figures that the Macedonian people have had throughout their history, development and civilization - faithful children and loyal champions.

Therefore, it is rightly said that George is one of the Macedonian patriots, businessmen and philanthropists who, with his charisma, persistence, proven deeds and values, with his steadfastness, has remained an unswerving and proud Macedonian, a prime mover of the thought for free Macedonia and for a united Macedonian people in their ethnic boundaries is George Atanasoski. He deserves great gratitude and recognition for all that he is doing for his homeland, for Prilep and for the Macedonian people as a representative of the lineage of the Atanasoskis.

The rise of a nation, of a church and a state - of the Macedonian people, the Macedonian Orthodox Church, and the sovereign Republic of Macedonia could be seen through the examples of his notable contributions. Our three eternal torches, which are living flashes not only survived through time but they also line up new successes, values and achievements in all fields. And virtuous patriots spread the truth about them, make efforts to preserve their name and prestige, help and contribute in the best possible way. Being a believer, George contributes to the rise of his nation and the sanctity of the MPC with his considerable spiritual deliberateness and commitment in the Macedonian community, as well as in New York and New Jersey, in Macedonia and in Florida where the Atanasoskis live.

And facts, deeds, deserved epithets, compliments and admiration for him could be threaded like pearls onto a string since wherever he goes he stresses his Macedonian origin and Macedonian roots with great love and undying devotion to his homeland - the Republic of Macedonia - the beautiful biblical land on the Balkans, in the southern part of the European continent, and to America, his second homeland across the Atlantic.

The Monograph "George Atanasoski"

60 YEARS OF ACTIVE LIFE AND IMPRESSIVE ACHIEVEMENTS OF GEORGE ATANASOSKI (4)

George Atanasoski, Big George, as his friends prefer to call him, is an extremely great person, well-known, recognized and an unavoidable figure both in the Macedonian diaspora and in Macedonia. He is, without a doubt, one of the most financially successful Macedonian worldwide. Although he has been living in Florida, United States, since his emigration, he is deeply and strongly attached to the destiny, truth, and the latest developments in Macedonia. George Atanasovski is a Macedonian by ethnicity, and an Orthodox Christian by faith. He is one of the biggest instigators and organizers in defending the Macedonian name, especially the Macedonian flag from Kutlesh.

He is a defender and promoter of the history and honor of the Macedonian people and Macedonia all over the world, especially in North America. In these trying moments for Macedonia, when Macedonia is internationally recognized, although not under its constitutional name, he puts forward his views on the possibilities for the Macedonian economic, cultural and religious revival, as well as for its further democratic development as a sovereign independent and self-governing state in the Balkans, an area which is exposed to the winds, figuratively.

Mr. George Atanasoski was born on February 18, 1952 in the village Marul, in Prilep Region, of father Alekso and mother Spasija. In this year of the Lord he celebrated his 60th birthday marking sixyears of his active life, and therefore it is right to say that he is one of the most successful Macedonian businessmen in the world. In 1985 he married and had four sons. His sister Violeta, who is a cardiologist in Florida, and his brother Joseph, who is a known and recognized figure in the business life of American society, are also members of his immediate family.

In 1970 George Atanasoski left Prilep for the United States where he lived with his older brother Joseph. He started his career as an engineer at the University of New York. Only five years later the brothers, who lived in harmony, set up their own business that would later transform into a great company. Today, the headquarters of Microflex Inc. is in Ormond Beach, Florida. The fully automated plant of the company stretches over 16 thousand square metres.



They manufacture top quality flexible metal products which meet the needs of auto manufacturers Ford, Chrysler, General Motors, General Electric, NASA, and other companies world- wide. The agenda of the brothers, who get along very well, was expanded recently to include construction of new production plants in America. In addition, Mr. George Atanasoski plans to construct his first plant in Macedonia to meet the needs of the EU, NATO and other European countries with products from the well-known and recognized program of Microflex Inc., whose quality is confirmed by the certificate for standardization, ISO 9001.

However, Big George is recognized as the most significant Macedonian investor in the Diaspora who has invested in his ancestral country – the Republic of Macedonia. He is a founder of the Macedonian weekly *The Macedonian Sun*, the first of its kind in the world, the international company "Mak AM", a hotel with a petrol pump "Hotel Sun- GA" and hotel "Lipa" in Prilep, the most patriotic TV station in Macedonia, "TV Sun" in Skopje, the company "Žito Prilep" in Prilep, the Prilep Handball Club, and other sound investments. He plans to invest his own funds in new manufacturing facilities in Macedonia and beyond, that makes Big George one of the most successful Macedonians in business world-wide. Therefore, it is quite correct to say that although George Atanasoski has been living and working in the U.S. since his emigration, he is inextricably connected with Macedonia's fate and development.

Among other activities in his new settings in the U.S., Mr. Atanasoski became a member and later, secretary (1974-1980) of one of the oldest Macedonian organizations in North America, the "*Macedonian community of New York*". The organization promoted the Macedonian nation, its history and culture. During his activity within the Macedonian community of New York, he united the Macedonian community by sponsoring social and cultural events including folk festivals, symposiums, poetry evenings, sporting events and the like. He has been particularly active in promoting democracy in Macedonia.

As an explanation, being head of the Organization for Protection of Macedonia's name, flag, and constitution he promotes the recognition of Macedonia as a sovereign state by countries all over the world. In parallel with the promotion of democracy in Macedonia, Mr. Atanasoski focused, in May 1992, his efforts on financial assistance to the World Macedonian Congress (WMC). This association is a broad organization that supports the civil society and economic development, coordinates and gives its technical support to NGOs.

The same year, George Atanasoski was elected president of the Macedonian World Congress of North America, one of the most influential Macedonian NGOs worldwide. His engagement at WMC resulted in organizing humanitarian activities to sponsor research activities in Macedonia in the field of history.

Following the independence of the Republic of Macedonia, Mr. Atanasoski commenced his active engagement on the Macedonian political scene,



while on an international level he is one of the greatest supporters of preserving and fostering the national interests of the Macedonians in their country and all over the world, paying particular attention to their economic progress.

On June 24, 1994 he cofinanced, organized and started up the first Macedonian weekly, *The Macedonian Sun*, in order to emphasize the importance of and create confidence in the independent media. This weekly is very successful in the Macedonian media space, and it is open to any citizen in the country and beyond.

As a result of his political career, the Macedonian businessman George Atanasoski ran for president of the Republic of Macedonia as an independent candidate in the presidential elections in October 1994. It was necessary to provide ten thousand signatures in an extremely short period of time. And when it was completed in record time, the National Election Commission regrettably "concluded" that the necessary number of signatures was not provided. The presented valid arguments did not bear fruit.

In 1999 Atanasoski again ran for president of the Republic of Macedonia, with the desire to, if he gained the trust of the citizens, promote democracy in the country, develop an economic system based on the principles of a free market, and a state governed by the rule of law. The main agenda of his campaign was to accelerate the economic and social development of Macedonia. Regrettably, he failed to transform his intention into reality as a result of similar reasons.

However, Atanasoski didn't deviate from the path he had followed for the well-being of the Macedonian people and for their better life at the present time and in the future. He kept on with his activities and, as a result, he launched an initiative to set up the political party *Macedonian Alliance* during January 1996.

The District Court in Skopje, which is in charge of the court register of political parties, adopted a decision in out-of-court proceedings, and pursuant to this decision the *Macedonian Alliance* based in Skopje acquired the status of a legal personality and was allowed to commence its activity as of March 22, 1996.

Since 1996 Mr. Atanasoski has been president of the *Macedonian Alliance*. This party was registered in Skopje, but it has branches in all countries where Macedonians live. Promoting his patriotic views, the *Macedonian Alliance* has become synonymous with the national struggle of the Macedonian people. With the aim of expanding its influence, the *Macedonian Alliance* formed a Macedonian national coalition that participated in the 1998 parliamentary elections. Unfortunately, the party didn't manage to get its deputy into the Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia as a result of the already well-known reasons.



Nevertheless, the *Macedonian Alliance* persistently continues its ambitious development plan for the Macedonian economy, for finding ways out of the crisis, and for a comprehensive development of the country. To this aim, this party has offered the hand of cooperation to all Macedonians and minorities living in the Republic of Macedonia so that anyone can participate in the overall prosperity of the country in the future,

The well-known Macedonian businessman George Atanasoski is also a great philanthropist, benefactor and patron of many important national cultural events in Macedonia and overseas where many Macedonians live and work. He gives his comprehensive technical, political and economic analysis of the situation in the country and beyond.

George Atanasoski has been active for the benefit of Macedonia, Macedonians and for finding solutions to the Macedonian issue for so many years, uniting Macedonian immigrants and the Macedonians who live in the neighboring countries by sponsoring social and cultural events, including folk festivals, sports events and the like. He especially cares for the Macedonians in the Aegean and Pirin parts of Macedonia, for the Macedonians living in Mala Prespa, Gora and throughout Albania.

Therefore it is proper to say that Great George really is a prototype for a Macedonian who has successfully achieved his goals abroad with his knowledge, intelligence, resourcefulness and adaptability. Guided by his love for Macedonia and its sun, like Alexander the Great, he is active in Macedonia as well.

For twenty years since the independence of the Republic of Macedonia he has participated and invested, with his heart, soul and great love, in the economy, politics, culture, media and social life in general for the existence and continuation of the Macedonian people and of Macedonia. Today, George Atanasoski lives with his beloved Maria Gontcharova, born on 11.04.1965. She is an internist and a granddaughter of Natalia Gontcharova Nikolovna, the wife of the greatest Russian poet Alexander Sergeevich - Pushkin.

The Monograph "George Atanasoski"

ESMA REDZEPOVA -TEODOSIEVSKA, PROMOTOR OF THE MACEDONIAN CULTURE (5)

The saga of Esma Redzepova -Teodosievska is a hymn for praising a human being, the lady with the voice of an angel, stage virtuosity and excellence before which millions have bowed down in the world's most prestigious concert halls on all meridians of the planet Earth. Esma. Well-known name. Recognized. Appreciated. Highly respected. Respected and rewarded. A name that has provided a high place among the stars, that has become one among the legends with its masterfully performances, uniqueness, countless successes and mega popularity.

The monograph *"55 Years Esma with Her Song"* by Slave' Nikolovski-Katyn is dedicated to our music and charity heroine, Esma Redzepova-Teodosievska, most outstanding name of the Roma, Macedonian, Balkan, but, also of the world folk and treasure.

It is an unusual, lively, special and very layered and interesting story that looks like a timeless chronology, dignified on these pages and between these covers, by the author, with Katin's imagination, skill, knowledge and power of the well-chosen word and lettering immortalized in the specific kind of treasury documentation for our hero.

Esma Redzepova-Teodosievska is a powerful promoter and true ambassador of her native Macedonia, whose name and fame she has proudly spread through dozens and dozens of countries on all continents, becoming recognizable Macedonian brand through time and space.

But she's also dedicated her life to humanity, philanthropy and kindness. The lady with the divine voice is a musical talent discovered at her ten-year age, when they entered her name at the-then very popular radio show *"The microphone is yours"*. She wins the first prize, and soon becomes famous young girl from the center of Skopje. With her hands outreached to the music editor Stevo Teodosievski, who offers and provides full support, training and engagement, and with her talent, effort and perseverance, she starts climbing up the music ladders and becomes popular music diva whose successes become her indelible mark in continuity. She becomes recognized, accepted



and acknowledged worldwide with her song, temperament, originality, musical rhythm and sensitive connection with the audience.

Esma Redzepova-Teodosievska is a distinguished music artist for more than half a century. Jubilee which is crowned with glory and jubilee rarely experienced. She is relentless, dynamic, and remains active on the music scene. With unbearable lightness she interprets master pieces and anthological songs of the Macedonian and Roma spirit that, through masterful performance and vocal 'pirouettes', have brought her the title Queen of Song because this intense burst of song comes from the bottom of Esma's soul and with its power it manages to get to hardest hearts, to stir up also the most hidden emotions of the admirers of her song.

Esma, the hero of this book, by her 55-year friendship with the Roma and Macedonian song, constantly affirms the Macedonian culture in the Republic of Macedonia, the Balkans and worldwide. Such prominent star, legend and patriot - a lover of her homeland, is always led by the wholly idea to present the song and leave indelible traces for future generations.

Many have said and written that Esma is Esma, unique and inimitable. Esma's voice rises from the Esma's heart, and so she extols the world, encourages it, uplifts, dignifies, enriches, nourishes and powers it by her melodious voice that makes her a rare musical artiste shaped by her destiny, while her mission is to be a charity donor and philanthropist.

With her divine voice she "fooled" many nations. When she sang in Spain they thought that she was a Spanish Roma. In Russia she "used a little bit wrong accent" so that the audience thought she was from Uzbekistan. In Cologne the audience of 20,000 spectators remained speechless when they heard her voice. There was absolute silence in the concert hall as never before. She is happy that she was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for the second time. First, in 2002 as the candidate of the Red Cross of Yugoslavia, and again in 2006 as a 'trump card' of the World Organization of Roma, with the support of 76 NGOs and Lions clubs in the country.

Owing to her originality and musical virtuosity Esma is called Queen of Roma music worldwide. As a result, in 2010 the President of the Republic of Macedonia, Gorge Ivanov, awards this musical performer with the "*Order of Merits of Macedonia*" for her activity in the music world thus far, as well as for her humanitarian and philanthropic activities. On that occasion her modesty would say: "*I don't deserve this high recognition but the citizens of Macedonia deserve it because I am always in their homes. This is not just recognition for me, but also recognition for all nationalities living in Macedonia*".

In addition, Esma Redzepova-Teodosievska is the first woman who was awarded the prestigious title "*National Artiste of the Republic of Macedonia*" in



2013. She is the third recipient of this highest national award, among the three male holders: Simon Trpceski, Milco Mancevski, and Boris Trajanov.

If someone has elevated the Roma women as self-conscious, bold, decisive, warm, smart, hard-working, committed then it is certainly Esma.

Esma Redzepova-Teodosievska has always entertained and delighted her audience and the lovers of the beautiful song in the world, and she is present at all events related to the life of the Roma and the Macedonians by her beautiful song. She is present with the song *"Macedonian Girl"*; at all wedding ceremonies with *"Chajorie Shukarie"*, while at the parties, regardless of the age of the audience, with the song *"Life, wait a little"*.

Her message is that she loves the life and gives her boundless love to people lavishly. Her predestined mission is to be a benefactor, to help, to be a mother over mothers, steadfast and persistent in her intentions to shower anyone with great love from her inexhaustible source of goodness that makes her exception in this a little bit strange world. And the purpose of her life is philanthropy which consistently follows her all the past years making her popular, well-known in the Macedonian and Roma folk music.

The woman with the divine voice who started her career from her first music revelation on March 11, 1957, has become accepted and recognized worldwide for the past 55 years thanks to her angelic voice. With her song, temperament and Roma musical rhythm she has conquered the world. Esma has become an easily recognized Macedonian brand in the world by her originality and musical virtuosity.

Dressed in the Macedonian flag, she loves her country and upholds the tradition of the Macedonian and Roma people ringing out through the sounds she produces. When on stage and on tour, she is not only a great voice, but she is a lover of her country about which she speaks at all meetings with journalists, ambassadors, politicians, presidents, mayors and the audience.

On many tours she was often invited to give lectures about her musical excellence and on those occasions she always used the opportunity to present Macedonia and its beauty as well, so, it is not too ambitious to say that Macedonia is recognized worldwide also by Esma Redzepova evident by her numerous awards certificates, titles, acknowledgments, and letters expressing gratitude from all over the world. Therefore it is rightly stated that Esma Redzepova-Teodosievska is the ambassador of our culture and promoter of the Republic of Macedonia.

The Monograph "Esma"

RADA KRSTEVSKA – VIDINOVSKA'S LIFE STORY (6)

Today, Macedonians in new environments in multicultural and democratic Canada, proudly emphasize their origin. Moreover, thanks to the role of the Macedonian Orthodox churches, church and other associations and the positively oriented Macedonian clergy, emigrants with great enthusiasm and impulse maintain the church and folk traditions and proudly emphasize the rich folklore, language, literature and traditions, affirming Macedonian past and present, thereby defending and affirming the Republic of Macedonia.

The life of a noble family of emigrants from Macedonia in Canada, such is the Vidinovski family, placed in a modest with data biographical and journalistic time flow, is a peculiar kind of saga for its survival. The monograph for the family of Vidinovski with all modesty is dedicated to its life and the work that they left as a remembrance for the young generations in their family forever, and to be a good example for the emigrants to cherish their love for the grandfathers' roots in Macedonia

Radaa Krstevska - Vidinovska She is a Canadian woman of Macedonian origin, born in the village of Zhivojno, and married in Krstoar. Rada left her native country - Macedonia, but memories, thought, love, sorrow and patriotic spirit towards her homeland and her people remained deep inside her. Such penetration of these horizontals in the life of Rada and her husband Boris (Borche) Vidinovski, as well as in the life of all Macedonians around the world, reveal the image of the Biblical nature of the ancient land of their origin - Macedonia.

When writing about Rada Vidinovska it can be said that poetry is actually her life. In her poetry her two homelands Macedonia and Canada are intertwined. That's why the poetic works she wrote are a good example of a honest and hardworking Canadian Macedonian woman, for who her fatherlands induce joy, and sorrow, and admiration at the same time.

The economic reasons, or the idea of a better life, made the family of Vidinovski to leave to Canada. In 1970 she left her homeland with her family and immigrated to Canada, Toronto, where she actively joined the Macedonian emigrant organizations and church communities.

Therefore, it is often said that today, the Macedonian emotional, national and cultural space is not fenced only in the area of historical ethnic fact. Today, Macedonia stretches from the Balkans - to infinity. One such trauma



could only be endured by a nation that, in its essence, is gifted and capable of defeating all trauma and all historical injustices.

In Canada, Rada Vidinovska became a Macedonian emigrant writer, poet, essayist and storyteller. Therefore, it can be said that in her poetic framework and through her works the Macedonian emigrant history is projected. She is a person of respect and an example which other Macedonians in both homelands, Canada and Macedonia can and should follow.

She is living in Toronto, Canada with her family, but she constantly craves, sings and grieves for her native Macedonia. Her roots are from the village of Zhivojno, Bitola region, where she was born on July 15, 1944. In Toronto she actively joined the Macedonian emigrant organizations and church communities.

She was a member of the management of MOC "St. Clement of Ohrid", a member of the Cultural Committee, as well as president of the women's section of the church "St. Clement of Ohrid", a president of the women's section of the organization "United Macedonians" and a president of the Writers' Society "Miladinov Brothers" in Toronto.

She published her verses in "United Macedonians", "Macedonia", "Macedonian News", "Vecher", "Vreme" in the magazines "Macedonia", "Sovremenost", "Zhe-na", "Stozher", "Bitola Gazette" and etc. She is one of the most active members of the "Miladinov Brothers" Writers' Society, as well as in the Macedonian community in Toronto, Canada and one of the greatest poets of the Macedonian Diaspora.

Rada Vidinovska is the author of the following poetry books: „Бисерни кайки од Хуџазара“ (*Pearl drops from Niagara*) (1992), „Молњи во око̀шо“ (*Lightning in the Eye*) (1993), „Белези за душа̀и“ (*Marks to the Soul*) (1993), „Скришни огледала“ (*Hidden Mirrors*) (1995), „О̀ворени ѝорѝи“ (*Open Gates*) (1999), „Траги ѝо корено̀и“ (*Traces in the Root*) (2005), „Жена на брего̀и на океано̀и“ (*Woman on the ocean coast*) (2007), „Харфа“ (*Harp*) (2007), „Göç Kuşu“ in Turkish language (2008) translated by Esad Bajram, „Бисери и кавали“ (*Pearls and Fifes*) (2009), „Трендафило̀и од Живо̀но“ (*The Rose from Zhivojno*) (2010), „Огњиште“ (*Fireplace*) (2012), „Мајка Македонија“ (*Mother Macedonia*) (2013) and „По̀езија̀и - мо̀јо̀и живо̀и“ (*Poetry - My Life*) (2018).

She is the first laureate of the "Emigrant Charter" award in 1992, which for the first time the House of Immigrants of Macedonia awarded for the best poet from the Diaspora at the Struga Poetry Evenings. She is currently a member of the Justice Commission within the Managing Board of the church "St. Clement of Ohrid". She is a member of the Writers' Society of Macedonia since 1994 and member of the Mediterranean Academy "Miladinov Brothers". Her books are translated into many languages.

She is represented in several anthological sources from the Diaspora and in Macedonia, as well as in the anthology "One Hundred Macedonian Short Stories"



as a short story writer (publisher "Phoenix" - Skopje, 2009). She is represented in the book of selected essays "Year of the essay" published in 2010. She is the winner of the "Book of the Year" award for her book "Pearls and Fife" at the Mediterranean Academy "Miladinov Brothers".

She has participated in the International manifestation "Struga Poetry Evenings" for several years upon an invitation of the Managing Board of the SPE and she is represented in the "Who's Who" selection for the world's poets.

All of the fourteen poetry works written by Rada Vidinovska are a fine example of a diligent immigrant woman whose life story, at the same time, is a modest part of the history of her native Zhivojno and Krstoar (the place of her marriage with Boris Vidinovski), of the Macedonians in the diaspora, and through them of their homeland - Macedonia.

Poetry works by Rada Vidinovska are promoted in many places in the Republic of Macedonia and the North American continent. It contributed to her being the first laureate of the "Emigrant Charter" in 1992, which for the first time the House of Immigrants of Macedonia awarded for the best poet from the Diaspora at the Struga Poetry Evenings. Rada is a member of the Writers' Association of Macedonia since 1994, and she is also a member of the Mediterranean Academy "Miladinov Brothers" from Struga.

It can rightly be said that with her poetic views Rada strives to penetrate into the essence of the Macedonian and Canadian living, the emigration truth, freedom, and future... Hence the realization that dealing with this work makes us richer for another new and an indepth view of the poetic transfer of the country and the people to whom Rada Vidinovska belongs, who is proud to feel like a Canadian Macedonian or a Macedonian Canadian woman.

Otherwise, the Vidinovski family is part of the many fortune seekers from the regions below Pelister, to whom the fate was cruel and left centuries-old traces and scars to the lives of the emigrants. In that migrant saga, of course, special place belongs to their birth village Krstoar, which is closely related to the historical and social development of Macedonia and the Macedonian people, as well as with the emigration in general.

Borche and Rada are persons of respect and they represent a role model which other Macedonians in both homelands, Canada and Macedonia can and should follow. The work accomplished by Borche Vidinovski and his life companion Rada Krstevka Vidinovska is a good example of a honest and noble Canadian couple

The Monograph "Vidinovski"

THE STAMEVSKI FAMILY - AN AFFIRMER OF MACEDONIA (7)

My years-long engagement in studying Macedonian migration led to the publication of numerous books in this field. In recent years, however, my attention has been increasingly preoccupied by the successful Macedonians in the Diaspora, whose number is not a small one, and who have left a unique mark on this old migratory phenomenon. And not only because of the specific character of the migratory movements in the world, especially during the last century, but because of the fact that the Macedonians leave a unique mark on the societies in which they integrate, regardless of which world meridian they may find themselves on. An epitome of this is the highly respected family of Steve Stamevski from the village of Odri near Tetovo.

He is a Macedonian migrant in the state of Illinois, USA, a distinguished businessman in Detroit, a well-known and acknowledged donator, a humanist, and loyal patriot of Macedonia and the USA.

His family experienced every phase of the Macedonian crucifixion, filling the entire 20th century with events typical of the age-long struggle of Macedonian survival, not only in the old fatherland, Macedonia, but in every place in the world to which they migrated. It is a family to be respected and one that should serve as an example to the other Macedonian families in both fatherlands, USA and Macedonia, because the work of the Stamevski family is a beautiful example and inspiration of an honest and noble family.

Analysis of their stormy migratory path, precisely for the reasons given, reveals to us the world of the Macedonian on a global level, showing and confirming that the descendents of Alexander of Macedon, regardless of their native origins, are part of one of the oldest civilizations in the world, whose eternal values they carry to every part of our galaxy, by which the world recognizes us.

For this reason, the history of any successful Macedonian family in the Diaspora is in fact a history of the age-old Macedonian existence, not only in the Balkans and Europe, but on every other continent as well. For this reason, my attempt to write a monograph of the Stamevski family in my research work on the Macedonian migrants is the crown to this independent project. The monograph is based on facts that spring from the lifetime opus of these people of ours, who are the pride of their old fatherland, Macedonia, which, despite all the problems it is currently experiencing, has nevertheless made its



first successful steps towards its democratic reform within the European and world integration processes.

One of the most significant people, who have made a great contribution to the affirmation of the independence of the Republic of Macedonia and its recognition by the USA, is of course Svetle Stamevski, a politician, a member of the same party, and friend of the American President George Bush Junior.

This book is a monograph of the Stamevski family, who come from the village of Odri, near Tetovo, Macedonia. Since the second decade of the previous century, this family has lived and worked in Detroit, in the state of Michigan in the USA. One can get the full picture of them only under one condition: if we break down their native hearth of Odri, near Tetovo, as their property, and Macedonia as their fatherland. Thus, their history will be complete, especially for those who will find this book in their hands, Steve's American friends and his new generations, but also those in the fatherland, who still do not have the complete picture – and who do not know how to help it.

They will learn this lesson from Svetle (Steve) Stamevski, who has not only not given up on Odri, Tetovo, and Macedonia, but is also having an effective influence on the currents of American politics. Among others, Svetle Stamevski also deserves credit for the election of America's leader – George Bush Junior. Both, he and Macedonia are proud of this, for his contribution in this respect is a contribution to the future of the most powerful nation in the world, and indirectly to the future of Macedonia, and only time will tell whether our country will know how to appreciate this.

The story of Macedonian existence throughout the centuries is quite incredible. There are few cases in history where a nation has survived the catastrophes of the epochs. As a land with rich culture and tradition, an ethnic organism and social community, Macedonia has experienced phases of negation and anonymity. It smoldered in the ashes of long deprivation, subordination, and slavery of various kinds up to the point when it emerged on the historical scene like the phoenix, as an inseparable piece of the great global family of the nations and countries.

As a biblical land, Macedonia passed through the labyrinth of time along the endlessly long and winding road, filled with the radiant pages of endurance. This is especially emphasized by a phenomenal exception: a nation that is finally constituted as late as the mid-twentieth century, a nation of European profile located in the heart of the Balkans. It is an Ancient Macedonian territory where Hellenic culture and Roman civilization left numerous traces, where Christianity and Islam competed for domination over a long time. It is a land of clashes, but also of mutual perception of the Albanian, Turkish, Roma, Greek, Serbian, Bulgarian, and other ethnicities. The Macedonian nation survived all the forms of pressures and age-old denials of its identity, only managing to maintain itself thanks to its cultural consolidation. Even though good faith was



most often not on their side, nevertheless, the entire logic of the long, age-old exhausting struggle, accompanied by uprisings and rebellions, defiance and motivation, taught the Macedonians to overcome the crude lesson of existence successfully.

Macedonia first existed as an independent state during the Ancient period. It was a slaveholding country located on the territory that used to be referred to as Emitia. Ancient Macedonia bordered to the South with Ellada (modern day Greece), to the West with Epirus, to the North West with Illyria, and to the East with Trace. The country was primarily populated by the Macedonian tribes known as Orestis, Lynkestians, Elimiotis, and Evrodeis, who resembled their neighbors in an ethnic sense.

In the 6th century BC Macedonia did not have any close communication with the Hellenic states and cultures. In a social respect it still lived in the primitive period. However, towards the 5th century BC it entered the phase of the so-called military democracy. When the developing processes on a social level came to include Macedonia in the class system, too, the broken up land of districts was united for the first time, and a political unification resulted. King Alexander I (498-454 BC) was the first to unite Macedonia. King Archelaos enhanced centralization and introduced monetary and military reforms (413-399), and during the time of Phillip II (359-336) the Macedonian empire expanded. He reorganized the army and liquidated all separatist tendencies. Furthermore, with the battle at Chaironeia (338 BC precisely on the 2 August, as a first Ilinden) he inflicted the greatest defeat upon the Hellenians, and to the entire anti-Macedonian coalition, thus making Macedonia one of the most powerful countries in the Balkans.

Phillip II was succeeded by his son Alexander of Macedon, known as Alexander the Great (336-323 BC) who continued the conquests and reached as far as India to the East. Macedonia then became the center of a huge country that stretched over three continents and reached the summit of its development.

However, after the death of Alexander of Macedon, Macedonia began declining as a state. The conquest efforts of the Romans in the Balkans led to the three so-called Macedonian wars that were waged during the periods 214-205, 200-197, and 176-168 BC. After this, Macedonia was conquered and partitioned into four autonomous districts within the Roman province with its main center in Thessalonica, and later a second center in Stobi.

From the end of the 6th century to the middle of the 7th century AD almost all of Macedonia, with the exception of the city of Thessalonica, was inhabited by the Slavic tribes known as the Draguvitis, Sugaditis, Veligizitis, Strumjanis, Rinhinis, Smoljanis, and Berezitis. They mixed with the natives, quickly assimilating them and thus creating the future ethnic amalgam of the Sklavins, or the Macedonian Slavs, i.e. the Macedonians. Finding themselves in the busiest part of the Balkans, the Macedonian Slavs quickly became the object of foreign



aspirations and wars, for Byzantium always saw in their stronger state organization a potential threat that a new powerful Slavic country may be created. After a persistent and long resistance of more than 200 years, the Macedonian Slavs were conquered by Byzantium.

The Byzantine dominance in the Balkans was also felt in the 10th century with the beginning of the processes of intensive feudalization of society, the development of agriculture, and the formation of village-based territorial municipalities. However, among the Macedonian Slavs the strengthening of feudalism led to a strong resistance, known as the *Bogomil* movement. This counter feudal inclination of most classes of the people was occasionally demonstrated by rebellions and uprisings. One of the best known anti Byzantine uprisings is the rebellion of the sons of the Brsyak Prince Nikola in 976.

By the end of the 10th century, Nikola's son, Samoil, managed to liberate all of Macedonia and to organize the first state of the Macedonian Slavs. Samoil's empire lasted from 976 to 1018. Macedonia was then one of the most powerful countries in the Balkans, with its center being first in Prespa, and then in Ohrid. It is important to note that at the time the Macedonian church had the rank of a patriarchate. Samoil's Macedonian state included Thessaly, Epirus, and part of Albania including Durres, Northern Bulgaria, Bosnia, Duklja, and Raška.

Czar Samoil's defeat by Byzantium in 1014 in the battle near Belasica was followed by many centuries of slavery for Macedonia, first under Byzantium, then Bulgaria and Serbia, and finally Turkish Ottoman slavery that went on for over five centuries, until the beginning of the last century. In addition to the numerous rebellions and uprisings of the Macedonians against these conquerors, they also actively participated in the battle against the Turkish tyranny.

They participated in the Serbian and Greek uprisings (in 1804 and 1821) with their own troops. Nevertheless, the most massive uprising was the one against the Turks during the Austrian-Russian war up to 1689. This was the Karpoš uprising, which was then followed by the Kresnensko Uprising in 1878, the *Brsyak* rebellion in 1880/81, the activities of the *Voyvodas Grandpa Iljo Maleševski, Spiro Crne, Voyvodka Sirma* and others.

The Internal Macedonian-Odri Revolutionary Organization (*Vnatesna makedonsko-odrinska revolucionerna organizacija*) known as VMRO, was founded in Thessalonica in late 1983 as an expression of the phase that marks the beginning of the collective resistance of the Macedonians against the Sultan's rule. VMRO advocated a Macedonian autonomy within the Turkish state. Founders of VMRO were: Damjan Gruev, Goce Delčev, Gjorče Petrov, Petar Pop Arsov. Later, its best known activists and leaders included: Jane Sandanski, Dimo Hadži Dimov, Pere Tosev, Nikola Karev, and others. The first socialist groups in Macedonia were also formed during these years. They proclaimed



that “the liberation of Macedonia is the job of every Macedonian” and they propagated the idea of an independent Macedonian republic.

The Macedonian revolutionary organization reached the summit of its activities with the Ilinden Uprising in 1903, when the ten-day-long Kruševo Republic was founded in Kruševo. The Macedonian people stood up with weapons in their hands in a determined battle against the conqueror. However, in the uneven fight against the far stronger enemy, they were defeated in bloodshed. The uprising failed, but the whole world learnt of the readiness and determination of the Macedonian people to fight for freedom.

The Balkan wars that were waged from 1912 on Macedonian territory definitely put an end to the five-century long Ottoman rule in the Balkans and in Macedonia, too. Nevertheless, even though the Macedonians participated massively on the side of the allied armies i.e. Bulgarian, Serbian, and Greek, still Macedonia did not get its freedom. With the Bucharest Agreement of 1913, Macedonia was partitioned between Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece (Vardar, Pirin, and Aegean Macedonia).

The Macedonian people did, nevertheless, take advantage of their chance in WWII. Joining the anti-fascist coalition, the People’s Liberation War against the German/Bulgarian/Italian occupiers, together with the other Balkan peoples, the Macedonian people won their freedom. Unfortunately, they won their freedom only in the Vardar part of Macedonia. As part of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Macedonia got the status of a state – the Republic of Macedonia, proclaimed as such at the First ASNOM Assembly at the Prohor Pčinški monastery held on the 2 August, 1944. Thus, once again on Ilinden, following an armed battle, the majority of the Macedonian people got their own state, which developed within the framework of the Yugoslav community. Later, on 8 September 1991, it became a fully independent, renowned, and acknowledged democratic country.

The Monograph “Stamevski”

A PART OF THE LIFE AND WORK OF BUSINESSMAN STEVE PLIAKES (8)

The businessman Steve Pljakas (Stevo Pliakov) who comes from the Aegean part of Macedonia is a respected, appreciated and virtuous Macedonian. He is a recognized and proven lover of his homeland; an outstanding promoter of his Macedonian origin, his roots, name and Fatherland; a businessman and traveler in the world

He is an extremely great, known, recognized and unavoidable figure in Macedonian diaspora and in Macedonia. He is without doubt one of the most financially successful Macedonians in Canada. Although he's been living long in Newmarket, Ontario, he is deeply and strongly linked with the destiny, the truth and the events in Macedonia since his arrival on the American continent up to now.

Steve Pljakas is a Macedonian by nationality, respected Canadian, one of Macedonian masons on the north-american continent, but an Orthodox Christian by faith. Businessman Pliakas is a great defender of the Macedonian name and promoter of the history and honor of the Macedonian people and Macedonia throughout the world, especially in Canada. Steve (Stevo) Pliakes (Plakov) was born on June 2, 1940 in the beautiful village of Zeleniche, region of Lerin in the Aegean part of Macedonia, by father Lambro and mother Gena. This year he celebrates his seventy-fifth year of our Lord, his 75th birthday of his turbulent life and successful career. Steve came into the world as a beloved baby, first male child whose parents were immensely happy. His sister Mari-ka was born before him, while his sister Tila and brother George were born after him. Ever since a small child he was lively, bright child that's enchanted people around him by his perceptions and points of view.

In beautiful Zeleniche, through the local wide fields and flowering meadows, through alleys and yards, along the river and on the hills around the village, Steve spent his first 12 years. They were only occasionally beautiful childhood days filled with games and fantasy, because instead of carelessness, joy and tranquility, those early years were times of anxieties and ordeals.

The family of Pliakas pressed by difficult economic conditions and faced with terrible political turbulence of the Macedonians in Aegean Macedonia, decided reluctantly to leave behind their century-old hearth and home. Forced parting with the homeland, leaving it forever, was a very difficult decision and an open road to unknown destinations of the North American continent.



Their choice was moving to the great country - Canada. As a boy who has just stepped in life, Steve together with his beloved ones - his mother, two sisters and the brother, left one early morning, on May 5, 1952, leaving behind his homeland. He turned back once again to look and say goodbye to his home and blossoming garden, to whose flowers, trees and early fruits, each of them, he'd rejoiced so much and so often.

That morning a swarm of tears rolled down the face of a child who was leaving his home and who was heading into a different new world and among unknown people and remote regions. He hugged his friends with whom he'd played along the alleys, in the school yard and through the fields, who came to send his favorite peer in that early dawn. A sad scene of farewell, an unforgettable memory since he was to leave forever his centuries-old ancestral doorstep and treasured birth place.

The traveling family saga of the Pljakes began even in Zeleniche on their way to Athens, from where they departed for Halifax, in distant Canada by boat through the Mediterranean waters and the great Atlantic Ocean. In the long days and nights while sailing on the blue expanses, Steve did go up on the deck many, many times and while staring at the endless wide open place so many thoughts passed through his mind as if in dream and reality.

Shortly after Halifax, their new destination was the city of Windsor, in the province of Ontario. A city that is an entrance door when from the US Michigan and car maker Detroit one arrives in Canada through underwater tunnel or across the bridge. At 30 km north of Windsor, in place Kolester, his father Lambro had already had a farm of about 3 hectares of land, around 10 acres. In that place, Essex County various vegetables were planted, which even then were genuine eco food, so it is no coincidence that they were highly valued and constantly sought after.

Being friendly and good family people, the Pljakas acquired many friends and their family became highly appreciated, especially among the Macedonians from Aegean Macedonia, living in many areas outside of Windsor. This family '*went off the pattern*' and brought innovative content, gatherings and events in their daily life routine.

Thus, in 1953 the family, together with other Macedonian families organized a picnic on their farm, which was an extraordinary act of the All-Macedonian friendship, understanding and unity. They did their best to make it an event to remember, because all who attended left satisfied, wishing again to return to such good hosts. As time went on, so increasingly in Steve matures the knowledge that this place, this business and other circumstances are not a dueling ground for the big plans he's designed for his future. For several reasons, he ended his the farming business after six years spent in the Windsor region to continue a new search and looking for new emerging destinations.



Steve Pljakas and his family were faced a new challenge. After various analyzes, thoughts and plans they made a family decision and in 1958 they completely left for Toronto. They settled down in the big city of Ontario, which was facing new beginnings and new life challenges in Canada. As an 18-year industrious and very bright boy, Steve decided to start a garage business by himself just to start from somewhere. He was doing it very well and after a while he became a representative of the car giant "Ford" to sell their vehicles. Managers in this business recognized the talent, resourcefulness and ability of this young boy, Steve, and therefore he got such a working engagement that opened up his roads in the business.

However, as time went by so his visions and plans for a different tomorrow got more ambitious and greater because Steve had the capacity to create new values, to embark on a far more effective projects. Toronto had many options and offered alluring opportunities but he, however, decided to look for happiness in the nearby towns of metropolitan Toronto.

Thus, in 1974 he packed his belongings and went to the town of Newmarket. That place has remained his longtime private and family wharf. And there is Steve today, together with his faithful life companion with a big heart, a charming and serene Lily Pliakes. Exactly in Newmarket they live for ages, this is the place that's elevated their business. Also, here is the oasis of their personal and family peace, where they really live happily and enjoy with the families of Margaret and Ginny. At the same time, Newmarket is their first step for all their trips around the meridians worldwide.

With the funds from his first business in the automotive work, and as a dealer of services and car sales, Steve acquired a building plot across the road, where they built their family home. However, the restless soul of Steve still wasn't calm. He searched for new businesses, other jobs, his own road and future. So after a while he sold his automotive service center, leaving quite successful automotive work and entered into real estate business, where his life experience and knowledge of the English language came to light; needless to say that the sales of properties is especially lucrative business in Canada. At the same time, the financial assistance from the family of his wife was of great importance.

All his activation in several areas was an interesting mix. As a result, it all allowed him to be involved in politics that was already a significant step forward in his rich and very impressive biographical pages. Thus, in the 1987-88 election cycle Steve was elected in the department "Police Service" as a member of the federal party NDP (New Democratic Party).

As in every engagement until then, Steve did it well and achieved great success and in the long run. He is therefore respected member and activist in Newmarket where he was elected, but also beyond receiving many compliments, recognition and satisfaction for the commitments on political plan.



But still, his first and main occupation was business. Along with Lily he opened the Lilcris Industries Limited in Newmarket, together with Chris, a Macedonian from the village of Besvina, Aegean Macedonia. However, in 2000, Steve and Lily bought the part of their partner and friend Chris and went on independently towards their happy future. After separation, i.e. after he got full ownership of the company, Steve added a new impetus, new energy and initiated new activities and expansions.

As a holding company this company has grown into a powerful business center in Newmarket, whose president and CEO is Steve Pliakes. Under his control are also the stock exchange trends, transactions and actions. Altogether, a very interesting mix in the field of business that their daughter Ginny and son-of-law Alec successfully run getting great support from Steve and Lily.

The famous Macedonian activist and businessman Steve Pliakas and his wife Lily are also major benefactors and philanthropists to many persons, associations and significant Macedonian cultural and other events in Canada, the US and the Republic of Macedonia.

Steve Pliakes has been working many years for Macedonia, the Macedonians and the Macedonian issue, uniting Macedonian immigrants and the Macedonians in the neighboring countries. They are sponsors of a number of socio-cultural events, including folk festivals, sports events and more. Therefore, it is rightly said that Steve Pliakas has managed perfectly well in Canada. However, driven by the love of Macedonia and its sun, he's been active in Macedonia like Alexander the Great.

In addition, Steve Pliakes is one of the Macedonians on the North American continent that is a mason, or a Freemason. Otherwise Freemasonry is a fraternal organization that arose in the late XVI and early XVII AD. Freemasons exist today in various forms around the world, with a membership of about five million people, including half a million in England, Scotland and Ireland, and about two million in North America, where the largest number exist.

According to Steve all forms of Masons share the same moral and metaphysical ideals, which in most cases include a statement of belief in God. The fraternity is administratively organized into Major Lodge, each of which has its own jurisdictions. There are also additional bodies, which are organizations that are closely related to the Freemasons, but with their own independent administration.

The first Grand Lodge of England was founded on June 24, 1717, when four existing Lodges in London met at dinner, while in Ireland and Scotland were formed in 1725 and 1736. Freemasonry is brought in the British colonies in North America or in Canada during the 1730's, which were formed various local Grand Lodges It should be mentioned that there are no real differences between Masonic lodges practices in the past and today.



The oldest jurisdiction in continental Europe, however, has the Grand Lodge of France, established in 1728. Most lodges countries English-speaking severed contacts with the French Lodge around 1877 - when the Grand Lodge of France changed the requirement for its members in connection with the belief in God and has accepted atheism. Therefore, it is usually said that Freemasonry is composed of two branches: the Grand Lodge of England (UGLE), and the Grand Lodge of France (GOdF).

In the longer conversation with Steve about Freemasonry, he said that Freemasons are often called "secret society," saying the term is more suitable than the term "*Ezoteric association*", because the majority of their activities are secret. Covert activities in modern lodges are ways to recognize among members, as well as certain parts of the rituals. I was assured in Izmir, Turkey, when Steve did not feel the best, and was recognized through the rings with a mason, who promised that everything will do for Steve.

The candidate mason must enter the parlor of his country. To be questioned by an existing member, if he wants to be a Mason. If agreed, it becomes a candidate for membership. In some lodges practiced a possible candidate to be asked three times. The other members approve its membership by placing the "*white balls*" in the ballot box. If there is a "*black ball*", the candidate will be denied. The number of negative votes rejecting the candidate is not the same in all the Lodges, however mostly one vote against is sufficient.

According to the general requirements for becoming a Mason, inter alia, entering into the organization of their own free will; belief in a supreme being; candidate to have a good reputation, good moral values; be psycho-physically healthy; be able to accept the rules of the character box and more. Derogation of one or more of these conditions considered an indicator of rejecting of that Masonic organization.

Interestingly to mention that since 1723, it is accepted that Mason can only be a man. Most lodges do not accept women in their ranks. However, before 1723, there were several women who became Masons. Nowadays, the ladies form their lodges and practice the same rituals. Women's Masonic organizations are found worldwide.

The Monograph "Steve Pliakes"

50 YEARS OF MARRIED LIFE OF LILY AND STEVE PLIAKES (9)

In the life paths of Steve Pljakas there is a special place for his marital idyll, marital years contained in the beautiful story with his wife Lily. It's really a life "constellation" of several decades which continues to be a harmonious, beautiful story – then, now and forever. There is much to write and speak about the years they've been sharing thus far, but on this occasion the author of these lines would try to portray at least a portion of the marital happiness of Steve and Lily.

The beginning the love between young Steve Pliakes, at the age of 25, born in Zeleniche and juvenile Lily Gianu, at the age of 16, from the village of Zelevo, region of Lerin, took place when their eyes met for the first time. The beautiful girl and the handsome boy got to know each other and the first sympathies of the future couple immediately aroused.

Great love was born, rings were exchanged and engagement was announced. Soon after a lavish wedding took place and their joy was intensified by the newborn babies, the two daughters, Margaret and Ginny, and their marriage with the son-in-laws George and Alec. The families of their daughters have made their story very interesting and in many ways specific, making their marriage homogeneous and so happy, especially enriched with the birth of their grandchildren: Angela, Stephen, Christopher and Stephen.

Since many personal-marital and family mosaics are intertwined and embedded in the life story contained in this biographical work, we are going to select part by part of the events to round out them as if a movie about the family saga of the Pliakes of Canada.

We return to the wedding of Lily and Steve. Namely, on 24 January, in mid-winter of 1965, the young and beautiful couple of Lily and Steve said their - yes. Finally they entered the marital waters. They stood in front of the church altar and mystical podium at the Macedonian Orthodox Church "*St. Clement of Ohrid*" in Toronto, receiving a blessing for a long, happy, and productive life together. It was a very big day for them, for both families and their relatives and friends. It was an exceptional act when they made a vow of fidelity and when they directed their prayers to God for happiness, joy and success in the years to come, in their future life.



They entered the history of *St. Clement's* temple in Toronto as the second couple who was registered at the first Macedonian Orthodox Church in Canada. The priest at this service Atanas Popovski, famous Prespa man born in Bitola, immortalized the extremely joyous moment with biblical words, those who are read from the canons when a couple enters the marital waters. And when Steve and Lily formally put their signatures in the church book pledging that from that moment onwards they would be together forever, a long applause resounded spontaneously.

Relatives and friends who were attending that glorious act, over 200 of them, heaped them with a million good wishes and sincere congratulations to lifelong marriage. They wholeheartedly wished the newlyweds happy years together, and to continue the family line with their offspring. Then a banquet followed with the catering service of the Bitola famous Van Petrov. The wedding food and drink was rich in various Macedonian-Canadian international specialties. Good enough to satisfy the most demanding tastes of everyone present.

The happy groom and bride shared their emotions with their closest ones, with their families and friends. And all this took place before the icon of the Most High God and Mother of God, in the Macedonian temple and with Macedonian priests, in front of saints and angels soaring above them in the temple. All in all, memorable moments that remain cherished deeply in the beautiful wedding memories of Lily and Steve. Over the years and decades nothing's faded, on the contrary. They remember with great feelings almost every detail of that glorious day, when they were standing before the altar of the *St. Clement's* spiritual temple in Toronto. They were young and in love. They entered into a joint life with infinite confidence and with a pledge to be and remain together forever.

That was the beginning. That was the beginning of five marital decades thus far to be lined up on and on, like anniversaries, diamond weddings, jubilees, gatherings and other family joy. Their fifty years in the marital waters were solemnly celebrated and remembered; this is a very different story for Lily and Steve Pliakes that is also celebrated a rich, interesting, and in many things unusual.

Their significant date was the January 24 January 1965. Amid the winter, in cold Canada. Now half a century later, here follows a monographic document about the past and present of this famous and recognized Macedonian couple in Canada.

A book that immortalizes a wonderful life that is likely to be a strong incentive, motivation and inspiration for future couples. To commit themselves to one another when life is cheerful, happy and exciting, and also when burdens, difficult situations and days burden the life. Therefore, such literary works like this monograph are recommended to shed light on life story and the truth



about the Macedonian people so that other Macedonians worldwide would follow the example of Lily and Steve Pliakes.

In the past 50 years Steve and Lilly lived first in Toronto and then moved to New Market, where they live happily today. However, in the last ten years in summer they live in Markham or travel to Macedonia and to many places around the world, while in autumn and winter they are among the Macedonians who move as migratory birds from Canada to Florida.

It should be emphasized that Lilly and Steve Pliakes are among the most active persons in the Macedonian community in Toronto. Among others, Steve Pliakes, who hails from the village of Zeleniche, district of Lerin was president of the *"United Macedonians"* and one of the most active during the maintenance meeting of Refugee Children from Aegean Macedonia in 1988, held in the Republic of Macedonia. He was president of the Macedonian Orthodox Church "St. Kliment Ohridski" in Toronto and is the first Macedonian who went to visit Hunza in Pakistan to discover and left an eternal mark in each of the descendants of Alexander the Great the Macedonian, and the Macedonian Empire.

Lilly and Steve Pliakes were among the sponsors of the Olympians from the Republic of Macedonia in the Olympic Games in Athens and Beijing, where Steve wore Macedonian flag and besides athlete, he was the proudest of all proud Macedonians worldwide.

Lilly Pliakes, life companion Steve, meanwhile, was born in the village of Zelevo, district of Lerin, when she was less than two years old left her native place and the roads took her to Poland, and then came to Canada. She is very active in the women's sections of the Macedonian Orthodox churches in Canada and Florida and other associations known and recognized by Macedonian.

Lilly, along with Steve, among other things, donors instrument for dialysis in a hospital in Skopje, financial supporters of many activities of the Macedonians in Canada and the US, as well as the Macedonian Orthodox churches, folklore groups, media and various Macedonian Associations in Macedonia in the Aegean, Pirin, Albania and other places around the world where Macedonians live.

Also, Steve and Lilly Pliakes their family and their businesses play a significant role in Canadian society. However, it seems that they are especially known for guidance mall named *"Macedonian Plaza"* in New Market, in Canada one of its kind in the Macedonian Diaspora.

The Monograph "Steve Pliakes"

THE ROOTS OF FOLKLORIST GEORGE TOMOV (10)

The roots of George Tomov from his father's side, Jovan, lead to the famous Macedonian town of Kruševo. It is a small town and evocative of the turbulent past of the Macedonian people. It is located on Mount Buševa, 1,250 meters above sea level, probably the highest small town on the Balkan Peninsula, with about 4.000 inhabitants.

In the Macedonian national history, Kruševo is known as the seat of the first Republic on the Balkans – the Kruševo Republic proclaimed on August 2, 1903, when Macedonian rebels, during the wellknown Ilinden Uprising, liberated Kruševo and established their authority with the president of the Republic. The Republic lasted only for 13 days, but remained in history as a great inspiration and undertaking of the Macedonian people.

The famous place of Mečkin Kamen, with its monument dedicated to the unit of freedom fighters of Pitu Guli, who was killed in the Ilinden Uprising, is in the nearby surroundings of Kruševo where the Ilinden Uprising is celebrated each year. Jovan Tomov Angelov, father of George, was born in 1888 in Kruševo, Macedonia, to his mother Zaharija and father Tomo from a respectable, rich and influential family of merchants. In 1893 his parents fled to Belgrade in order to save themselves from the Turks because there had been revolutionary fighters in their families and they, by their own part, had supported the Macedonian movement. In addition, the Turks used to collect very high taxes paid in gold in those years.

In 1902, Jovan went to live and study in Bucharest, Romania, with the family of his uncle who was a teacher in the local high school. After three years, he returned to Belgrade because he had found out that his education would not be recognized in Belgrade. The same year, he started to learn the locksmith's and engineering trade with a skilled craftsman in Belgrade where he opened his own locksmith's and engineering workshop five years later.

In 1917 he went over to Macedonia in order to avoid being sent as a Serbian soldier to the front. At that time, Macedonia was occupied by Bulgarians but he was caught, together with other Macedonians. The Bulgarian soldiers sent him to the front in Strumica. At that time, Strumica was under Bulgarian occupation. That year, he met his future wife Aneta Patarova. They got engaged in December, 1917, while the following Christmas they got married and went to Belgrade without delay.



However, Jovan and Aneta returned to Strumica in 1921. There, he opened his workshop with twelve skilled craftsmen and several journeymen. He used to hire several workers to assist the journeymen. Jovan was a very capable man: he made drawings and constructed machines for threshing grain; he used to send a great number of machines to Belgrade for casting in order to assemble them in Strumica; in addition, he made church bells for the Macedonian churches and monasteries; he repaired typing machines, banking sets, but he was especially good at repairing cars, "Singer" sewing machines and others. It is interesting to mention that in 1924 he brought the first "Mercedes" car and the first bus in Strumica. Then, he donated and assembled the first electric generator in Strumica. Zaharija was born in 1927, then Marija in 1928, while George was born in 1933, and Janko in 1938. In August 1944, Jovan left Strumica and moved to Skopje, first with George while his wife Aneta with Janko, Marija and Zaharija joined them in October, same year. Jovan Tomov Angelov passed away on 16 March 1955 in Skopje, while Aneta died in 1973, also in Skopje.

However, George Tomov, the main figure of this book, has spent his entire life embracing, organizing, establishing and nurturing the Macedonian culture, both in the United States and in different countries of the free world where he has promoted goodwill and a better understanding among different ethnic groups. His vigorous participation in numerous cultural pursuits, especially throughout the United States, Canada and Australia, have made him be well loved and respected and have brought him closer to other international authorities in the same and similar fields, encouraging them to participate in the interexchange of folklore, folkdance and folksongs among countries more vigorously and enthusiastically in the interexchange of folklore, folkdance and folksongs among countries.

Although George's father never danced or sang, his mother liked to take part in all dance and song festivities which always were important events in the Macedonian communities. Radio and television were yet to come, so in those days the city dwellers would gather in front of a neighbor's house to dance and sing. Formal dances were big events while he was young. His sisters danced and sang skillfully.

At that time, young women in Macedonia were not allowed to go out after sunset without escorts. Even though he was a mere youngster at the time, he was the one who served as chaperone. Soon, folkdances and folksongs conquered his heart. He liked to watch others dancing, and soon he started to sing and dance, too.

The demands for his company continued to grow, especially in dances for two, because of the scarcity of young men. Ballroom dancing was popular during such evenings, but the "Eleno mome" dance, the first folkdance he learnt, was engraved in George Tomov's memory of his childhood. All that took place



in Strumica, where he spent his childhood with his sisters Maria and Zagorka, as well as with his brother Janko.

Janko Tomov in Australia

Janko Tomov, the brother of George, was born in Strumica on May 4, 1938. He finished the advanced school for physical culture and became a sports trainer for gymnastics and athletics. In 1961 he graduated from the University of Belgrade and became a high quality teacher of physical culture. In 1962, Janko organized the international gymnastics competition between Yugoslavia and East Germany in Skopje and the interstate gymnastics competition between Macedonia and Slovenia in Veles. Finally, he became a counselor at the Institute for Physical Culture of Macedonia, and from 1964 to 1967 he organized several courses, seminars and conferences for trainers, instructors and for physical education teachers. He worked in this field until 1970 when he left the country.

He has been living in Perth, Australia, and in Brisbane together with his wife Planinka (Nina), his son Alexander (Sašo) and daughter Aneta since 1975. Janko Tomov became a Macedonian activist at the National Democratic Movement. He wrote, edited and published many articles and organized conferences and peaceful demonstrations within the framework of the Movement where he was an executive member of several committees. With the Macedonian Human Rights Organization in Perth and in cooperation with other organizations in Australia and overseas, he has written many articles about human rights and protection of the Macedonians all over the world and especially of those who live in the border areas of neighboring Greece, Bulgaria and Albania.

Janko Tomov is the author of the books: "Support from beautiful Perth" (in Macedonian), "The 1984 Thessalonica Manifesto and the Movement for Human Rights in Diaspora", 2003 (in Macedonian), and "Discoveries About Important Events in Macedonian History", 2004 (both in Macedonian and English), and the book *"The Ancient History of Macedonia and the Balkans in the Works of Western Authors, from forgery to concrete presentation"*, (Macedonian and English version), Brisbane, Australia, 2005.

The Monograph "Tomov"



***PART SEVEN -
WELL - KNOWN
MACEDONIANS IN THE
WORLD***



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CEREMONY OF LAUNCHING THE MONOGRAPH ON METROPOLITAN KIRIL (I)

On the 14th of December 2007, the Monograph on Metropolitan Kiril written by Slave' Nikolovski-Katin and published by the Diocese of Polog and Kumanovo and the Makedonska Iskra Publishing House, was presented to a great number of well-know politicians, cultural workers and diplomats, as well as to many believers and other quests, at the Cathedral Church of St. Clement of Ohrid.

His Beatitude Archbishop Stephen of Ohrid and Macedonia delivered the keynote speech about this piece of work, written in Macedonian and in English, and he was followed by Metropolitan Agathangel of Povardarie and publicist Stavre Dzikov who delivered their speech about this Monograph as well.

The Most Reverend Metropolitan Kiril of Polog and Kumanovo is the oldest enthroned Bishop of the Macedonian Orthodox Church. In addition, he is also the only living signer of the historical Decision of the Holy Bishops' Synod of the Macedonian Orthodox Church (1967) on the restoration of the entire spiritual and canonical autocephalous status of the Ohrid Archbishopric. Metropolitan Kiril is the first Bishop in charge of the *American-Canadian-Macedonian Diocese*, and of the Diocese of Polog and Kumanovo.

This Monograph on Metropolitan Kiril, written by Slave' Nikolovski-Katin, well known and acknowledged publicist, cultural worker and journalist, has confirmed the growing interest in an animated approach to the truth about Metropolitan Kiril and, along with it, to both the Macedonian Orthodox Church and the orthodox Macedonia. This piece of literary work offers an interesting opportunity to follow the steady progress of Metropolitan Kiril achieved in his spiritual development during his life thus far.

This book, which has come from the pen of Slave' Katin is, in fact, a modest representation of Metropolitan Kiril's devotion to God, his work and life thus far, and his work during a 40-year period marked by his efforts, within the bounds of his possibility, to fulfil a part of the oath given during his official appointment as bishop in 1967.

This Monograph on Metropolitan Kiril is a luxurious 360-page publication in large format which, in addition to the text in Macedonian and in English,



contains a great number of photographs from his past and present. It is divided into seven chapters. In addition to the introduction by Archbishop Stefan, there are texts about Metropolitan Kiril's fatherland and family roots.

A special place is dedicated to Kiril as founder and affirmer of the Macedonian Orthodox Church in the diaspora. Short texts are given for any churches and monasteries the foundation stones of which were laid or were consecrated by Metropolitan Kiril during this period of 40 years. Also, an appropriate text is given about the Diocese of Polog and Kumanovo and about its churches and other church facilities.

A modest space is dedicated to Metropolitan Kiril through the pages of the press. At the end of this book extended texts are given on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, when it was given the highest state recognition, as well as on the occasion of awarding the highest church recognition "*St. Clement of Ohrid*" to Metropolitan Kiril, followed by the reviews of Metropolitan Agathangel and publicist Stavre Džikov.

This important and highly characteristic literary works presents, in a special way, the overall national, spiritual, religious and cultural-educational existence of our brothers and sisters who have decided to live in the democratic countries blessed by God – in the USA, Canada and Australia.

Slave Nikolovski-Katin has portrayed the destiny and commitment of one of the bishops of the Macedonian Orthodox Church clearly and based on facts; the Church that has been playing an important role in gathering the Macedonians home and abroad. It was fully expressed following the constitution of the Republic of Macedonia in 1944, the renewal of the Ohrid Archbishopric in 1958, and proclamation of its autocephaly in 1967. The Macedonian Orthodox Church has made a major breakthrough among the Macedonian expatriates in the overseas countries and in other countries thanks to Metropolita Slave'n Kiril, among others.

This important work of Katin is dedicated precisely to the man who has left permanent marks in the development of the church life in Macedonia and in the overseas countries. This publication is a significant contribution to the strengthening and deepening of the knowledge about Bishop Kiril.

The great spiritual and patriotic deed of Metropolitan Kiril is a specific example and stimulus to the young generations to contribute to the development of the church and spiritual life and affirmation of the Macedonian Orthodox Church. At the same time, this literary text about Metropolitan Kiril is a road sign for the other members of the Macedonian clergy, and an affirmation of the Macedonian people and of the Republic of Macedonia.

This manifestation was enriched by the church choir "*St. Clement of Ohrid*" and maestro Boris Trajanov, opera singer, that sang religious and sacred songs.

The Monograph "Metropolitan Kiril"

LOU (ILIJJA) VLASHO - FAMOUS AMERICAN, BUSINESSMAN, HUMANIST AND HONORARY CONSUL OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA (2)

Lou Vlasho was born American, but Macedonian by origin from the village of Breznica (Vatohori), Lerin (Florina) region, in the Aegean part of Macedonia. He is an intellectual, businessman, humanist, known and recognized in American society, as well as an Honorary Consul of the Republic of Macedonia to The United States of America. He is a famous American who made a significant contribution to the Macedonian cause and dedicated his life to the service of human society.

Lou Vlasho, although born an American, his love for his ancestral country-Macedonia is great and is rooted in the upbringing he received from his Macedonian parents who left his native village of Breznica and immigrated to the United States, the big country, for better opportunities for his family.

The village of Breznica, where the roots of Lou, Ilija's as his parents, relatives and friends called him, come from is located in Aegean Macedonia, about forty kilometers west of Florina towards the Albanian border. It is a purely Macedonian village and is located northwest of the villages of Smrdesh and Dumbeni, not far from the town of Bilishta in Albania. There were about 120 houses in it, which, unfortunately, today nearly all are empty reflecting the great sorrow of the Macedonians from Breznica who for many reasons, some for a better life and some forced on them, have moved forever to different countries around the world.

Lou Vlasho was born on May 26, 1937 in Canton, Ohio. He is the son of Ziso E. and Athena (Tina) (Malta). Lou Vlasho and his wife Jan had two children: Vincent Todd Vlasho and Steven Louis Vlasho.

Canton, where Lou Vlasho was born and spent his childhood, is located about 60 miles south of Cleveland and some 25 miles south of Akron in north-eastern Ohio. According to the 2010 census, the population was 73,007, making Canton the eighth most populous city in Ohio. Canton is the birth place of 25th US President William McKinley, who was elected in 1896. Today it is known as the birth place of The National Football League (NFL) and its Hall of Fame which is located in Canton.



Lou Vlasho completed his education in his hometown of Canton and graduated with a Bachelor's Degree with a major in Accounting from Ohio University in Ohio, interestingly located in Athens Ohio, in 1959. During his career he held various executive positions in financial management and systems management.

He was a twenty-five year employee of Hobart Corporation, Troy, Ohio, 1959- 1984, and was vice president and controller from 1980-1984. He was Senior Vice President of Gold Bond, Inc., Green Bay, Wisconsin from 1984-1986. For over 10 years he was Vice President of Rimaco Corp and Vergina Restaurant located on Fifth Avenue in Naples Florida. He was the editor of the 1983 Accounting Management Guide. In politics, he is a member of the Republican Party, and by religion belongs to the Methodist Christian Church and a dedicated Christian.

For a period of fifty years Lou Vlasho held senior positions in numerous companies and various organizations in several US states. At the same time, Vlasho was a strong supporter of Macedonia's independence. Among other things, he helped facilitate scholarship programs at Ohio University, which enabled numerous Macedonian students, who received scholarships, to the United States. His vision for mentoring these students helped them integrate into American society, have successful careers, and to be a kind of ambassadors for Macedonia.

Although he devoted most of his life to his career and service in the American community, he never forgot his parents' homeland - Macedonia. Therefore, Lou Vlasho was a strong supporter of Macedonia's independence, a recognition of the country that declared independence and the path to NATO membership.

Lou Vlasho as a Methodist by religion was a close friend of the late Macedonian President Boris Trajkovski, also a Methodist. As religious like-minded people, they helped spread the President's vision for the World Conference on Building Dialogue between Religions in Macedonia and in the World, which continues to this day.

For more than a decade, Vlasho was actively involved in the Annual National Prayer Breakfast (NPB) in Washington, D.C. and was instrumental in establishing a Luncheon for guests from the Balkans. Together with his personal friend and former Ohio senator George Voinovich, he co-chaired this now-annual lunch, which is attended by over 100 people a year from the Balkans.

As a sign of gratitude to Lou Vlasho for his commitment to the work and progress of the Macedonian cause, the Government of the Republic of Macedonia appointed him Honorary Consul of the Republic of Macedonia to the United States of America in 2007. The Honorary Consulate opened in Naples,



Florida, in February 2008. This is also the year in which Lou Vlasho was awarded the special cross of “St. Stanislav” (Kiev Ukraine) for his charitable services.

Also, Lou Vlasho is an honorary member of the Council of the United Macedonian Diaspora (UMD), for his contribution, especially helping in the development of the first member of the Congressional Caucus on Macedonia and the expansion of Macedonian-American relations, as well as obtaining the necessary support from the Congress for Macedonia’s membership in NATO.

Lou - Ilija, as his parents and close relatives called him, has a great love for Macedonia, so his positive attitude and readiness is to help his parents’ country. He does this in many ways, one of which is thru the humanitarian organization Habitat, which has a very successful operation in Macedonia.

He is an honorary member of the board of “*Habitat for Humanity in Macedonia*”, which provides simple, decent and affordable housing solutions for those living in poverty. Thanks to the efforts of Lou Vlasho, in 2008 Collier County (Florida) “*Habitat for Humanity*” signed a partnership with “*Habitat for Humanity*” from Macedonia.

The records in the history of Lou Vlasho show that his first wife Janet (Jan) passed away after thirty-eight years of marriage at the very young age of 58. Lou met his second wife Patricia, a well-known American humanitarian and social activist. Patty and Lou are people of respect and example. They are hospitable, talkative and very interested in the situation in Macedonia, especially in Aegean Macedonia.

Lou Vlasho has been a resident of Naples since 1989. He and Patty lived Pelican Bay, for many years and recently downsized to the downtown Naples area. Lou and Patricia are members of the *United Methodist Church* of the North Naples.

Lou has two sons, Vince, a graduate of the United States Naval Academy who currently lives in the Washington area his wife, Jerri, They have two daughters (Megan and Alexis). Megan is the mother of Lou’s first Great Grandson, Reid. His son Steve, a graduate of The Ohio State University. He and Tatjana live in the Dallas area with their son Ryker and his son Jackson. Patricia’s daughter, Erica, lives in New York City as does her grand daughter Brittianny.

The Author

INTRODUCTIONS AND REVIEWS OF BOOKS OF OTHER AUTHORS BY SLAVE' KATIN (3)

In addition to his numerous dynamic engagements with the Macedonian emigrants, we find Katin as author of introductions in books with artistic value written by Macedonians in the Diaspora. He wrote an introduction to the collection of poems titled "Southern Winds" written by Zaklina Petreski – Roberts, from Toronto, Canada, and published by "Matica Makedonska" in Skopje. Upon the occasion Katin said that Roberts was one of the numerous Canadians from Macedonian origin to whom English is like a mother tongue since she was educated and wrote her poetry in this language. Nevertheless, she did not forget the Macedonian language in which she made creolizations, i.e. in her speech she used English words made to sound Macedonian, words for which she could not find an adequate Macedonian word in her vocabulary.

Her collection of poems, "*Southern Winds*" gave us only some of her poems written throughout the years, yet enough to present her poetic world and to affirm her as an author. Katin said that even though she wrote them in English when she was far from her native country, she could nevertheless feel the southern winds from her grandfather's land - the winds in her poetry. He added that her poems were the result of her experiences in the new surroundings, and her longing for her roots - roots that no Macedonian descendant should ever lose.

Nobody ever forgets their birthplace even after living far away from it for years. You always carry it in your heart as a dignity and an unwritten rule, a rule that you pass from generation to generation. At the end of his editorial of the collection of poems Slave' Nikolovski – Katin said that this was the case with Zakie Petreski – Roberts. At the "Eighth Weekend" held in Nis during 27-29 May 1994, organized by the Society for Literature and Culture of Yugoslavia and Canada, Katin participated with a presentation on Roberts' poetic opus.

In his review of the manuscript titled "*Ripe is the Wheat*" by Daniel Melvil from Lozano, Switzerland, Katin said that it was an important contribution towards the additional broadening of the knowledge of the poetic feelings of love, passion, and attachment to the written Macedonian word of the Macedonians in the Diaspora. He continued to say that the text surprised and captured the readers. His poems in this book, published by the Ministry of



Emigration of the Republic of Macedonia, were written in a good and strong native Macedonian language.

Katin emphasized that the authors' native country was an inspiration for their poems found in the collection, particularly those titled "God punish him who first started" (*"Bog da bie koj prv pocna"*), "May the foreign countries be cursed" (*"Tuginata pusta da oстане"*), "Goodbye Mother" (*Zbogum majko*) and many others.

In his review of the book "Migrant Workers in Vevcani from the Turkish Period till World War II" by Atanas Kuskoski, Katin emphasized that working abroad was a long and well known tradition in Vevcani. It reflected the fate of the Macedonian people throughout the centuries. He said "well known" as Vevcani had always been a Macedonian lighthouse that showed the way for the movements of our people, on a temporary or permanent basis.

They were movements encouraged not only by the struggle for mere existence, but by the social needs of our people to show and prove their capabilities and values - values that European and world culture cannot even be imagined without. The Macedonian from Vevcani always was and remained not only tied to his birthplace but also present in the places where new civilizations were created. Without doubt he incorporated part of himself in all of these places, from Vlasko and Serbia through Croatia and Slovenia, all the way to Western Europe and across the ocean.

Assessing the publication "*Migrant workers in Vevcani from the Turkish Period to World War II*" as a deficient edition in the scientific and publicist genre in our country, Katin evaluated its publication as a precious contribution towards filling the gap that existed in this field. He believed that this publication affirmed Vevcani and the entire Drimkol. The people from this region were in a festive mood throughout all of January.

This picturesque, and God gifted place, opened its portals wide for its migrant workers to come back home to their birthplace. At the end of his review Katin wrote: "*therefore, let this time spent with the written word transformed through Kuskoski's persistence, efforts, and strong love towards Vevcani, be expressed by the wish of the migrant workers that their parting will bring them together again for another meeting in Vevcani*".

Additionally, Katin wrote a review of the work titled "*In Honor of Saint Methodius of Salonica*" (*"Vo cest na sveti Metodij Solunski"*) by Trajko Ognenovski, published by the Association for Science and Art in Bitola in 1998. In his review Katin pointed out that this work was special evidence of our attitude towards this clergyman and educator of the Macedonian people, believers in their educators and saints.

We know the date when Saint Cyril passed away and the place where he was laid to rest. However, we do not know the date when St. Methodius left



this world, nor do we know where he was laid to rest because the enemy wiped these out completely. Therefore, the cell of his darkness in Elvangen was considered a holy place, and bowing before it a Christian act.

Oggenovski's book was a witness not only to the glory, the canonization, and the tradition of the saintly martyrs, but to the attitude of the Macedonians in the Diaspora towards them as well. As regards those in Germany, we could say that during their poetry evenings and other important events and dates that they celebrate, they unavoidably connect them with the work of the saintly brothers, i.e. with Saint Methodius. They visit his cell in Elvangen every year. Katin talked about the book upon the occasion of its publication as its recommended reviewer. He said that the book *"In Honor of Saint Methodius of Salonca"* was a good reason to remember our traditions, our genesis, and our century-old continuity, at first the Pan Slavic, and then the Macedonian literacy and culture.

In the year 2002, under the leadership of its editor-in-chief Slave Nikolovski – Katin, *"Makedonska iskra"* published the book titled *"From Kalenik to Canada"* (*"Od Kalenik do Kanada"*) written by Konstantin Malkov. In his introduction to the edition Katin pointed out that Malkov was an authentic witness to the events linked to the darkness and madness of the Greek fanaticism. It has been trying since 1913 to the present day to exterminate the Macedonian century-long roots in the Aegean.

The author put special emphasis on the events concerning the Civil war in Greece (1946 – 1949). In his book he spoke of them on the level of an argument that would remain a permanent witness of the tragic faith of our people from the Aegean part of Macedonia. Katin said that Malkov's work was a precious contribution to the treasury of the Macedonian memoir poetry that can be used by younger authors as an inspiration to create new literary works on the destiny of the Macedonian people.

Additionally, Katin reviewed the publication *"The Small Newspaper Lexicon"* by Sveto Stefanovski, published by the "Hit" agency in Skopje. Its use was purely practical. Its basic aim was to bring closer the more important terms and categories from the field of journalistic theory and practice to the people that were more or less connected to journalism or demonstrate an interest in this profession. As a reviewer and a member of this profession, Katin said that this edition could also prove to be useful to those who want to enrich their general knowledge about one of the widest communication fields of human living – journalism.

The Monograph "Katin"

BOSKO RAJČOVSKI – PELISTERSKI AND HIS NUMEROUS ACTIVITIES (4)

After spending so many years in the workshops of the automobile giant Chrysler, Boško said goodbye to that daily routine. For him, his retirement meant a beginning of a completely new life. One of the changes was that he started living in Detroit during summer and living in Florida during winter where, in fact, he has settled down. He has taken the route that many Macedonians use who, like migrant birds, travel from the north to the south, to Florida.

And there, in those wonderful areas that have exceptionally favorable climatic conditions, everybody lives and entertains according to their liking. But, it is important that people on the north dream about living in Florida during winter.

However, Boško Rajčovski doesn't relax even in the southern parts of the USA. There, where he spends almost half of the year, he has become an active member of the Macedonian Orthodox Church of 'St. Dimitrija' in Florida.

It is one of the newly established spiritual temples of the Macedonians who live in those areas, but also of those who 'hibernate' in Florida like bears. That Church is a center for all unexpected guests from North America and it is going to become a spiritual place of worship and real gathering place for Macedonians.

In addition, his retirement has enabled him to visit Macedonia, his first homeland, more often. And, every moment during his visits there, he has never forgotten his birth place, his Ljubojno. It has got a special place in his heart. Therefore, each year he is included in the celebration of the Ilinden festivities, in the organization of the Ilinden meetings – a manifestation which has developed into tradition of holding reputable meetings.

His friends, also immigrants, such as Mile Paspalovski, Vlado Paspalovski, Jan Hristov, his departed friend Vlado Pašarikovski, and others were initiators for organizing the Ilinden Meetings in Ljubojno.

Both Ljubojno and Boško live for Ilinden; many people of Ljubojno often say so. His name is closely connected with the Ilinden manifestations. Fidanka Tanaskova, well-known journalist and publicist from Skopje and a many-year journalist of the *Nova Makedonija* newspaper and correspondent for the Macedonian radio programs in Cologne, Germany and in Melbourne, Australia, has



covered a gathering in Ljubojno and on one occasion later she published the following report:

Ljubojno, Prespa, Macedonia. A pleasant summer evening in August. It is a holiday today - the Ilinden festive occasion which is both holy and popular.

Thousands of young and grown persons, natives of Ljubojno and newcomers, have gathered in the center of the village, in 'Polena', in the center of the famous Ljubojno which is Boško's eternal love. A quiet wind is swaying now from the spacious Prespansko Ezero and then from the Pelister bringing along fresh cooling air in this solemn ambience to be remembered forever.

Drums are thundering, church bells are ringing. Even the access road to the village was teeming with people, not to speak about the streets. The hosts have used huge posters and placards in Macedonian and in English language to welcome warmly their guests wishing them unforgettable event and jovial happening.

The hard-working and painstaking hosts who were occupied themselves to prepare everything for that event, as well as the organizers of the Ilinden Meetings in Ljubojno, of the Ilinden Days of Culture, who worked inexhaustibly during day and night, could take a rest at last.

Boško Rajčovski-Pelisterski, one of the greatest enthusiasts who was bursting with ideas, a native man of Ljubojno who has been a Detroit migrant for decades, a poet, journalist, activist, businessman and, certainly, a patriot is approaching and climbing up the stage.

There is a strong message in his appropriate and solemn speech. There is a warmth, happiness and sadness in it. Happiness for holidays and celebrations, for Ljubojno which is alive with people, but there is sadness about those who are separated, about migrant workers, the displaced, about deserted homes and about villages without their villagers. A lot of people are moved to tears.

On the eve of Ilinden, on the eve of the 32nd Ilinden Meetings of Ljubojno on 1 August, Boško is expressing his gratitude and thankfulness for the presence of so many people, Macedonian people, with chosen words, sincere, warm, and strong message.

He is expressing his appreciation to each of them who have come here, in the center of the village, to celebrate Ilinden together, to magnify this manifestation and to make their best to maintain this tradition this for many, many years to come.

And the days of the 2005 Meetings were enhanced by the presence of Lambe Alabakovski, a rising performer star of Ljubojno, of Tatjana Lazarovska, Jasmina Mukaetova and Goce Arnaudov, a singer and showman, accompanied by the 'Biorhythm' orchestra.



Some time ago Ljubojno was teeming with people, Boško says. It was teeming with people both during holidays and on weekdays. The houses used to be full of life, there used to be flower gardens and yards, fields were full of workers, songs were sung in meadows, horses thudded in the woods, while young women and men were the best decoration in this small place of ours. Festivities, weddings, baptizing ceremonies, gatherings, churches and monasteries and unforgettable holidays there. Ah, what a wonderful time it was!

And now, during this evening, young boys and girls are going to sing and dance, recite and welcome us all, while we are going to be enraptured by and be very proud of their virtuosity, Boško said and he immediately read several poems that he has written. His verses sounded like a spiritual magic because they came from the bottom of his heart, because they are a bridge between Ljubojno and Detroit, between Prespa and Michigan.

A bridge between his two homelands – Macedonia and America. There is love in his verses, a motherly love and bitterness from the curse of partings, there is also homesickness and, of course, hope and faith from time immemorial.

A thunderous applause burst. Those present recognized both his homesickness for his native place and his love for Ljubojno, as well as his desire that he, himself, and all those blood related-migrant workers should come here wherever possible so that neither they nor their offspring could ever forget their roots, their homes, their hearths and homes, their motherland and fatherland, and its boundary lines.

Many of those present were touched by the verses of Boško. He could really convey and produce all that in a very skilful manner. Spontaneous applauses and exclamations could be heard for very long time.

The long folkdance, played in the middle of the village by both the old and the young, twisting so far as to the acacias will be remembered. Young women and young men, bride and bridegrooms, mothers-in-law and fathers-in-law, aunts and uncles, grandmothers and grandfathers, mothers and fathers, they all, next to each other, were dancing in the Macedonian rhythm which is rich and famous far and wide. Close relatives, friends, neighbors, fellow-citizens, unexpected guests, guests of honors, fellows, compatriots were dancing.

Each of them was a part of that wonderful atmosphere which, we believe, shall be remembered in Ljubojno, shall be remembered by those who experienced it personally and were a part of that night under the Pelister.

Many of them sighted with pain looking far away at this crossborder region where it seems that if anyone only stretches ones hand, they will touch our Aegean Macedonia with their palm, where it seems that it is just right here, at a very close distance, but unfortunately it is so far away, and yet just behind those wooded hills and valleys.



The manifestation of the Ilinden Meetings in Prespa is recorded in the annals. Ljubojno and the people of Ljubojno proved themselves to be excellent organizers and hosts. The contribution of Boško Rajčovski, our brother, along with the contribution of other members of the Council who assisted them, was significant one.

And I, as a journalist, have described with pleasure what I remembered and saved in my mind from that Ilinden celebration in our Macedonian Ljubojno in the Prespa region which was holy, bright, more than beautiful, one hot summer evening, just in the eve of the glorious national Ilinden, at the very beginning of the third millennium, says Fidanka Tanaskova.

Boško Rajčovski-Pelisterski is known in Ljubojno, in addition to other things, for the following activities: the drinking fountain, which was cemented in the middle of the village, is a small gift from him; In the year 2000, when his book titled *"He has not returned"* was promoted, he, as a token of gratitude, hosted a lunch under the porch of the *St. Jovan the Baptist Church* in Ljubojno for all those present, which was also attended by a great number of prominent officials from the social and cultural life. He has organized the performances and touring of folk dance groups, ensembles, notable persons from the world of arts, social workers, ambassadors and men in love with the written word for several successive years.

One of the initiatives which he hopes that shall be really realized is his sincere desire to organize a *'Folk Fest Prespa in Ljubojno'*. He always speaks about Ljubojno, about those meetings, about Macedonia with many feelings and great delight. He is a great lover of his native place and due to his great love he, on the occasion of his 60th birthday, produced a CD with songs about Ljubojno and the Prespa migrant-worker villages.

Boško expresses his love for his native place and his homeland in different ways. However, it seems that the following lines are very emotional and touchy for the author of this monograph. Namely, Boško has written:

"My last will and testament to my family is that my last resting place be in Ljubojno. And I am also conveying another message that the village, the grandfather's house, hearth and home, are to be never forgotten. I would like to express my great gratitude to all friends of mine who have highly appreciated my work and activity be it in the cultural, or religious, or journalistic life whether in Detroit or in Ljubojno.

Let me also add that it is my special honor that some of my friends, with whom I used to cooperate closely, have placed their trust in me and that I do appreciate their share".

A new chapter in the life of Boško Rajčovski – Pelisterski was opened in 1987 when he was in Australia on holiday and when he promised himself and his friends that he would visit them again. The same year, he went in Russia of



holiday. His desire was to visit Sank Petersburg in the middle of the summer when it is really wonderful to see and take a walk in that old luxurious city.

His parents, his beloved mother and father, deserve a special place on these biographical pages. When this notable poetic creator speaks about them, many happy and sad, as well bad memories and feelings impossible to cure gush out...

"My father passed away in June 1987. Ten years later it was the will of God that my mother also passed away. Their eternal resting place is in Ljubojno. The sad loss of my beloved parents caused me great sadness and suffering, a great emptiness in my soul. And therefore, I made my will that I be buried in my native village. I am endlessly grateful to my father and my mother that they had brought me into the world, raised me in the approved manner, and given me so much love. I had never offended them. I had never said a rude word to them.

I had neither come into conflict and fight with anyone, nor had I been indebted to anyone for anything. They had thought me to love, very strongly, my nation and my faith. The fellow citizens also praise the goodness and kindness of my parents. My father was a pattern of a good farmer and outstanding worker in the social life. He and my mother came in the USA where they worked until their retirement.

As a token of my gratitude towards my parents for everything they had done for me, I arranged their golden wedding anniversary in 1984 which was attended by more than five hundred guests," explains Boško proudly.

Throughout his life Boško Rajčovski has been working and making efforts to do as more as possible in all fields and spheres of his activities. It should be underlined, just for illustration, that after his working time he used to immediately go to the radio station to direct the Macedonian radio program.

When he has organized concerts, dances, competitions, promotions and other cultural activities he used to be ardently devoted to his goal - to make them big success and therefore those activities have remained in him as valuable and lasting memories.

However, it seems that, for example, the first religious service in the hired cathedral of Van Dajk in Detroit has a special place in his memories. Also, his Macedonian and Yugoslav Radio Program. The organization of an array of ceremonies and celebrations such as the Miss Macedonia competition. Those activities constitute a pleasant memory for a man who has invested maximal energy, ideas, efforts, and engagement.

It should be underlined that a special chapter in that impressive array of activities has his direct participation, together with Jan Hristov, in the establishment of the Ljubojno Association in Detroit. And there, in those large American areas, in addition to the Prespa Association the emigrants from Ljubojno have organized themselves also in the Ljubojno Association which was established in 1992.



It should be pointed out that only in the city of Detroit there are more than 100 families from Ljubojno, but Ljubojno families live also in other American cities, such as in Chicago - about 20 families, then in Ohio, in California, as well as in Canada.

It is assumed that there are about 300 families from Ljubojno living in North America. In other words, according to its size Detroit is the second Ljubojno where our traditions are followed and maintained and they, being our riches, should be inherited by the new generations of our Ljubojno people, by our American Macedonians in Detroit, Michigan. This Association provides a special support and assistance to the village of Ljubojno.

It financially supports the maintenance of the churches, cemeteries and other public facilities in Ljubojno. In 1993 a special humanitarian campaign was carried out for collecting funds aimed at purchasing medicines for the village clinic.

It was a campaign in which Jan Hristov together with the demised Vlado Pašarikovski had the greatest share. The same year, an idea was developed to collect money also for building a road from the village to the *St. Peter Monastery*.

The Ljubojno Association organizes an annual picnic, usually on 15 May or on the nearest approaching Saturday or Sunday, during the summer feast of St. Atanas, as a memory of the village feast which is holding in the *St. Atanas Monastery* in Ljubojno for centuries. On that occasion, a dance is also organized to which all Macedonian emigrants of Detroit, as well as are the Ljubojno emigrants from other parts of America, are invited.

The Monograph "Boshko Rajchovski-Pelisterski"

GOYKO JAKOVLEVSKI'S FAMILY ROOTS (5)

Based on the words of Goyko Yakovleski, alias Goyko Delchev Rafkin - Gotse of Macedonia, his mother Rafka was born around 1910 in the mountain village of Kunovo, Suva Gora, Gostivar region. She was born in an agricultural and priestly family. The surname of his mother Rafka was Jovanovska, Jovanovic. Her father's name was, more precisely, he was given the name Jerusalem, but everyone called him and know him as Ruse, (grandfather Ruse), and her mother's name was Yonka (grandmother Jovanka) who is remembered for being so dear and her the bosoms were always full of nuts, hazelnuts, chickpeas, sesame sweets, biscuits, candies, chocolates, apples, pears, plums ...; her bosoms for the children have always been an inexhaustible source of beautiful and sweet things. She knew to tell very vividly horror stories about robbers or deceased people who resurrected and the children were falling asleep while listening those stories.

His mother Rafka's grandfather was a priest, and her father when he was still young went abroad as a fortune seeker to work in Romania to provide money for a more comfortable life for his family, but he never returned from his fortune seeking journey and no one knows how he died, nor did anyone has any knowledge on the location of his grave. Her grand-mother Yonka, remarried in the village of Debreshe, a village predominantly inhabited by Turkish and Albanian population, to a man who had three male children with his first wife. The youngest child was called Gero (he lost his leg later in the war), then Gine and the oldest - Obre.

According to Goyko's recollections, Gine and Obre were very nice and loved their grandmother, even though she was not their birth mother. They also loved Goyko, being her nephew, were very patient with him, they took him to the field, they allowed him to ride a donkey, carried him on their back and always pleased him. Sometimes, when his parents were angry to him, he would immediately run, crying, his grandmother Gjera, along the vineyards of Zubovce, along Malkamen, their vineyard, and when he would reach a high place he screamed and called his grandmother. Although she was always occupied with work in her yard and she would listen to him and take him to her house

When Goyko talks about his mother Rafka's life story, he revealed to us that at the age of ten she stayed with her grandfather, priest Mladen. In her youth,



she cooked, cleaned, raised the livestock and took care of her grandfather Mladen; he also took care of her. Goyko's mother was grieving for her mother; she was often crying and feeling very lonely and unhappy. From time to time she had a desire to see her mother, so her grandfather Mladen would take her to Debreshe, where she would stay and spend some time with her mother. But she returned to Kunovo quickly, because she didn't want to leave her grandfather alone. So, the years went by with sufferings, but his mother, despite all her troubles, developed well and became more beautiful.

His mother Rafka had long and straight black hair and very tender white skin. She had a stout figure, a tame, gracious but insightful look that sometimes reflected her sad destiny. On occasion of some celebration, Saints day or wedding, she went to Debreshe, and sometimes to the neighboring picturesque village of Zubovce, one of the few villages in the area where only the Christian Orthodox population lived, which was well known by many beautiful and modern girls and boys.

Like his mother Rafka, his father Delche, who was born in Zubovce, was ten years old when his father passed away. Until 1960, the surname of his father's ancestors was Manojloski, Manojlov, Manojlovic, but from that year they decided their surname to be Yakovleski.

The father of Goyko's father Delche, that is his grandfather Petko, went to work in Istanbul, Constantinople, where he died in 1920, and Delche's mother, grandmother Sirma, whom they called "grandmother Bulja" when they were children, because she was always head-"covered"; she always wore a scarf on her head, and the children were scared of her. Together with her mother-in-law - great-grandmother Manojlica (whose name was Yonka), they went to Istanbul to find out what happened with grandfather Petko (the son of great-grandmother Manojlica and husband of grandmother Sirma) on whom they had no information.

When they arrived in Istanbul, they learned that grandfather Petko had died in that city and was buried there. Grandmother Sirma who had three young children with grandfather Petko - Goyko's father - Delche (10 years old at that time), his uncle or "papa Yorde" (11 years old at that time) and his aunt Vaska (12 years old at that time), abandoned them because while she was with her mother-in-law in Istanbul she met a man named Duke from the neighboring village of Volkovia and married him leaving her three children to live with her great-grandmother Manojlica.

Great-grandmother Manojlica was so sad that she was ready to jump into the Sea of Marmara and drown. But she thought that if she did it, no one would look after the three golden little grandchildren - Delche, Yorde, and Vaska, so she gave up that idea and intention. But she swore that she would never allow her daughter-in-law (grandmother Sirma), who left her three children to remarry, to see her children.



Goyko, on the other hand, had not heard this sad story for a long time and knew nothing about it. But many years later, while living with “**papa Yorde**” in Sofia, he told him that story, often saying, “*She (his mother Sirma) is not a mother, she is a bitch.*”

According to Goyko’s words, his mother Rafka grew up and she was frequently going to Zubovce. The girls from Zubovce used her as a courier and sent her to Delche, who was a handsome boy, a bachelor, to bring him a red apple, or a handkerchief, as a sign of affinity and interest.

It happened very often, and his father has spotted his mother who was a pretty girl, stout, smart and coming from the remote village of Kunovo. Even though at weddings and festive days he met many girls dressed in beautiful costumes, with aprons, mittens, belts, various decorations and golden coins, his father often looked at her and eventually he started talking to her and asking her from where was she and why was she coming to Zubovce.

Goyko’s mother told him that she was an orphan since she was very young, that she lost her father, and that her mother remarried in Debreshe.

His father Delche was surprised that both of them shared a similar destiny. He showed great interest in the girl from the distant village. One of the beautiful girls from Zubovce said, “*It is useless, none of us will get to Delche’s heart, Rafka will be the one.*” So it happened.

His father Delche decided to marry his mother Rafka exactly on the day of “*Fiery Maria*”, which in Zubovce is considered to be the warmest day of the year. On that day in Zubovce nobody works and only weddings are organized. And there is a reason for that. Once upon a time on this day in Zubovce a fire broke out and great damage was done. Everything that was valuable and useful, the gardens, the harvest, the fruits were burned. On that day inhabitants of Zubovce do not work. So the wedding, that is, the marriage of his father who was 20 years old and his mother who was 18 years old, took place on July 31, 1930. On the same date, on July 31, on St. Marena’s Day, that is “*Fiery Mary*” in Zubovce, “**papa Yorde**” married his aunt Filka from Pozharane.

Goyko’s mother and father got married, it was a beautiful wedding, and they were blessed with a number of children. The first child Victor and the second, a little girl named Ancha, died when they were little. Goyko is their third child. He was quite fragile and sickly, but later recovered. After Goyko, his sisters Nada, Milja, Rayna and Sirma were born; the youngest son Mane is sixteen years younger than Goyko.

The Monograph “Goyko Jakovlevski”

INTRODUCTION OF THE BOOK MIRROR (6)

The publication “*A Mirror*” contains the highlights and main events from the prestigious “Lifetime Achievement Award” ceremony organized by the United Macedonian Diaspora (UMD) from Washington and honouring the works of Slavè Katin.

Although Slavè Katin had a strong desire to receive the award in Macedonia, a recent surgery prevented him from attending. As a result, the award was accepted by his daughter, Dafinka Scatozza, and his granddaughter, Isabel Katin Scatozza, on his behalf.

A letter from UMD, among other things, states: “*It is our pleasure and great privilege to inform you that the United Macedonian Diaspora (UMD) has decided to award you our 2022 UMD Global Lifetime Achievement Award. We will be pleased to present this award to you in person at our 5th UMD Global Conference in Skopje, Macedonia, which is expected to take place in July 2023.*”

The “Lifetime Achievement Award” by UMD from Washington, embodies the UMD’s dedication to recognize remarkable individuals who have made significant contributions to Macedonia. This year’s award has been bestowed upon Slavè Nikolovski-Katin, a prominent figure in the Macedonian diaspora, renowned for his work as a publicist, journalist, and analyst.

Katin does not belong to a political party, because he is a member of ethnic Macedonia, the Macedonians in the diaspora and the Macedonian Orthodox Church-Ohrid Archdiocese (MOC-OA).

The United Macedonian Diaspora (UMD), is a top international, non-governmental association whose main goal is the interests and needs of people of Macedonian origin and the Macedonian communities worldwide.

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The United Macedonian Diaspora (UMD), is a top international, non-governmental association whose main goal is the interests and needs of people of Macedonian origin and the Macedonian communities worldwide. UMD is not a parallel organization to any other organization and strives to contribute to the good of Macedonia and the Macedonian people. The members of UMD, of which the author of these lines is also a member, actively work towards keeping open communication and dialogue with the United States of America, Canada, Australia, and Europe.

A special place in the publication is dedicated to the co-founder and president of the *“United Macedonian Diaspora”* (UMD), Meto Kolovski and his dedication to the organization from the outset in 2004 until today. In addition, the publication covers information about Gordan Jordanov, who was recently appointed as UMD’s new Director for Macedonia and Europe. In this role, Jordanov will be based in Macedonia, overseeing UMD’s efforts as the prominent advocate for Macedonians living abroad.

At the Conference, during the book launch of *“American Son of Macedonia,”* Lou Vlasho delivered a personal and inspiring speech. *“American Son of Macedonia”* is published by the Publishing House *“Macedonian Spark”* from Skopje, and was released for the Christmas and New Year’s holidays in 2022, on 330 pages in both English and Macedonian, and was edited and co-written by the journalist Herit Heitaus from the USA and the publicist Slavè Katin from Macedonia.

In the publication *“A Mirror,”* special space is given to recipients of the *“Lifetime Achievement Award”*. Notably, this esteemed group includes distinguished individuals such as the President of the Republic of Macedonia Kiro Gligorov and Slavè Nikolovski-Katin from the Republic of Macedonia, John Bitoff and Jaimes Sanders from Canada, George Atanasoski and Atanas Kolarovski from the USA, and Mick Velovski from Australia.



Below are the biographical data for Slavè Nikolovski-Katin. A special space is dedicated to his work and published works. The text for the *“English-Macedonian limnological lexicon”*, Ohrid, 1986 by Slavè Nikolovski-Katin, has been moved.

Regarding other awards, it is noted that the Council of the Pelagonian Gatherings, headed by the President Dr. Vesna Kalpakovska, at its meeting on May 17, 2022, decided to award the *“Charter for Lifetime Achievement”* to the publicist Slavè Katin for his overall work, achievements and contribution to science, culture, journalism, religion, and social life. The award was officially presented to him at the traditional Pelagonian Gathering in October 2022.

In addition, other awards presented to Slavè Katin are as follows, *“Award for Lifetime achievement in Publishing”*, which was awarded to him at the “49th Emigrants’ Gatherings” in Ljubojno, Prespa; the *“Krste Petkov Misirkov 1991”* award for achievement in journalism was given to Katin by the Association of Journalists from Macedonia. A special place is devoted to Slavè Katin’s membership in the literary societies *“Brothers Miladinov”* from Toronto, Canada and *“Grigor Prlichev”* from Sydney, Australia, as well as for his lifelong volunteer membership in the foundation *“Atanas Bliznakov”* at the University *“St. Cyril and Methodius”* in Skopje.

Also are presented the song *“Portre tof Slavè Nikolovski-Katin”* by Savo Kostadinovski, from Germany, and the texts: *“OMD marks the 120th anniversary of the Ilinden Uprising”* and *“OMD asks the Macedonian government to declare August 10 as a day of remembrance of the Macedonian genocide”*.

The Author



INTRODUCTION OF THE MONOGRAPH “KATIN” (7)

Slavè Nikolovski – Katin was born on 19 August 1941 in Nakolec, a village in Dolna Prespa, in a house which the waves of Lake Prespa used to splash at the time. He was born at the start of World War II when Hitler's Germany, opiated by fascist ideology, rose against the entire world believing it had the power to seize it all.

During this great global cataclysm the family of Sandra and Risto Nikolovski (Bardgevski) were joined by their first newborn, their son Slavè, who was to continue the family tree. And not only this; it was as though they knew their first child would become a well-known and renowned name not only in Prespa, but in Macedonia and abroad, throughout the world.

The aim of this book is precisely this. It aims to sublimate Slavè Nikolovski – Katin's contribution to Macedonia and the Macedonians in the Diaspora, and to repay his parents for the talent they gave him to do this, as a true Macedonian, preoccupied with the destiny of his people and its emigrant Golgotha.

His biography tells us that several months after he was born his family moved to Ljubojno, where his mother Sandra came from. She came from the Grezhlovski family. Slavè spent most of his childhood and early years there, and has continued returning to it almost his entire life. Thus, from a very young age he felt the hard migrant life of the people from Prespa, particularly through the migrant saga of his grandfather, Alekso (Alec) Ristov- Grezhlov.

Slavè completed eight years of primary school in Ljubojno gaining his certificate, and learned Geodesy at the Secondary Technical School in Skopje. He studied Geodesy in Belgrade, but graduated from the Department of English Language and Literature at the Faculty of Philology in Skopje. With his wife, Nada, they have two children. Their son, Aleksandar, was born in 1974, and their daughter, Dafinka, born in 1975.

Finishing high school he worked as surveyor for the Assembly of the Municipality of Resen for several years. During his studies at the technical college he went to Canada, where he remained for four years. In Toronto he attended the special Institute for English Language and Literature.

For a while he worked as a surveyor, and was also active among the Macedonian colony in Toronto. In 1978 he spent a term as Secretary General of the church management of the Macedonian Orthodox Church of “St. Clement



of Ohrid" in this city. At the same time he was active in the field of journalism, collaborating with the "*Duhovna iskra*" (*Spiritual Spark*) magazine in Toronto, and with other Macedonian printed and electronic media in Canada.

After graduating from the Faculty of Philology and returning from Canada, Katin worked as coordinator and translator for the Hydro biological Institute in Ohrid for five years. This took place during the period of research on Lake Ohrid determined in the Agreement between the Institute and the Smithsonian Foundation in Washington.

During this period he worked intensively on a number of translations of scientific and technical character, translating from Macedonian to English and vice versa for the needs of the Institute. He also worked on a series of English translations of scientific papers published in the country and abroad.

During the period 1979-1984 Nikolovski worked for the "*Matica*" or head office of the Macedonian emigrants where he headed the Information Service and worked as translator and journalist for the "*Makedonija*" (Macedonia) magazine. Between 1984 and 1990 he found himself at the National Conference of the Socialist Soyuz (Alliance) of the Working People of Macedonia (RK of SSRNM), where he edited the "*Informativen pregled*" (Informative Summary) and other informative publications of this public organization.

At the same time the executive council of RK of SSRNM appointed him head of the Information Service and secretary of the commission of RK SSRNM for interethnic relations and of the board for realization of the role of SSRNM in the sphere of religion and religious communities. During the period 1991-1998, appointed by the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia as an independent state, Katin was Vice President of the National Commission for relations with the religious communities.

In 1999 once again he returned to the "*Matica*" which had by now been transformed into the *Ministry of Emigration*, and following a reconstruction of the government, was again renamed into the *Agency of Emigration*. With the aim of devoting himself more intensively to the emigrants, in 2001 Katin left the Agency retiring early.

For a long time Katin has attracted attention with his dynamic informative and journalistic activities related to this corpus. It has made him a central figure in relations between the church and the state on the one hand, and relations of the state with the church and the Diaspora on the other. This kind of position has brought to him nominations in numerous associations, societies, and organizations in Macedonia and abroad.

At the same time he participated in numerous symposiums, panels, and seminars within the country and abroad at the request of their hosts who appreciated and respected his views on a series of issues in their fields. In this



respect Katin has established an exceptionally rich and dynamic communication with numerous people in the country and throughout the world.

This enabled him to penetrate into the essence of the problems that preoccupied the Macedonians in the Diaspora and the government structures in the state who continued changing their attitudes toward the emigrants during the different periods. This is another reason for the lack of a consistent government strategy toward them.

Aware of this fact Katin tries to fill in this gap, to compensate this vacuum with proposals and suggestions, and to establish a certain balance in the relations between the state and the emigrant Macedonians through concrete practical steps. Thus, he began building the great golden bridge of their link with their fatherland as an independent state, as well as their mutual acquaintance and togetherness regardless of the distance between their destinations.

However, his contribution does not end here. Katin is aware that Macedonia can most be helped if it is invested into through the realization of a series of projects significant for its faster development, i.e. if those in the Diaspora, as successful businessmen, show an interest in this.

Katin's diverse palette for realization of the strategic objectives in this field covers numerous endeavors, part of which is already functioning. In addition to his relatively frequent visits to the three continents and his private meetings with the migrants, through his monographic publications about the most successful of them Katin also tries to arouse interest among state leaders in the country for collaboration with the Diaspora.

The effects of such visits by respectful Macedonians from the Diaspora to their fatherland are yet to be felt, as will also Katin's contribution in this field. The historical dimension of his national project regarding the emigrants objectively affirms him as a unique leader of a global all-Macedonian movement for promotion of Macedonia, not only as the cradle of an ancient civilization, but as a country which contributes toward the highly developed world feeling it increasingly in its own development.

If Macedonia is the most beautiful country in the Balkans, then Prespa and Ljubojno are the core of this Macedonian beauty. And this is no coincidence, for it was the centre of Samoil's state and Saint Clement as well, the former Alexander the Great-being ruler of the world and the latter St Clement of Ohrid-an outstanding man of Orthodoxy. Hence, the reason why their descendant, Katin, shines on the horizons of the Macedonian emigrant galaxy with a charisma that only the stars of the Macedonian sky could have.

Following Clement's death the long and harsh winter of the year 927 turned Prespa into a white snowy valley. Hence, the name "*Prespa*" was derived from the word "*preslap*" signifying white snowdrifts. The melting snow later formed the lakes; first the large one and then the smaller ones.



Thus, Prespa began transforming into a natural reservation as is never remembered in the Balkans. The beautiful mountain scenery of Pelister and Galichitsa, the rich and rare flora and fauna, and the pleasant climate have turned Prespa into a true natural wonder.

The revolutionary movement for national and social liberation of the Macedonian people from Turkish slavery emerged in Prespa toward the end of the 19th century. The first VMRO spark was lit in Resen in August 1894 during the sanctification of the new church of Sts. Cyril and Methodius.

Supported by this organization, through established komitadji groups (cheti), headed by village and regional voyvodas, the Prespa population prepared and took massive participation in the Ilinden Uprising in 1903. As revenge, the "asker" (Turkish ruler) burnt a number of villages. Risto Tomulev, leader of the village "cheta" and Hristo Popov, priest and member of the regional management of VMRO, both from Ljubojno, take up a special place among the pleiad of revolutionaries from Prespa.

Following the failure of the Ilinden Uprising part of the employable Christian population went on "*pechalba*" (going abroad to earn money) to the European and Trans Atlantic countries, which further intensified the tradition begun toward the mid 19th century.

This emigrant Golgotha continued after the Balkan and First World Wars, reaching its culmination after WW II, i.e. after the failure of the collectivization conducted by the government of what was then the Federal Yugoslav state which Macedonia was a part of as a Republic. Most people from Prespa now live in Canada, USA and Australia, as well as the Western European countries such as Germany, Denmark, Belgium, Sweden, Switzerland, France, and Norway.

Prespa was also partitioned during WWII. The city of Resen and several villages of Gorna Prespa fell under Bulgarian rule, while the entire Dolna Prespa and Mala Prespa remained under Italian rule. At the time the border between the fascist countries, Bulgaria and Italy, spread from the "*Makazi*" crossing westward, between the villages of Gorno Dupeni and Evla, till the capitulation of Italy in 1943 when Bulgarian rule spread toward Dolna and Mala Prespa.

The People's Liberation and Anti Fascist movement began in 1942 in the region under Italian rule. Mite Bogoevski, the poet and revolutionary from the village of Bolno, and his friend Stevan Naumov – Steve from Bitola, were killed on 12 September 1942 by the Bulgarian occupying army and police near the village of Bolno. Both were proclaimed heroes.

What makes Prespa and its history so special is its abundance of cultural and historical monuments which date back to the time when it was an ancient Roman crossroads and the first Capital of Czar Samoil. The churches and



monasteries built during the time of St. Clement and St. Naum of Ohrid during the 9th and 10th centuries, and during the time of Samoil's Empire during the 10th and 11th centuries, had been destroyed.

Many of them were rebuilt and again destroyed during the rule of the Turkish Empire. Some of these that date back to the period between the 11th and 17th centuries have been preserved as a result of their distance from communication links or their location in the mountainous regions.

Such is the case with *"St. Georgi"*, 12th century, in Kurbinovo; *"St. Ilija"*, 12th century, in Grncari; *"St. Petka"*, 14th century, in Brajcino; *"St. Atanas and St. Arhangel"*, 14th century in Dolno Dupeni; *"St. Petar"*, 14th century, in Golem Grad; *"St. Sava"*, beginning of 14th century, in Pretor; and the Slimnichki monastery of *"St. Bogorodica"* dating back to the beginning of the 17th century. Other not less significant historical monuments in Prespa include the *"Kurbinsko kale"*, *"Petrinsko kale"*, *"Kale Istok"*, *"Kale Ilino"*, *"Shurlensko kale"*, *"Marko kula"* a tower in Podmochani, as well as the towers: *"Kula Slivnica"*, *"Kula Krani-Arvati"*, *"Kula Shtrbovo"*, *"Kula"*.

As an active journalist, he was elected as secretary of the Association of Journalists of Macedonia, for a period of five years. Then, he was a member of the Presidency and the Commission for International Cooperation of this Association. He was also a member of the Council of the Centre for Foreign Languages in Skopje, the publishing board of *"International Politics"* from Belgrade, and a member of the Association of Literary Translators of Macedonia.

He was vice president for two terms, and a member of the Society for Literature and Culture Macedonia-Canada; he was an honorary member of the Association for the use of the Macedonian Language in Official and Public Communication; a vice president and lifelong member of the Boards of the Foundations *"Atanas Bliznakoff"* at the *"Ss. Cyril and Methodius"* University.

He was a member of the International Academy for Freedom of Religion in Washington, DC, U.S.A, honorary member of the Literary Association Miladinov Brothers, in Toronto, Canada, and Literary Association Grigor Prlichev in Sydney, Australia, as well as a member of the Macedonian Association of Sciences and Arts from Bitola, Macedonia

The Monograph *"Katin"*

WHO IS BLAGOJ MEHANDZISKI - ZEGIN? (8)

Dr.. Blagoj Mehandziski-Bari, or Zegin, as his close friends named him since he was very young, was born in the beautiful Macedonian village of Rusinovo located in Berovo region. He is well known, recognized and distinguished person who is very appreciated among the Macedonian businessmen. He is rightfully said to be a human, a noble and successful businessman in Macedonia who runs pharmacy business and at the same time he helps people. He is known like a loyal Christian, faithful and devoted to the values of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, Macedonian people and to Macedonia.

Blagoj Mehandziski is distinguished, proved and recognized businessman and humanitarian in Macedonia. According to the Wealth-X, the global authority on wealth intelligence, Blagoj Mehandziski, the founder of "ZEGIN", the first private company for sale and production of medicines in Macedonia is ranked on the 9th place on the list of the wealthy people in the Republic of Macedonia.

He runs the "ZEGIN Wholesale" for entire 25 years and it can be freely said that there is no one in Macedonia and wider who has not heard of "ZEGIN" and Blagoj Mehandziski. Namely, this intriguing and, according to the people from his surrounding, sometimes controversial businessman, is a true enigma for numerous topics from his life and business.

It is fair to say that is not easy to portray Blagoja Mehandziski. His friends often say that he is a man who transforms into a "machine" when he is occupied with his business. Those who know him privately claim that he is a person who in the rare moments of leisure makes jokes, invites his friends to party and entertain his guests. Being his biographer I know him since he was a student and I also know that his life path was not so smooth. He has always fought to express his opinion, even in the situation which is not favorable for him; therefore, Bari, or as we call Blagoja, together with "ZEGIN" is one and unique, unrepeatable.

His employees very often did not understand why they had to run after him while he was assigning them their working tasks, but that was the kind of person that Blagoj is. He is a man with lot of tasks, a man whose deliberation is "turbo"-style and who makes decisions very quickly. Therefore, it is rightfully said that the manager of "ZEGIN", Blagoj Mehandziski is a businessman who



belongs to the new structure of businessmen who have a vision for the development of their companies and intuition for investment of the capital and its fertilization. According to my friend Bari, the leader of "ZEGIN", this is a great success not only for his company, but also for our country, because in Macedonia are invested tens of millions EUR so far.

Blagoj Mehandziski was born in the village of Rusinovo, situated in Berovo region, where he spent his early childhood. Rusinovo is the largest and one of the most beautiful settlements in Maleshevo region. Rusinovo is connected to the center of Municipality of Berovo by an asphalt road approximately five kilometers long. It is populated only by Macedonian population which has lived, lives and will live in harmony, which largely contributes to mark Rusinovo as a pleasant place for living. In Rusinovo

Although it is often said that the businessman Mehandziski is a world man and seeker for new challenges, he never forgets the Maleshevo region. He often visits his home in Berovo and he is also involved in business and donation activities in the Maleshevo region.

His origins are from the Mehandziski family which is an old, Rusinovo-based family for centuries. He is proud of his Maleshevo Macedonian roots. His father Nikola and his mother Victoria were also born there. His deceased wife Vera Mehandziska, a physician by profession gave birth to their daughters Lenche, Liljana and Marija. He has two granddaughters, Victoria and Christina.

Blagoj Mehandziski-Zegin is a member of the VMRO-DPMNE political party. Many times he has financially supported numerous party activities and he is considered to be a loyal member. That is the reason why his name was mentioned as a possible candidate for a Member of Parliament during the last parliamentary elections, when he publicly announced his affiliation to this political party.

It is often said that Blagoj Mehandziski is the soul of the Wholesale „ZEGIN“, whose idea for its establishment dates back to 1974, when he graduated from the Faculty of Medicine. Then he had an opportunity to enter the business with pharmaceuticals. As a representative and in cooperation with "Kemofarmacija" from Ljubljana Mehandziski showed and proved his qualities and capacities in the field of pharmacy business.

In that period of time he decided to name the company "ZEGIN". The name is actually composed of five letters which means the following: "Z" - "Zdravstvo" ("health services for everybody"); "E" - "Education in all fields"; "G" - "Guarantee for your health", "I" - "Information on health services from everybody to everybody"; "N" - "Nadez" ("hope for all ill people"). Those were the abbreviations for the name for which he announced an open competition.

From the very beginning of "ZEGIN" company until today, it is open for higher educated staff, because the knowledge and advancement are the main



prerequisites of the future. Therefore, "ZEGIN" finances all the education activities of its employees which are related to needs of the company. We produced our own expert literature, our own registry and software programs, which makes possible to transfer the complete health and information system in Macedonia. All of that is proof that "ZEGIN" Wholesale invests much in innovations and education.

Nevertheless, the companies which successfully operate within "ZEGIN Wholesale" are the following: "ZEGIN Pharm", "ZEGIN Policlinic", "ZEGIN Medika", "ZEGIN Pharmacies" and "ZEGIN Forwarding". According to the statistical data of the official institutions, all these companies contribute to the permanent positioning of "ZEGIN" Company among the top ten companies by the realized net profit.

"ZEGIN" Company is owned by Blagoj Mehandziski and it is the first private wholesale in the Republic of Macedonia which is the role model for successful operation and donation activities for humanitarian purposes for many years. It is also a company which often offers interesting initiatives and novelties. The success of this well known pharmacy wholesale is due to their aspiration and persistence to keep pace with the latest achievements in the pharmaceutical industry. All of this makes "ZEGIN" a leader in the pharmaceutical business in the Republic of Macedonia.

The businessman Blagoj Mehandziski is well known humanitarian and donor. As a leader and owner of "ZEGIN Wholesale" he is a donor and supporter of numerous cultural, sports, folklore and national activities which take place especially in Maleshevo region and Skopje. During the 26-year period of its operation, "ZEGIN" has made donations to orphanages, individuals, schools, sportsmen and sport events, health and other institutions, as well as to a large number of Macedonian Orthodox Churches in the Republic of Macedonia.

For his proved humanity and solidarity, he is awarded many prizes and recognitions, such as the prize "The Greatest Humanitarian" in 1999; in that same year he was declared a donor of the year in the Republic of Macedonia. In 2007 Mehandziski was pronounced the best manager of southeast and central Europe; "ZEGIN Wholesale" which is owned by Blagoja Mehandziski, is the Macedonian laureate of the prestigious award "Regional Business Partner for 2009" which was awarded in Belgrade. He is also a winner of the "Award for the Best Brand of Southeastern Europe", "Super Brand in Macedonia 2009", "The best manager of Southeastern and Central Europe", and "Regional business partner for 2009".

The Monograph "Blagoj Mehandziski-ZEGIN"

“THE HOLY LANDS” OF ISRAEL AND MACEDONIA (9)

For Jews Israel is the land which God promised to Abraham and his followers. According to Bible tradition from the Old Testament, the first migrations of Jews in the Promised Land - Canaan has begun around 2,000 BC.

Israel was and remained the torch of holiness where the birth, miracle and the power of the Savior Jesus Christ is a divine creation and mundane adherence followed by many hundreds millions of followers all over the world.

Church of the Holy Sepulcher , where Jesus Christ was buried and resurrected, is the holiest place for Christians from all meridians , so it is rightfully said that it is a place of faith , hope and love of the people who come with their own truth and expectations , worship and prayer , joy and sorrow.

According to Biblical tradition of the New Testament regarding Christ's birth and his childhood the cities of Bethlehem and Nazareth attract special interest. Today, both cities are under the Palestinian authority as autonomous territories.

According to the New Testament, Jesus Christ was born in the city of Bethlehem, where is his birthplace shrine and the “Church of the Nativity.” This temple has undergone many architectural reconstructions and been constantly enlarged in different periods of the history.

The church is a creative achievement of the mankind through the beautiful creations of a number of biblical motifs, contents and specific Christian characteristics. Today Bethlehem is a tourist resort and is crowded by visitors from around the world, especially during the days of celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ - Christmas. There Christmas is celebrated three times during the year.

Nazareth is, however, a holy place for Christians, because numerous Christian churches, monasteries and other religious objects are built in it. There are the churches: “*The Annunciation* ”, “*Archangel Gabriel*”, built over the natural springs of the “*Holy Virgin*” and the church “*Saint Joseph* ”. It is the town where Jesus Christ grew up.

Church of the *Holy Sepulcher* is a symbol of the unity of all who believe in the Son of God and a testimony of the separation of Christians. Life, teachings and death of Jesus will mark the new page in the history of mankind.



At the time when Jews mourned the destruction of the Temple, the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth have already spread the new, Christian doctrine. Jerusalem, the city of Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection remains the biggest sanctuary in the Christianity to date.

Jerusalem is a city of timeless beauty and the Holy Places. Throughout millennia, the people of Jerusalem, and those who come to bow, have glorified and still praise it as a city of eternity, as the center of the world, as the capital, as a city of great political power ...

Accordingly, the city has been given several names in the Bible, in Moses' records and in the literature. Israelis call it Yerushalayim, which is the origin of its today's name - Jerusalem which means the "city of peace".

However, the existence of Jerusalem - the city of Christ's suffering, death and resurrection, over the last two millennia is not tied to the notion of peace. There is no sacred place in the world where so much blood has been spilled. There is no other place in the world where so vigorous fights were fought; there is no other place in the world with so deep hatred and so fierce battles as in this holy city which is located on the cold and gray cliffs of Mount Judah. The three world religions - Jewish, Christian and Muslim, made the city a center of division. At the same time, there is no place in the world where so many prayers are told as in Jerusalem.

Israel is not only a land of the past, but it is also a land of today and tomorrow. In Jerusalem is the Museum "Yad va'Shem" which mission was to carry out a commemoration and documentation of events, and a full selection, research and publication of the evidence of the Holocaust, then, to make a selection and registration of the names of the victims, as well as to further explore and educate future generations. This modern institution in Israel is one of the best equipped in the world which can serve as an example.

In Tel Aviv is the *Museum of the Diaspora*. This museum depicts and presents the history of the Jewish people from the time they were expelled from the land of Israel. The goal of the Museum of the Diaspora is to show the visitor the real historical development of the Jewish people continuously during the whole period of its existence. Through displaying the cultural, national, educational, family, religious and other advancements, through the efforts to achieve a better future, they try to acquire, to gain and to trace a wide two-way road of the individual and centuries-long historical map of identification of the Jewish people.

Therefore, it is often said that the visit to the holy land Israel is endless spiritual inspiration, unique purification and cultural well, and certainly a great pilgrimage of unforgettability. In the past millennia, the civilization, historical, spiritual and cultural existence and life of the Jewish people and their homeland, is a huge story, a strong poem and unique truth, created, written



and memorized in the vaults of the permanent values through documents, tales, myths and legends.

The bridges of connections, cooperation and mutual respect between Macedonia and Israel are building long time ago. Starting from the ancient period until today, Israel like Macedonia was, is and will be the crossroads of different nations, civilizations, cultures, languages and religions. Therefore, it is rightfully said that the history of the Jews and the history of the Macedonians is closely tied. That common history starts from the ancient times of Alexander of Macedonia, the period of the Romans and Byzantine, Ottoman period until the next world wars will show that Israel and Macedonia have similar, if not identical fate. Namely, through this long and important period in Macedonia only two nations have chosen the name of the country as a part of their identity - the ancient Macedonians and Macedonians today.

Macedonians won their independence, social, political and cultural rights in 1944, and in 1991 they constituted their independent, sovereign and autonomous state - the Republic of Macedonia, while the Jews have constituted their first homeland in Israel in 1948.

Among other things, Alexander of Macedonia is also mentioned in the annals of Jerusalem. Namely, Jerusalem has been conquered by numerous warriors, including Alexander of Macedonia. It is interesting that the city has experienced a significant blooming during the time of Alexander of Macedonia, who has come there in 332 year BC, after he has expelled the Persians. During his time, and at the time of his successor Ptolemy, Jerusalem has been strengthened as a religious center which expressed the spiritual harmony of Israelis.

Christianity in Macedonia began to be preached since apostolic times. After the acceptance of Christianity, the Apostle Paul has become the first preacher of the new messianic concept during his missionary journeys. The Apostle Paul has travelled many times and during his missionary activity he has preached among the Jewish and pagan population. The Apostle Paul has visited Macedonia four times.

At that time, Macedonia was a part of the Roman Empire, like Israel, thus, often changing its borders and its ethnic composition. One of the first indications regarding the journeys of the apostles in Macedonia is found in *“Acts of the Holy Apostles”* probably written by the Apostle Luke, which says:

... during one night Paul had a vision: a Macedonian stood before him and prayed, saying, *“Come over to Macedonia - help us!* And when he saw his vision, we immediately decided to go further in Macedonia, concluding that God has called us to preach the Gospel there. Then we sailed from Troas and travelled straight to Samothrace, and the next day in Naples...

The Jews, however, in the long and difficult path of existence at the time when the Romans have destroyed Jerusalem when the Holy Temple was



burnt, Judah was plundered and devastated. Jews were forbidden to live in their homeland Judea, which led to the great Jewish resettlement throughout the world. After that in Judah came Muslims, Crusaders, Ottomans and each in their own way has treated these people.

Certainly, the last century for the Jews is the most tragic, because Aryans led by Hitler killed 6 million Jews. That is why the Holocaust over the Jews which left so deep scars in the Jewish people and its history cannot be forgotten.

According to the written documents first Jews arrived in Macedonia during the Roman Empire, when the Jews fled Israel because of the strong Roman oppression. The oldest evidence of the existence of Jews in Macedonia is the old synagogue which dates from the III century BC in the ancient city of Skupi.

Macedonian larger cities such as Thessaloniki, Skopje, Bitola, Shtip and others have attracted many Jews, which community maintained very good relations with the rest of the population in Macedonia.

When one writes about that dark part of the historical development of the Jews in Macedonia it should be said that it has another dimension. Namely, the Jews were not favored by their fate, when in April 1941, the Bulgarian army, which was an ally of the Axis powers, entered Macedonia and occupied large part of the territory.

Thus, on October 4, 1941, the Bulgarians introduced a bill that among other things forbade Jews to be involved in any way in the society. Later on the Bulgarian authorities gathered almost all Jews from Bitola and moved them to the poorer places for living. Soon after that, in 1942, the Bulgarians in Macedonia and Aegean Macedonia (Northern Greece) started to deport the Jews.

During the night of 10 and 11 March 1943 all Jews in Macedonia were arrested and imprisoned in Monopoly, in Skopje, which was at that time a temporary concentration camp. According to the records of the Bulgarian and German occupying authorities, 7,144 Jews were arrested and transported to the occupied Poland, to the death camp Treblinka, where they were executed.

In the remembrance of the executed Jews in Skopje was built the Museum of the Holocaust, which after the museums in Jerusalem and Washington is the third museum in the world and first in Europe dedicated to the victims of the Holocaust.

The Author

55 YEARS ESMA WITH HER SONG (10)

Macedonian diva Esma Redzepova was born on August 8, 1943 in Skopje, in a working poor family. However, the origin and history of her family is interesting, immigrant-related, composed of more nations, and cosmopolitan in which the three most important world religions reigned: Jewish, Muslim and Orthodox.

No matter how many times she speaks about her origin, about her intimate and (un)common happenings in her life, it seems that Esma Redzepova-Teodosievska, the Queen of Roma music, always has a new story as a surprise. Even to her closest family and friends who think they know all about her stories, sagas and paths. It's probably so because she always retells them with new emotions, including even those stories about her family history before she appeared in the world by her voice and talent.

She is always touched by the story about her grandmother Esma, Jewish, after whom she was named. Her grandma Esma was born in Iran, from where she came in Tirana, Albania. There she married Redzep, Catholic Roma, a potter, Esma's grandfather. They gave birth to 10 children - nine girls: Zela, Pas-ka, Asaika, Emina, Bajrusha, Duda, Hajrie, Safia and Majramilija, and one boy, Ibrahim, father of Esma Redzepova, Queen of Roma song.

The life paths took her grandmother Esma and grandfather Redzep from Tirana to Pristina. When her grandfather died, grandma Esma bought a house in Skopje, in the area of the city center, where Esma Redzepova was born, who holds the last name after her grandfather Redzep.

Her father Ibrahim, Catholic Roma, was born in Tirana, and died in Skopje, while her mother Kania, a Muslim, was born in Aracinovo, near Skopje. They lived together in their small house in the downtown area of Skopje. There they gave birth to their six children: Redzep, Sajka, Fahri, Yasha, Emina, and Esma as their fifth child.

The same as she is touched by the life story of her grandmother and grandfather, any reviving memory of the fate of her father Ibrahim brings her to the brink of tears as well. "I'd never seen my dad standing on his two legs. During the Second World War, in April 1941, at the age of 21, my father Ibrahim, with many Roma boys, was taken to Kale to be liquidated by firing squad of the Skopje's occupiers. My father was shot in the hip but he survived the shooting unlike other victims. However the wound was serious and he got gangrene so his leg had to be amputated. When I was born, he had already got only one leg. He died young, before his fifty. But my father and his fight for life has always



been my great inspiration for life," tells Esma sadly. These emotions always wake up when she sings the song dedicated to her father - "Ibrahim".

Her father Ibrahim and her mother Kanija Redzepovi were doing their best to provide food for their four daughters: Sajka, Yasha, Esma and Emina, and for their two sons Redzep and Fahri. Ibrahim cleaned shoes for living, but because he was disabled, someone always had to carry his box with paint and brushes.

Among other brothers and sisters, little Esma also became assistant to his father. But soon she expanded her "business" starting to help other shoe cleaners in Skopje. Soon she became their key "supplier of raw materials".

She used to run to the only workshop for the production of color shoe type "imalin" to buy it for all cleaners. The money she got for bus fare, she spared for cinema tickets, and she usually walked instead spending money for bus tickets.

Older citizens of Skopje may not remember that today's Roma Queen is the same girl that fifty years ago was waiting in queue to buy milk for them and to whom they gave a coin or two as a gratitude which ended in the Skopje cinema ticket window.

Schoolgirl Esma was rebellious and she always got even with those who humiliated her by calling her "Gypsy". She was never ashamed of work, not even when as a nine-year girl was forced to clean stairs and wipe windows in homes of wealthy Skopje citizens. She had silky voice, always a huge smile and cheerful nature. Her mother never sung. Her father Ibrahim sang, but only for his own soul because he considered singing at bars disrespectful.

His 13-year-old daughter Esma was in love with the song, but in fact he didn't know that she'd already captivated the audience with her voice, singing a song in a theatrical performance and that she'd received an invitation to participate in a sing competition among primary schools hold in Saraj.

Her father learnt about it several days later when renowned artist Stevo Teodosievski knocked on the Redzeps door. He came to persuade Ibrahim to let Esma perform with his ensemble. That autumn in 1957, Esma won the school contest and received calls for cooperation from Radio Skopje. In that 13-year-old girl, dressed in modest dress, music critics found extraordinary talent. From that moment onwards the life of Esma got a different direction. She joined the ensemble of Teodosievski, while her father received a promise from Stevo that he would take care of her performance, her career and he would never allow her to become an alehouses singer.

After the conclusion of this joint agreement, the old car of Stevo Teodosievski, the roads, new cities and hotels became Esma's home. Now Esma almost cannot remember her first official appearances. First they started with modest tours in Macedonia, then in the republics of former Yugoslavia. Esma's



first appearance outside of Yugoslavia was in Bulgaria in 1961. She was the real attraction during this two-month tour because at the time it wasn't "natural" to include Roma in entertainment world.

Owing to contacts and more developed music market, Esma Redzepova and Stevo Teodosievski become citizens of Belgrade where they lived from 1960 to 1989.

Their house consisted in fact of two rooms on Dedinje, where all members of the ensemble "Teodosievski" lived, as well as Stevo's mother, Paraskeva-Paca, who was a second mother to Esma. In Belgrade Esma finished high music school. As a result of their many performances in then-Yugoslavia, and in many other countries on each continent, including one of their first performances abroad in Paris Theater "Olympia", Esma and Srtevo were rightly called "citizens of the world".

The music and living together with Stevo Teodosievski culminated in a marriage in 1968. Those living in Drachevo still remember the great and joyful Roma wedding, and seven days later their marriage was legalized in Belgrade.

Many trips of the Roma music queen started from the Belgrade airport. Esma Redzepova became popular and her name was entered into the protocol of the President of then-Yugoslavia. The first time she sang in front of Tito was in 1961, when the guest of the Marshal was Indonesian President Sukarno. Libyan leader Gaddafi also got into a good mood with her songs when he was on summer holiday in Tito's residence on Brioni.

All those years spent together, until the demise of Stevo Teodosievski, they hosted a great number of concerts all over the world, traveling by their Mercedes even to India, where they were proclaimed "*King and Queen of Roma music in the world*" in 1976. They infinitely loved their country and carried it within themselves spreading the tradition of Macedonian and Roma people that ringed out through the sounds they produced.

Their joint motto was "*If you have two, give one*", and it was consistent with their mission give to those in need. Regretfully, after 30 years of marriage, the death of Stevo separated the Queen and Queen. But she says that he's remained permanently in her life.

During the joint career Stevo and Esma Teodosievski fostered 47 boys, provided home for them, raised, educated and enabled them to finish music school so that they all pursue their own music career now. Esma Redzepova-Teodosievska is financing Eleonora Mustafova, a poor girl who studies solo singing fully supported by Esma.

In addition to setting up such a numerous musical family, Esma Redzepova-Teodosievska and ensemble "Teodosievski" held more than 2,000 humanitarian concerts, and carried out many humanitarian activities and donations, out of which the donation to the City of Skopje should be singled out. It is



the "House of humanity and Museum of the Music of Esma and Stevo Teodosievski", where Esma Redzepova-Teodosievska lives today.

It is rightly stated that humanity and the struggle for peace with song and noble deeds is the basic content and richness of Esma's life. With the message for peace, Esma, together with the ensemble "Teodosievski", was in many crisis areas throughout the world affected by war, natural disasters, epidemics, encouraging people and spiritually helping them to overcome the crisis.

In one part of the biography of Esma Redzepova-Teodosievska it is written, inter alia, that she's held thousands of concerts around the world as a folk music artiste; about six hundred compositions are permanently inscribed on plates, cassettes and CDs, sung in 20 languages; she's had around ten hours of television programs; she's received over 2000 certificates of gratitude for her humanity; she's raised and educated around fifty children; she received a gold and silver medal from Tito for her outstanding contribution to the culture in the former Yugoslavia; she's received gold medal for being "*Singer of the Millennium*" awarded in Moscow in the competition of top singers from 83 countries; she's holder of the national awards "*13 November*" and "*20 November*"; she was presented the award of UNICEF in Belgrade.

She's also a holder of the passport from the first child Embassy; she's been a candidate for the Nobel Peace Prize twice, and her nominations were endorsed by more than 50 non-governmental humanitarian domestic and foreign institutions; she deserved the titles "*Diva of the European Song*" and "*Queen of Roma music in the world*"; she's also won the national award "*Mother Teresa*"; she's received the "*Order of Merit of Macedonia*", and she's also earned the title "*National Artiste of the Republic of Macedonia*".

Summarized in such figures and facts is the biography or bibliography of Esma Redzepova-Teodosievska, of this remarkable woman, promoter of Roma and Macedonian musical story everywhere. Many call her second Mother Teresa, and not by pure chance. This "*Diva With a Big Heart*" as the magazine "*Zena*" (Woman) called her in the distant '63, staged 50 humanitarian concerts throughout Israel to help the victims of the 1964 earthquake in Skopje. Since then she's held a thousand concerts for those in needed around the world – she was singing for the helpless in India, Mexico, Serbia, Bosnia, Croatia, Pakistan, Iran and other countries in the world, bust most for Macedonia.

In all countries around the globe the Roma and Macedonian song has ringed out, carried by the powerful voice of our Esma Redzepova-Teodosievska. For years the world recognizes Esma for her songs "*My mother, why did you give birth to me?*" and "*Chae Shukarie*", and the answer to these verses is already crystal clear - she is in this world because of her own mission - to sing, to enrich, to help...



We've mentioned only a part of Esma's activities, but the real problem is if anyone wants to enumerate all other concerts she's held at renowned venues on all meridians, as well as her music and different activities worldwide.

So when her name is entered on any search browser on the Internet, one will find themselves amidst a real maze with rich materials. It is difficult to choose the best, most informative, most popular and most appropriate materials published in national and world news media, in order to shape the mirror for the life and work of Esma Redzepova-Teodosievska.

In recent decades Esma has established herself in all European and world centers, and promoted the Macedonian culture internationally. During these 55 years of practicing active musicianship Esma Redzepova-Teodosievska has participated in top music festivals and manifestations around the world giving enormous contribution to the promotion of the Macedonian culture and tradition abroad.

However, there is a difference between Esma on professional level and Esma in her private life. Although she's lively on stage, she's a very quiet woman in her private life, a woman that listens more and speaks less. She wants to socialize with people, she likes to help the poor, in a way she likes to protect the weaker.

She is not untouchable; on the contrary, she considers herself as a part of the people, and she is glad that people experience her that way. She's always wanted to lead a quiet life fulfilled with love and respect for the others in her surrounding.

Esma has been living in democracy for a long time thus far, accepting the market economy also in culture, and nothing is unattainable for her because she is a great worker and quality. Undoubtedly she is an intellectual person completely oriented toward the civil society and certainly she has a severe pain in her soul because of the premature departure of her husband Teodosievski. Maybe that is the reason why Esma extended her hands to Tupurkovski when he said "We are all Macedonia!", finding in it a crumb of hope that after all something was going to be changed.

Today, despite her performances and the care of the large family, Esma Redzepova-Teodosievska manages to give her contribution to policy as well. She was and she's still an active member of the Democratic Alternative of Vasil Tupurkovski, whom she appreciates and respects very much. Today she is a member of the Council of the Municipality of Centre representing the VMRO DPMNE.

But as in life so in politics Esma acts with her cosmopolitan creed: *"Pride because the Republic of Macedonia is independent country"*. Therefore she is pleased to conclude:



"I am very happy. The fact that the Republic of Macedonia is a self-governing and independent country is the dream come true for many generations. Now that we are an independent country, we can manage our own country according to our needs. I'm also happy that this plethora of young people, who are leading the country, are doing it properly. Construction works are underway, there are many job opportunities. I know that right now Skopje is like a construction site. But by the end of this year it will be very nice, but as of 2014 Macedonia will be a wonderful and beautiful country, and foreigners will be pleased to see so many impressive buildings and structures", says Esma.

According to her words: *"The Republic of Macedonia gives substantial contribution to the Roma and is an example for all countries on how to respect the Roma rights. The Roma first graders in Macedonia learn Roma language optionally and many of them continue their education at high schools, and many even at universities. Roma are not assimilated in Macedonia.*

The Constitution recognizes Roma as a nationality. We have our representative at the Parliament, a mayor of a municipality in Suto Orizari is Roma, and we have got our directors and other officials. The education of Roma is further developed and it is becoming better and better," concludes the Queen of Roma music.

She still holds concerts around the world each year, concerts that have their place in the media and that raise money for her protégés needed for their education and homes, as well as for their happy and normal life. Esma, who lives and acts as a charitable institution, is a replacement of Mother Teresa for many and therefore it is rightly to say that she is the great Sun of the Republic of Macedonia.

The Monograph "Esma"





***PART EIGHT -
MACEDONIANS IN
THE NEIGHBOURING
COUNTRIES***



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RECOGNITIONS OF THE MACEDONIANS ACROSS SERBIA (I)

With the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia all peoples of other republics, including the Macedonians living in Serbia, have become minorities and had to organize themselves in order to exercise their minority rights under the Constitution, the republic laws and regulations of the local governments in Serbia. Until that time, nobody asked who you are and where are you from, however, there were regional gatherings having amusing character. For example, there were Montenegrin, Macedonian, Lika, Roma and other evenings at which people met, enjoyed and spread the circle of friendship.

During this period, in addition to Macedonian institutions in Vojvodina, which worked with success over a period of seventy years, the Macedonians as a minority in Serbia have their new Macedonian organizations, associations, clubs, schools, folk groups and other associations which bring hope that the situation will improve and they will have a happier tomorrow.

Among others, we should mention the following : the National Council of Macedonians in the Republic of Serbia, the magazine "*Macedonian light*", the Association "*Goce Delchev*" - Vranje, the singing female group "*Tose Proeski*" in Kacharevo , the Club "*Ilinden*" in Jabuka, the Association "*White Dawns*" in Pirot , the House of Culture "*Koco Racin*" and the primary school "*Goce Delchev*" in Jabuka, the Association "*Makedonium*" from Belgrade , the Association "*Goce Delchev*" from Vranje, the Cultural and artistic society "*Vasil Hadzimanov*" in Jabuka and other . It seems that the greatest success is the introduction of the Macedonian language as a public (official) language of the Local Administration in the municipality Plandishte near Vrshac, and the election of a Member of the Serbian Parliament out of the Macedonian community.

In Belgrade we were guests of the academician Prof. Dr. Antonije Shkokljević-Dončo. He is one of those virtuous Macedonians who have devoted their life to the science, to the human health, the progress of new generations in the medical sciences, paleolinguistics, as well as to the ancient roots of the peoples in the Balkans. At the same time, he is committed to maintenance of good relations between Serbia, where he spends most of his life and Macedonia, his homeland. He, as a man having a great love for his two homelands - Serbia and Macedonia, as he likes to say, has given exceptionally large contribution



to the development of Serbian-Macedonian relations and communications, in particular, in the scientific and journalistic field.

The life path of the academician professor. Dr. Antonije Shkokljev-Dončo has begun in the famous Macedonian revolutionary village D'mbeni - Kastoria, in the Aegean part of Macedonia. It is the village in which were born many pre-war Macedonian fighters and intellectuals who have fought for affirmation of the Macedonian ideals. In D'mbeni was also born the biggest donor from the Macedonian Diaspora, Atanas Bliznakoff, who has lived in Gary, Indiana, in the USA, and who has established the largest foundation in the country the Foundation "Bliznakoff" within the University "St. Cyril and Methodius" in Skopje for supporting the Macedonian students.

The Academician Shkokljev considers Belgrade to be the city of life, love, science, progress ... He has completed Medical School in Belgrade and he has specialized maxillofacial and oral surgery at the Military Medical Academy in Belgrade, thus becoming a doctor of medical sciences. He is the founder and organizer of the Department of Maxillofacial and Oral Surgery at the Military Medical Academy (MMA), and he was an associate professor and full professor. As a military expert and professor at the Military Medical Academy in Belgrade gets the rank of general.

Antonije Shkokljev has been forced to leave his homeland - Macedonia, but his memories, thoughts, love, grief and patriotic spirit for the country and the Macedonian people were always present in his soul and mind. The permeation of those contours in the life of the academic professor Dr. Antonije Shkokljev - Doncho reveal the picture of the biblical nature of the country of his origin situated in the Balkans. Therefore, in addition to several hundreds of his professional and scientific research papers, ten experts and other books, even as a young scientist, he begins to engage in paleolinguistic research of the Balkans. With a great love and knowledge of several languages he penetrates deeply into the history of the Balkans, especially of Macedonia, in order to contribute to the truth of Macedonia and the Macedonian people in the ancient period.

He is around thirty years engaged in linguistic research of the Balkans, especially of Serbia and Macedonia. According to his own, original assumptions, there has been a language related to one of the oldest proven civilizations in Europe, such as Lepenski Vir, for which many interesting original findings are published. Based on it, he believes that such language has also existed in the other ancient cultural civilization centers in Macedonia and the Balkans.

Life and work of academic professor Dr. Antonije Shkokljev - Dončo is closely associated with the scientific and journalistic thought of the Macedonian and Serbian people. He confirmed the willingness of every Macedonian, no matter what part of Macedonia he belongs to, to promote his national identity and the land of his ancestors. His scientific, educational, historical, cultural



and other activities, leave deep marks in his two homelands the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Serbia.

However, the Ohrid Archbishopric has remained within the Byzantine Empire in the period between XI and XII century. But, at the beginning of the XIII century, the Balkans has experienced frequent political changes, as well as Macedonia. Sultan Mustafa III has abolished the Ohrid Archdiocese and its parishes has annexed to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which in turn has been bound to pay its debts. After more than seven and a half centuries of autocephalous life, the Ohrid Archbishopric has been unjustly abolished by the Sultan in 1767.

National liberation struggle of the Macedonian people during the Second World War was aimed not only to national and social liberation, but also to resolution of the issue of the Macedonian Orthodox Church. The First Clerical Assembly on the liberated territory in Western Macedonia was held in 1943 in the village of Izdeglavje, near Ohrid. It is regarded as the end of the second phase of the Macedonian church issue.

In autumn 1944 part of Macedonia was fully liberated. The newly established Macedonian state has become an equal member of a new Yugoslavia. Therefore, the Macedonian Orthodox believers and clergy held the First Clerical and Laity Assembly in 1945, which adopted the Decision on establishing the Macedonian Orthodox Church through restoration of the Ohrid Archbishopric.

In 1959, the Episcopal Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church recognized the decisions of the Second Clerical and Laity Assembly of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, held in Ohrid from 4 to 6 October in 1958 on separation of the Macedonian Orthodox Church as an independent, with the newly elected head – the Archbishop of Ohrid and Macedonia Dositheus. The representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church, led by HH the Patriarch German participated in the Enthronement of the Macedonian Metropolitan Clement.

Third Clerical and Laity Assembly of the Macedonian Orthodox Church was held on June 18, 1967 in the ancient Ohrid, when it was decided to declare independence of the Macedonian Orthodox Church led by Archbishop of Ohrid and Macedonia, HB Dositheus. The diocese of the Macedonian Orthodox Church matched the boundaries of the Macedonian national state - the Republic of Macedonia.

According to the Constitution of the Macedonian Orthodox Church adopted in 1974, the Macedonian Orthodox Church shall govern and manage its affairs independently, according to the dogmatic and canonical unity with the other Orthodox churches. Macedonian Orthodox Church has its own coat of arms, a flag and its official language is Macedonian. Clergy Diocesan authorities and administrative bodies of the Macedonian Orthodox Church are 1) the Archbishop, 2. the Holy Synod of Bishops, 3. Bishops' ecclesiastical court,



4. Dioceses - seven in Macedonia and three overseas (American - Canadian, Australian - New Zealand and diocese of Europe).

The Holy Synod is responsible for religious and educational activities, publishing of religious literature, as well as for the education of priests and monks. Macedonian Orthodox Church has its four-year secondary school (seminary) in Dracevo, Skopje where the future priests are educated and Theological School, which is a part of the University " St. Cyril and Methodius".

In the afternoon we headed for New Belgrade across the bridge "Gazela", where numerous monumental administrative, cultural and other facilities are built. We visited the Museum of Contemporary Art, which is located near the confluence of Sava and Danube Rivers, then the Congress Centre "Sava" and the Student City, where we've had the status of a tenant. Then we arrived to Zemun. This old city until 1918 was the Austro-Hungarian border section. We saw the Fortress on the city coast, the Tower of Sibirjanin Janko, the House with a Sundial, and other monuments. The visit to Zemun was a challenge for us who came from Macedonia, because we were informed that in this beautiful city, as well as in the villages of Jabuka Kacharevo, Gllogjan and other places many families have lived and still live, including the famous bakers from Kicevo who introduced burek and other Macedonian specialties, as well as many families from Prespa region which were very skillful in fruit growing.

In the village of Jabuka, which looks like a small city, there are more than six thousand inhabitants, of which 80% are Macedonians, who have made their family nests in the plain Banat. There, "Koco Racin", "Goce Delchev", "Macedonia" are the most frequent names of the cultural, educational, sport and other organizations. Thus, the Cultural Home was named "Gotse Delchev", the Cultural and artistic society of the Macedonians was called "Vasil Hadzimanov" and the elementary school was named "Gotse Delchev". All this speaks about the relationship of Macedonians in Vojvodina with their ancestors' country Macedonia.

We were lucky to visit these villages in Vojvodina where the corn is the most important agricultural product and where many Macedonian families from all parts of Macedonia, in the midst of the great post-war transformation were granted land that has been abandoned and taken from the German families.

According to some information, in the period from the breakup of Yugoslavia until today, there have been numerous changes in the cultural, political and social life of the Macedonians not only in Vojvodina, but also in entire Serbia. Namely, if the Serbs in Macedonia are spokesmen and advocates for getting more political, religious and social rights than they need, the Macedonians in Serbia have long been scared and unorganized primarily due to the political turmoil and the emergence of big nationalisms.

The Author

IN THE MACEDONIAN MUNICIPALITY IN ALBANIA (2)

During our visit to Tirana, we stayed at the hotel "Europark" in the center of town and went to see that for us unknown city and world. It seemed that in this short period we could see much. But in our memory remained a meeting with one Macedonian family. Namely, in Tirana we visited the family home of the famous and recognized writer Sterjo Spase, in whose home we were received with love and warmth characteristic for Macedonian hospitality.

Sterjo Spase is one of the most famous novelists in Albania. He is of Macedonian descent and was born in 1914 in the village of Glloboçeni, Municipality of Pustec in Mala Prespa. He was educated in Korca and Elbasan, and then he studied pedagogy in Florence, Italy and earned his Master's degree in the former Soviet Union. After the World War II he worked as a literary critic and wrote for many Albanian magazines. He died in Tirana in 1989.

Sterio Spase began his writing career when he was a teacher at the village school in Dervichane near Gjirokastra. He is the author of a dozen major novels in Albanian language. The novel *"They were not alone"* (*"Ata nuk ishin vetëm"*) (1952) by Sterjo Spase is also published in Macedonian language in 1989, translated by the prominent teacher from Mala Prespa, Nikola Berovski.

Also, the Institute of Folklore *"Marko Cepenkov"* and the Institute of National History in Skopje published in Macedonian language the work of Sterjo Spase entitled *"Macedonian folk songs from Mala Prespa"* (1992), prepared by Dr. Blagoj Stoichovski.

We visited a number of other cultural and historical monuments of the past that speak of life, achievements, sadness... We also saw the Orthodox Church in the center of Tirana and the quarter of the people on power who were educated around the world, but left their people in darkness.

The second day of our stay in Albania we went to Mala Prespa. It was our challenge, and it was really enjoyable to see the fertile field that was once known as Lake Volvi; on the east side Ivan Mountain is spread and it hangs over Prespa Lake, being an indicator for the bad weather across the lake below Pelister.

The road leading to Mala Prespa is leaving the section Korca - Bilista and turns to the north. In that period, part of the road was under reconstruction



and made the journey of twenty kilometers exhausting. However, all is forgotten when one arrives under Ivan Mountain, above Mala Prespa, where *“the only gate”* and the connection for the nine Macedonian villages with the rest of the world was placed.

We were informed that at the time of the Balkan wars that led to the partition of Macedonia between Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia, the southwestern part of Lake Prespa was added to the newly created Albanian state.

Such decision has been allegedly made because the residents have been economically dependent on the city of Korca , which has been populated by Orthodox Albanians , Vlachs and Macedonians.

We were told that until World War II Albanian state has run a policy of strong assimilation towards the minorities, including the Macedonian minority. This policy was abandoned after the war, when the Macedonians in this part of Albania were recognized as a Macedonian national minority with the right to education in the Macedonian language.

However, the democratization of the Albanian society in the last decade of the XX century, fortunately, created conditions for the Macedonians to actively engage in the social - political processes in Albania.

Mala Prespa or Dolna (Lower) Prespa, as Prespanians call it, is a geographic area along the southwest coast of Prespa Lake. The entire area consists of a dozen villages which are organized within the municipality of Pustec. The village of Pustec is the largest settlement, and is also the seat of the municipality, which mayor and all members of the municipal council are ethnic Macedonians.

It is interesting to mention that the coat of arms of the municipality contains the ancient Macedonian symbol, 16 – rays Vergina sun (Palatica - Virginia) above which is the inscription in Macedonian language - Municipality of Pustec, and below it, the same inscription in Albanian language. In the village operate primary and secondary school and there are possibilities for education in Macedonian language only to the fourth grade.

Within the school in Pustec there is a library with a huge stock of books in Macedonian language. In fact, it is the first official use of the Macedonian language in the Republic of Albania.

The region of Mala Prespa includes part of Lake Prespa and the following villages: Globocani, Gorna (Upper) Gorica , Dolna (Lower) Gorica, Zrnovsko (or Zrnosko), Leska , Pustec Tuminec , Sulin (Bezmishte), Cerje that make up the municipality Pustec , as well as the villages of Progun , Rakicko, Suez , Zagradec in the Aegean part of Macedonia.

Mala Prespa is populated by 5,700 residents, all of Macedonian ethnic origin and Orthodox Christian religion. Macedonians from Mala Prespa are recognized as Macedonian national minority and as such they have the right to



education in Macedonian language. The Macedonian language is also used in the municipal administration and culture. The municipality has positive demographic ratio and many Macedonian families and households are characterized by the large number of children and young people (5-6 or more children) . A smaller part of the Macedonians from Mala Prespa since 1991 live in the resort "Carina" in the Republic of Macedonia (near the Albanian border) , and much of the population has Macedonian citizenship .

It should be noted that Small Prespa is one of the poorest regions in the Republic of Albania. Population is engaged in fishing, agriculture and stockbreeding, but in very small quantity and in primitive conditions. After the overthrow of the former Stalinist regime and the opening of the borders , most residents have changed their occupation and oriented toward trade and earning money in Macedonia and Greece (Hellas) , and some of them work in major Albanian cities.

Many residents of Mala Prespa on a daily bases migrate to the markets in Skopje, Bitola and other major cities in Macedonia selling different goods such as olive oil , brandy " Skanderbeg", cigarettes and various agricultural products and handmade products, such as knit-work , wooden and other items. But, at the same time, there are many Macedonians who are top intellectuals who hold various social and other positions and who are part of current and future progress of Albania.

We went to visit the village of Pustec. Along the way we could meet children, men, women, elderly ... We greeted each other, we talked in Prespa dialect and wished good luck to those working in the field. And the village of Pustec has spread along the hill above the Prespa Lake. The houses are made of stone, in Macedonian style, modest, as in many other villages in Prespa. The village was like a beehive of people.

We met lot of people in the center of the village. We talked about the past, the present and the future of this Macedonian people which has preserved its national identity. All speak in a nice Prespa dialect, they study four years in Maced that is Macedonian. Pustec village is the only Macedonian municipality and one of the larger settlements in Korcha region and th onian language, there is a clinic, an agricultural cooperative, cinema, cultural center, several convenience stores, and fishing cooperative.

But, the most important thing is that they have pure Macedonian spirit and faith in the future of the Macedonian nation, Macedonian language and everything e largest Macedonian village in Albania. And there, in Dolna Prespa they sing, laugh, dance, mourn and suffer in Macedonian language.

During our stay in the village of Pustec we visited the island Small Town. It was a kind of adventure. There, on the beautiful and in many ways unique island, where according to legend, lived Tsar Samuil, you can feel the beauty and



tame of the Prespa Lake and Lower Prespa, which belongs to the Macedonian people and is divided into three states.

The Small Town Island which proudly and lonely hangs over the lake is a place for a challenge. In its rocky belly it has hidden the church "Saint Peter and Paul" as a testimony of the suffering of the Macedonian people in that area. From the island's heights you can see several cave churches that speak of the cultural heritage of the Macedonians who have remained divided and dismembered, not by their fault.

In our annals it will stay that we have seen Prespa Lake from Pelister in Macedonia and from Lower Prespa, in the Aegean part of Macedonia, and during our visit to Mala Prespa in Albania, we saw Prespa Lake from its third side.

This monument of nature as a water and as a part of the Macedonian beauty and destiny, as a lake is quiet and tame, and is divided just as the Macedonian people is divided. And, the people divided by borders that lives on the shores of this lake has the feature of gentleness, Macedonian mentality, language, culture and love for the homeland, but different destiny.

Until the Second World War the fate of the Macedonian people basically has been the same in all parts of the divided and enslaved Macedonia. The Macedonian population has experienced assimilation, division and displacement, as well as spiritual and physical assimilation and denial of the fundamental human rights, not only in the past but also today (in Bulgaria and Greece).

Therefore, in some areas of ethnic Macedonia incurred major migration and ethnic changes that had disastrous consequences for the Macedonian population.

After the Second World War and the liberation of part of ethnic Macedonia, a particular care has been taken for the Macedonians living in neighboring countries regarding their upbringing and in their native Macedonian language.

This was especially evident in the period from 1945 to 1948 in Pirin Macedonia and Albania, where there were Macedonian schools, bookstores, libraries, folklore groups and other institutions with all Macedonian national characteristics and symbols.

It should be emphasized that immediately after the war Albania asked the Yugoslav government to send teachers for teaching Macedonian language in areas inhabited by Macedonian population. Teachers, in particular, were required in the villages of Tuminec, Pustec, Lower and Upper Gorica, Globocani, Sulin and Zrnovsko, located in Mala Prespa and belong to Korcha region as well as in the villages of Vrbnik and Cerje in the borough Bilista, then in Lin, in the region of Pogradec and in other populated places.

All teachers - enthusiasts who spread, renewed, kept and passed on the Macedonian language, culture and traditions, especially to the younger generations in Albania, have played an important, if not the most important role



in the promotion not only of the Macedonian literary language, but also of the Macedonian people, their roots and the Republic of Macedonia in general.

Therefore, it is rightly said that teachers of Macedonian language in Albania and in Pirin Macedonia are an important part of the mosaic and the foundation of the Macedonian literary language, which after its codification became one of the three official languages of the then People's Republic of Yugoslavia since 1945.

All of this was taking place by the time of Informbiro, when all teachers of Macedonian language in Albania have been dismissed and sent back.

Only the teacher Nikola Berovski has stayed in Albania; he worked until his death on spreading of the Macedonian language; he wrote numerous textbooks, grammar and other school books for Macedonian students in Albania, dedicating his life to his native language, which was taught from first to fourth grade, and further schooling was in Albanian.

Unlike Greece and Bulgaria, Albania has recognized the existence of the Macedonian minority on its territory and did not have negative attitude toward the Macedonian nation as a whole. It was evident by its constitutional and other regulations, which at least formally Macedonians were allowed to exercise their national rights.

However, because of its foreign and domestic policy, Albania's communist regime did not allow the Macedonian minority to communicate with the people in the Republic of Macedonia. Therefore, it is rightly said that the Macedonians in Albania were separated, but remained forever loyal to their native country.

The Author



THE TRUTH ABOUT MACEDONIANS IN BULGARIA (3)

The history of Pirin Macedonia says that it is part of the ethnic territory of Macedonia, which part after the Bucharest "peace" treaty in 1913 was given to Bulgaria. In the ancient period Pirin Macedonia has originally been a part of Pannonia and Thrace, and later become a part of the Kingdom of Macedon. In Roman times, Pirin Macedonia has experienced a kind of flourishing, as evidenced by many archeological sites of ancient cities near today's towns of Blagoevgrad, Sandanski, Rupite village and others. In the medieval period, Pirin Macedonia was under the rule of Tsar Samuel, Byzantine and Balkan feudal lords. With the arrival of the Turks, Pirin Macedonia has experienced certain stagnation, but still it does not leave its unsubordinated Macedonian spirit.

During the Russian - Turkish war in 1877-78, the northern part of Pirin Macedonia would fall under Russian occupation zone, but after the Berlin Congress it will be returned to Turkey. In the region of Pirin Macedonia is raised Kresna (Macedonian) uprising against the Ottoman rule in 1878/79, with its center in Kresna, which had a strong Macedonian national character and aim to create an independent autonomous Macedonian state.

At the end of the XIX century the great Macedonian revolutionary Jane Sandanski and his regiment will reign on the territory of Pirin. Jane Sandanski was a close associate of Gotse Delchev and the biggest fighter against Vrhovizam. He is known by his nickname "*Tsar from Pirin*" who has organized the famous kidnapping of the Protestant missionary Miss Stone.

After the Second World War, during the communist government led by Georgi Dimitrov, Macedonians in Pirin Macedonia were granted full cultural autonomy which was intended by legislation to become a territorial autonomy, in order to unite Pirin Macedonia with at that time People's Republic of Macedonia as a country of origin within the Balkan federation.

Macedonians in Bulgaria, or Pirin Macedonians or Bulgarian Macedonians are indigenous population, mainly living in Pirin Macedonia, in the southwestern part of today's Bulgaria. At certain periods there was eviction due to political and economic reasons, from other parts of the Macedonian region.

The eviction has been carried out in several major waves: in the Middle Ages, in the Renaissance, after the liberation of Bulgaria from Turkish rule, after the Ilinden Uprising, after the Balkan wars and the First World War.



Macedonian emigrants from all parts of ethnic Macedonia in Bulgaria are the largest Macedonian emigration group in the world, with a huge intellectual potential and rich cultural heritage. It is impossible to say what is the exact number of ethnic Macedonians in Bulgaria, especially, because different sources give conflicting data.

However, all agree that a large number (over two million, including mixed marriages) by citizens of the Republic of Bulgaria are the descendants of immigrants from Macedonia who, as immigrants or refugees have found their home in Bulgaria.

After the World War I, in the period of governance of Georgi Dimitrov, the Macedonians from Pirin Macedonia got total cultural autonomy which was to lapse into legal territorial autonomy and to unite Pirin Macedonia with the People's Republic of Macedonia at that time as its mainstream state within the Balkans Federation. It is impossible to calculate the exact number of the ethnic Macedonians in Bulgaria especially due to the fact that various sources cite controversial data.

Nonetheless, there is a common consent that a large number (over two millions, including those originating from mixed marriages) of the citizens of the Republic of Bulgaria are ancestors of immigrants from Macedonia who, being emigrants or refugees, had moved to Bulgaria.

According to the census of population as of December 1946, in the People's Republic of Bulgaria out of the total number of 252,908 inhabitants of Pirin Macedonia, 160,541, that is 70% declared themselves as ethnic Macedonians.

These presented facts acknowledge the truth about the Macedonians in Bulgaria, which Bulgaria skillfully tries to manipulate. Regretfully, and for the shame on principles of democracy, according to 2011 Census of population in the Republic of Bulgaria, the number of Macedonians who live there is only 1,654 of which 561 are inhabited in the district of Blagoevgrad, and the number of Macedonians who speak their mother's Macedonian language is 1,163, while 1,091 are citizens of the Republic of Macedonia who "live" in Bulgaria..

Unfortunately, and shamefully for the democracy, according to the 2011 census of the Republic of Bulgaria, only 1.654 Macedonians live there, out of which 561 are inhabited in Blagoevgrad area and 1,163 speak their native Macedonian language, while 1091 of them are citizens of the Republic of Macedonia living in Bulgaria.

In this occasion we should also mention that in 1947 were established printed media, "Pirin newspaper" and the Printing House "Macedonian book".

They were part of the realized promise related to the rights of the Macedonians in Bulgaria, which were aimed to strengthen the Macedonian language and culture. The media have been terminated and closed in 1958 for political reasons and change of the power.



However, in 1990, a new newspaper for the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria was created, named "People's Will". The newspaper is edited and printed in Upper Dzumaja.

At that time in Blagoevgrad was formed the United Macedonian Organization "Ilinden" – Pirin, a party for economic development and integration of the population of Bulgaria. It is a democratic party which protects the rights of minorities and advocates decentralization of the country. It is the only political party fighting for the rights of the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria.

The Party operates mainly in the southwestern region of the country, also known as Pirin Macedonia. It was registered as a political party in 1999 and took part in municipal elections. However, on February 29, 2000, the Constitutional Court of Bulgaria declared that it was unconstitutional, violating the right to freedom of association and the right to freedom from discrimination.

Unfortunately, and shamefully, the Bulgarian government refuses to recognize the existence of a Macedonian minority in Pirin Macedonia and continues to violate basic human rights. The members and supporters of OMO "Ilinden" - PIRIN, a political party and human rights organization, and OMO Ilinden, an organization for human and minority rights are abused, beaten, punished and even imprisoned, simply for proclaiming their Macedonian identity.

The reason for the persistent denial of Macedonians in Bulgaria comes from the Bulgarian nationalist dogma that there are no, there cannot be and should not be Macedonians. However, the truth is different not only by the census, but also with the real presence of the Macedonian people. So we wanted to make sure, to confirm it and to inform the readers of the truth of Pirin Macedonia.

Thus, in the early hours of one November morning we left for Upper Dzumaja, now Blagoevgrad. In the distance stood proudly Pirin, the most beautiful and the tallest of all the mountains in Macedonia. It seems like one can touch with his hands the famous mountain of Jane Sandanski which is a theme of countless legends told by the Macedonians from this region.

Rozhen is a small village situated on both banks of Rozhen River, inhabited by approximately twenty families. The village is connected by a paved road, and most of the social life is performed in front of the restaurant located on the large parking lot.

One can reach the Rozhen monastery from that village by the steep asphalt road which runs like a serpent to the hill on which flat height is placed the monastery and the grave of Jane Sandanski. Firstly, we visited the monastery which dates back to 1220, over which foundation was built the church "*Birth of the Virgin Mary*".

The monastery is surrounded on all sides by high monastery lodgings which verandas attract every visitor, and it can be entered only from the eastern side



through the thick oak door. The church has interesting frescoes and icons, and most valuable is the iconostasis made by the hands of Macedonian masters from Debar school, who only here but throughout Macedonia have left permanent and many valuable carving works.

At a distance of a hundred meters from the monastery to the east is the church "*St. Cyril and Methodius*", in front of which altar is the grave of Jane Sandanski. We bowed and paid tribute to the legendary Macedonian voivode, who was often called "*Tsar of Pirin*."

We were informed that in the past the grave of Sandanski with an inscription that Jane has fought for the human rights and the freedom of Macedonia, especially of the Macedonians in Pirin Macedonia, has previously been a few kilometers away from the church "*Birth of the Virgin Mary*." However, we witnessed that on the current gravestone of the "*Tsar of Pirin*" Jane Sandanski the following was written:

Jane Sandanski 1872-1915

"To live means to struggle -

The slave for freedom and the free man

For perfection."

We bowed once again in front of the great "*Tsar of Pirin*" and speechlessly left the tomb of Voivode. Then, we headed to Petrich where from the Struma River, at the crossing to Petrich District, we could clearly see the southernmost city on these Macedonian spaces. Petrich is located in the armpits of the northern slopes of Belasica Mountain, and is located near the mouth of the river Struma and Strumeshnica in the section that connects the town with Thessaloniki, Sofia and Strumica.

There Belasica Mountain with its highest peak Radomir (2.029 m) and the Tumba Peak (1.888 m) which is located in the triangle , steep and proudly hangs over the valley of Petrich , preventing the direct influence of coastal climate that comes from the Aegean Sea. However, in the Valley of Struma River still penetrate mild currents that cause the mild climate in these tame areas, providing favorable conditions for growing subtropical crops such as cotton, tobacco, sesame, as well as early vegetables and various fruits.

At a distance of approximately fifteen kilometers west of Petrich, near the Strumeshnica, which is named after the river, is located the region called Kluch. There, next to the road, on the right bank of the river remains of a fortress were found. Precisely in that area in 1014 has taken place the most horrible and bloody battle between the Macedonian tsar Samoil, who has sown



the Macedonian seed and established the Archbishopric of Ohrid, and the Byzantine emperor Basil II.

The army of Basil II as an act of retaliation has gouged out the eyes of Samuel's soldiers and left one eye to every hundredth soldier to lead his wounded comrades to their tsar in Prespa and Ohrid. When Samuel saw the terrible tragedy, his heart could not endure it and he died.

We left the border crossing and headed to the villages Novo Konjarevo and Novo Selo, and then to Strumica, leaving behind Pirin Macedonia, in which during the cultural autonomy 93 teachers worked with more than 35 thousand Macedonian children who studied the Macedonian literary language and developed their cultural and national traditions. At that time in the Pirin part of Macedonia there were libraries filled with books of Macedonian, Bulgarian and world authors.

The Macedonian people were exalted to feel the magic of the written word in their native Macedonian language. During that time, there was a Macedonian theater in this part of Bulgaria where the Macedonian people could culturally express themselves, and forget the dark years of the past times which have inflicted physical and spiritual pain to them.

However, after the Informbiro's resolution Bulgaria has changed its policy towards former Yugoslavia, and accordingly, towards the Macedonian issue.

So it resulted in the abolition of the schools and other institutions in Macedonian language and expulsion of the teachers and other cultural workers to the People's Republic of Macedonia. Then, the period of falsification of everything connected to Macedonian people started.

Regretfully, even today, the Macedonian population is obstructed and denied. Whether the new democratic processes within the Balkan region will change that situation, is still unknown. European vision has already shown its interest in the existence of Macedonians in Bulgaria, as well as in the implementation of decisions regarding the human rights and freedoms.

For Macedonians in Pirin Macedonia and in entire Bulgaria seek for minimum rights in their homeland Bulgaria - not to be named other but Macedonians

The Author

DENIAL OF MACEDONIANS' NATIONALITY IN GREECE (4)

The journey through the Aegean part of Macedonia at the same time represents a challenge and excitement and pleasure, as well as disappointment for the visitor to this unfortunate country. Each of those who have been acquainted with the fate and the tragedy of the persistent Macedonian people from this part of Macedonia, which is often referred to by the term "lake country" experiences that feeling. Therefore, one person at the meeting of the children - refugees said it was a fatal destiny, and will remain as the tragedy of the humankind which will be written about and narrated for many centuries.

It was autumn Sunday morning. The sun has just appeared from the distance of the mountain Belasica from the east, and the river Vardar seemed to be sunk into the fog created by evaporation. We left Gevgelija and headed to the border crossing Virgin Mary, in order to continue our trip to Thessaloniki.

Greece had a character of a democratic republic and precisely in the name of that "democracy" we waited for three hours at the border crossing Bogorodica, near Gevgelija, the Greek customs officials to affix a stamp over some incomprehensible "document" only for them, because Greek stamp is not affixed over a passport bearing the name Macedonia. Therefore, at those unpleasant moments we thought of the tyrant Pisistratus who, if appeared in the third millennium, would learn new methods and tactics in the way of treatment and in the struggle for a happier tomorrow.

We crossed the border and entered the border area of Hellas (Greece), that is, in the Aegean part of Macedonia, where unfortunately, the Macedonians do not enjoy even the basic human rights guaranteed by the Declaration of the United Nations, which member is the Republic of Greece.

The Aegean Macedonia is a country which name since the ancient times designated a little province near Pella - the capital of the ancient Macedonian kingdom. At that time Macedonia has covered the area between today's dried Pazar Lake and lower part of the Vardar River. Accordingly, with the expansion of the borders of the Macedonian kingdom, gradually grew the area indicated by the name Macedonia, which the ancient Macedonians have divided into the Upper and Lower Macedonia, primarily due to the geographical features of that area. However, such a division of Macedonia has political, cultural, military and administrative significance.



The Macedonian people in the Aegean part of Macedonia (Belomorska Macedonia), according to their characteristics and customs, language and ethnic origin is strange to the Greeks (Hellenes). For these reasons, the Greek bourgeoisie immediately after it has expanded its power over Aegean Macedonia, has introduced a policy of physical extermination of the Macedonian people and changing the ethnic composition in their favor.

Therefore, the national composition of the population in this part of the Balkans has undergone major ethnic changes, especially after the Balkan wars and the division of Macedonia. Until the Balkan Wars, the Macedonian population in Aegean Macedonia has been prevailing. The Macedonians under Greek rule have been and they are still exposed to torture and forced immigration, with the sole purpose to modify the ethnic composition of Macedonia. However, the Macedonians not only existed, exist but will also exist, because it's not easy to uproot one people from a territory where they lived for centuries despite all acts of violence and denial of its nationality.

In the Aegean part of Macedonia continued the atrocities, assimilation policy against Macedonians and immigration of foreigners (Turkmen) of Orthodox religion just to change the ethnic composition of the population, all in order to reduce the number of Macedonians. And those thousands of exiled and displaced were forbidden to visit their homes, in that "Wonderland"

We left the border and headed to Meteora. After hours of driving we arrived in the small town of Kalambaka (with about 6,000 inhabitants) over which like eagles hang the rocks of Meteora. The city is situated in a narrow valley between Epirus (Aegean Macedonia) and the plane of western Thessaly, in the shadows of the big rocks of Meteora, which are a geological phenomenon. According to information obtained, the town has existed since the time before Christ. Its old name was Stagoi, which according to N. Janopolus comes from the Slav word "staja" (room or hollow in a rock). The modern name was given of the city at the time of the Turks which originated from the word "kalebak" (beautiful fortress).

For Kalambaka, which today is one of the most attractive inland cities in our southern neighbor numerous battles were fought in the past. So the city was under the occupation of Philip I of Macedonia, under the occupation of the Romans, Byzantines, and Turks, to finally fall in 1348 under the sovereignty of Stefan Dushan and later under the sovereignty of his brother Simeon Urosh when Stagoi has experienced a strong progress.

More than thousand colossal rocky cliffs rise vertically and hang over the city of Kalambaka and Kastraki village in the western slopes of Mount Andiksija. From that point is running the Pineios River which flows out of the Pindos Mountain and flows into the Gulf of Thessaloniki. It is the only place with such reefs which turned into a city of the rocks in the late Byzantine period, the city on top of the cliffs with hundreds of monks who have separated themselves in



the heights in order to preserve their privacy. These huge rocks provoke admiration and wonder in any visitor with their grandeur and the courage of their first visitors - invaders of those inaccessible terrains, many of whom have died.

The name of Meteora means "meeting in the air". It is a modern word which is not found in ancient writers. Athanasios from Meteora has discovered the monastery "Savior", and was the first who has climbed the Broad Rock in 1344. When we speak about those wonderful rocks, it is difficult to find an explanation for their creation and existence since they were exposed to strong winds, rain, earthquakes and various other natural disasters.

Today it is very easy for any person to climb to the monasteries, over the stairs which are carved in the period from 1922 to 1925. However, the climbing was previously possible only with a rope and nets. The question is how the first monks have come. There are many legends about it. Some people say that the monks have climbed using wedges and a hammer to fix them into the rocks, others think that the high trees that grew in the rocks helped them. There were opinions according to which the first climbing was done by kites which wore the ropes to the heights.

Nobody knows exactly when the first hermits and monks have made their nests over rocks in Meteora. But it is presumed that since the IX century there was a monastic life in that area. The first monks have lived in natural caves, and presumably they have gathered for services on Sundays at Stagoi (Kostraki) back in the XI century when they started to build monasteries on high cliffs, where later in the XVI century is open the first school known as the "school of Meteora," which has also performed important religious function at the time of the Ottoman Empire.

When we climbed up the road which has many curves and hills from which leave the visitor breathless, the view was wonderful. We could see the city and its surrounding to the east, toward Thessaloniki like from eagle's nest. Everyone rushed to make a photo to capture all that natural beauty of the monastery complex in which thousands of monks spent their lives as they were soldiers.

Afterwards we visited the Monastery of the Savior Jesus Christ known as the "Great Meteora", built on the tallest cliff which is elevated nearly 500 meters above the river level. You can reach the monastery by climbing over 150 stairs carved into the rocks. The monastery is situated in a very picturesque area and consists of numerous rooms painted with frescoes and icons. There are also many religious books and other items from the time of the first monk Athanasios. There we were introduced to the historical part not only of this order, but also of the monastic order and other features of the monastery "St. Stephen" and the smaller monasteries, in which at that time there were no monks.



In Meteora, among other things, we thought of the monk who has written a book in Macedonian language, but with the Hellenic alphabet. This indicates that a number of monks were Macedonians, who have left eternal traces with their prayers to Jesus Christ the Savior in their native Macedonian language. Also in Meteora we talked about the difficult life of a monk, such as the life of Archimandrite Nikodim Tsarknias who, instructed by his fraternity, built the Macedonian Orthodox Church "St. Zlata Meglenska" in the village of Sobotsko in Meglen, which we visited during our stay in the Aegean Macedonia.

We left the monasteries of Meteora and headed on the road to Thessaloniki, the city named after the sister of Alexander of Macedonia, and built by her husband Cassander. It is a nice seaside town, which as a shopping mall lures, and even seduces the visitors with its beauty, Mediterranean climate, its sandy beaches nearby and, above all, with the hospitality of the local population. It is situated on the Khalkidhiki peninsula and is known for its many green spaces, Beas Kula, Salonika Assassins, and for many other cultural monuments, as well as for the monasteries of Mount Athos, where a certain number of monks from Macedonia have spent part of their lives.

And not only Thessaloniki, which is the capital of Aegean Macedonia and the whole Macedonian country is beautiful, starting from the mystical Pella – the ancient Macedonian capital, through divine waterfalls of Edessa, the landscapes of Kastoria, the beauties of the rock churches and frescoes on the shores of Mala Prespa ... Its tame and width is enhanced with green landscapes of the mountains separated by the border, and between them, like a pearl, the passenger enjoys the glow of Kaimakchalan from distance.

That is the reason why the ancient Macedonians have established their capital on that place. One part of Pella is now accessible to visitors, but a huge part, as the older residents of Postol (Pella) say, still lies underground. Because of the glory of the ancient capital of Philip and Alexander of Macedonia, the Macedonians who have sowed the Macedonian seed, in tourist brochures Greeks call that entire region Pella with the capital Voden (Edessa).

Every day many tourists are visiting Pella who later on carry the memories and the smell of marble over which walked the great Alexander of Macedonia for years.

When a visitor is in Kastoria (Kostur), and on the shore of Lake Kastoria, he gets a feeling that he is in Ohrid and Ohrid Lake, because Kastoria is similar to Ohrid both by its location and its natural beauties. Here the nature offers many beauties which, unfortunately, are not fully utilized.

The city of Kastoria is located on the southwestern point of Macedonia, on the shores of Lake Kastoria. Some scholars hold that it has been named by the rare animal beaver which has lived in the Lake Kastoria and which skin has been used as a material for producing beautiful and luxury fur coats. Also,



there are many churches, basilicas and other monuments of history and culture in Kastoria (Kostur).

We made a tour around the city and the lake, and then we headed by foot toward the old part of the town which is a mixture of the old and the new architecture. All we saw were the numerous discotheques and many shops for fur and fur products, as the fur is the main artery of Kastoria. The pedestrians had difficulties to walk along the narrow streets due to the heavy traffic, which presented an obstacle to the guests to see and experience the beauty of this lake city, a city that is marvelous in all seasons.

We went to the eastern part of the city in order to have a lunch in the summer garden of one good looking restaurant, located on the shore of the lake. There we rested, enjoyed and admired the beauty of the city. Each of us was curious to see and understand more about the Kostur fur manufacturers, the luxury and expensive furs that were hung in the countless stores in the city, the lake and the swans that complemented the beauty of the lake, about the Macedonian population...

The Author



ON THE GRAVE OF YANE SANDANSKI (4)

When Steve Pliakes arrived in Skopje, he expressed his wish to visit Pirin Macedonia, because he decided to donate money to OMO "Ilinden" in Sandanski. But, most of all, he wanted to visit the grave of Yane Sandanski, "the czar of Pirin". The historical materials referring to that part of Bulgaria, among others, say that Pirin Macedonia is a part of the ethnic territory of Macedonia, which part after the 1913 "Peace" Treaty of Bucharest was given to Bulgaria. In the ancient time, Pirin Macedonia initially was a part of Pannonia and Trakia, and later became a part of the Ancient Macedonian Empire.

However, toward the end of XIX century the territory of Pirin was ruled by the great Macedonian revolutionary Yane Sandanski and his company, who was a close associate of Goce Delchev and the greatest warrior against the vrvhivism. He is known under his nickname "Pirin Czar" who had committed the famous kidnapping of the Protestant missionary Miss Stone.

After the World War I, in the period of governance of Georgi Dimitrov, the Macedonians from Pirin Macedonia got total cultural autonomy which was to lapse into legal territorial autonomy and to unite Pirin Macedonia with the People's Republic of Macedonia at that time as its mainstream state within the Balkans Federation. It is impossible to calculate the exact number of the ethnic Macedonians in Bulgaria especially due to the fact that various sources cite controversial data. Nonetheless, there is a common consent that a large number (over two millions, including those originating from mixed marriages) of the citizens of the Republic of Bulgaria are ancestors of immigrants from Macedonia who, being emigrants or refugees, had moved to Bulgaria.

According to the census of population as of December 1946, in the People's Republic of Bulgaria out of the total number of 252,908 inhabitants of Pirin Macedonia, 160,541, that is 70% declared themselves as ethnic Macedonians. These presented facts acknowledge the truth about the Macedonians in Bulgaria, which Bulgaria skillfully tries to manipulate.

Regretfully, and for the shame on principles of democracy, according to 2011 Census of population in the Republic of Bulgaria, the number of Macedonians who live there is only 1,654 of which 561 are inhabited in the district of Blagoevgrad, and the number of Macedonians who speak their mother's



Macedonian language is 1,163, while 1,091 are citizens of the Republic of Macedonia who “live” in Bulgaria.

In addition, it should be emphasized that in 1947 were established the printed media “Pirin Newspaper” and the printing house “Macedonian Book”. That was a part of the realized promises regarding the rights of the Macedonians in Bulgaria which would invigorate the Macedonian language and culture. The media were cancelled and closed in 1958 due to political calculations and the change of power.

However, in 1990 a newspaper named “People’s Will” for the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria was established. The newspaper was edited and printed in Upper Dzumaja, now Blagoevgrad. There was also established the United Macedonian Organization “Ilinden” – Pirin, a party for economic development and integration of the population in the Republic of Bulgaria.

It is a democratic party which protects the minority rights and pledge for decentralization of the country. It is the only party which is working toward the rights of the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria. The party mainly operates in south-western region of the country, also known as Pirin Macedonia. It was registered as a political party in 1999 and it participated in the local elections. However, on February 29, 2000 the Constitutional Court of Bulgaria pronounced that the party was unconstitutional, violating the right of freedom of association and the right of non- discrimination.

Regretfully, the Bulgarian government refuses to recognize the existence of the Macedonian minority in Pirin Macedonia, disregarding that after the World War II there were Macedonian schools, bookshops, newspapers in the Pirin part of Macedonia. Even today the Bulgarian government continues to violate the fundamental human rights. The members and followers both of OMO “Ilinden” – PIRIN, a political party and organization for human rights, and OMO “Ilinden”, an organization for human and minority rights are tortured, mistreated, beaten, punished and even arrested, just for declaring their Macedonian identity.

However, the fact is that in Pirin Macedonia during the cultural autonomy there were 93 teachers working with more than 35,000 Macedonian children who have learned the Macedonian literary language and developed their cultural and national traditions. At that time in the Pirin part of Macedonia there were libraries full of books written by Macedonian, Bulgarian and world authors. The Macedonian people in that period have experienced the magic of the written word in its mother’s Macedonian language. In those days there was also a Macedonian theatre in this part of Bulgaria, which supported the cultural exaltation of the Macedonian and which helped them to forget the dark fascist years of physical and spiritual pain.



Nonetheless, after the resolution of the Informbureau the Bulgarian policy regarding the former Yugoslavia, and consequently regarding the Macedonian issue experienced huge downturn. The schools and other institutions in Macedonian language were terminated and the teachers and other cultural workers were expelled in the People's Republic of Macedonia. Then, the period of falsifying of everything which was Macedonian followed. Regretfully, obstructions and denial are still performed over the Macedonian population. It remains to see whether the new democratic processes which are in place on the Balkans will change that situation.

The European vision has already shown its interest about the existence of the Macedonians in Bulgaria, about the execution of the decisions on the respecting the human rights and freedoms. Therefore, the Macedonians in the Pirin Macedonia and in the entire Bulgaria, which is a member of the European Union, should not be given other names but Macedonians.

The cause for the persisting denial of the Macedonians in Bulgaria comes from the Bulgarian nationalist dogma that which says that there are no, there cannot be and should not be Macedonians. But, the truth is different not only according to the census, but also according to the real existence of the Macedonian people.

That is why the businessman Steve Pliakes and I wanted to get convinced, to confirm that and to get informed on the truth about the Pirin Macedonia. Because of that, one August morning we went to Upper Dzumaja, now Blagoevgrad. In the distance we could see Pirin, the most beautiful and highest Mountain in Macedonia. It seemed to us that we could touch with our hands the glorious mountain of Yane Sandanski which is connected with numerous legends of the Macedonians from that area.

We continued our journey to the city of Sandanski (former Sveti Vrach) or the "Pirin Beauty" as it was often called. From the distance we could see the residential buildings located at one height, which number was increasing as we approached. We entered Sandanski which population is about 30,000 inhabitants and we drove along the picturesque boulevard with evergreen trees in the midst which beautify the view and make the city a pleasant corner for its visitors. We saw the monument of Spartacus.

As one Macedonian from OMO "Ilinden" whom we met in the centre of the city told us, according to a German scientist, the Valley of Struma River, between Pirin and Maleshevo Mountains is the native place of this leader of the slaves, a man about who many legends are written.

We visited one of the restaurants located on the square and had a pleasant time with several members of OMO "Ilinden". Later, we also visited the premises of OMO "Ilinden" which were regretfully in a basement. On that occasion



our guest from Canada, the humanist Steve Pliakes donated money for the organization and the members of OMO "Ilinden" were very grateful to him.

There was an old plane near the restaurant which reminded us of the plane in Ohrid. The city of Sandanski is pretty neat, and many new houses are built. Huge wealth for Sandanski is the springs of mineral water which flow from the beginning of time. There are many of those springs: some of them are in the City Park and others are on the right bank of the river Sandbanks Beatrice, which temperature reaches above 80oS and they also contain healing mud. The city of Sandanski with its surrounding is one of the warmest and most sunny places in Pirin Macedonia.

We left Sandanski in the afternoon and headed to south, that is, to Melnik which the visitors often call "legend city", "city of vine", "city of the past". But, in fact, it is the smallest city in Pirin Macedonia and even on the Balkans, if not in Europe, as well. There are hardly 400-500 inhabitants living there.

Melnik has very interesting past. Since the period of the King Samoil, it was very important military center and later it became an attractive place because the continental climate becomes mountainous, and to become upper toward the Pirin Mountain an alpine climate. In the previous century, Melnik was very important trading centre and a city of prestige among the traders who were opened the wide perspectives from there. That is the reason why in this city, besides Macedonians – from Pirin, a great number of Hellenics (Greeks), Turks, Armenians, Vlachs and others, which number at the end of the 19th century has reached 20,000 have moved in.

In that period the city experienced a great upbringing and growth in the field of trade; caravans of horses and camels, loaded with barrels and wineskins full of Melnik vine were daily expedited all over the world. Those caravans went to Egypt, to the south, to Paris and Madrid on the west and to Budim and Pesta to the north.

However, Rozhen is a small village located on the both banks of Rozhen River, which is populated by only 20 families. The village is connected by an asphalt road, and the social life takes place in front of the restaurant, at the large parking place. From that spot you can reach Rozhen monastery using the asphalt road which runs up like a serpentine to the hill where the monastery and the grave of Yane Sandanski are located. First we visited the monastery which dated from 1220, over which foundation the church "Nativity of the Virgin Mary" is built.

The monastery is surrounded from each side by high monastery dormitories which terraces attract every visitor, and it can be entered only from the eastern side through the massive oak door. The church has interesting frescoes and icons, and the most valuable is the iconostasis made by the hands of



the Macedonian masters of Debar School, who besides in this monastery have left many eternal and precious woodcarving pieces throughout Macedonia.

At a distance of about hundred meters from the monastery toward East there is the church "Sts. Cyril and Methodij" in front of which altar is placed the grave of Yane Sandanski. We made a bow and showed our respect to the Macedonian legendary vojvod, which was often called the "Pirin Czar". Some people told us that in the past the grave of Sandanski was several kilometers away from the church "Nativity of Virgin Mary". There is inscription on the grave saying that Yane had fought for the human rights and freedoms of Macedonia, and particularly of the Macedonian people in the Pirin part of Macedonia. However, we got convinced that on the present tombstone of the "Pirin Tsar" Yane Sandanski there is the following inscription:

Yane Sandanski 1872-1915

„To live means to fight -

The slave for freedom, and the free

For perfection“.

Steve Pliakes, whose great desire was to see the grave, was walking around the monument of Yane, occupied with his thoughts. Then we made a bow in front of the great "Pirin Tsar" once again and without saying a word we left the grave of the vojvod. We remained silent when we headed to Petrich, the southernmost city in this Macedonian region. We drove along the main street which divides Petrich into two parts and watched and admired this beautiful Macedonian city which has left a great impression to the travel author Evlia Chelebija from XVII century with its high chestnut, maple, oak and beech trees.

About 15 kilometers west of Petrich, in the immediate vicinity of Strumeshnica, which was named after the river, the town of Kluch is located. There, on the right bank of the river, next to the road, were found remainders of a fortress. Exactly at that place in 1014 was waged the most horrible and murderous battle between the Macedonian King Samoil, who has set the Macedonian seed and established the Ohrid Archbishopric, and the Byzantine king the Macedonian Basil the Second. The Army of Basil II in retaliation had blinded 99 men in each group of Samoil's army and left one man in each group with one eye so that they could lead their wounded companions to their king in Prespa and Ohrid. When Samoil saw his defeated army, he had a heart stroke and died.

The Author

IN PUSTEG LIKE AT HOME (6)

A couple of years ago Steve Pliakes and his wife Lilly decided to visit Macedonia. They travelled many hours from Toronto to Vienna, and then to Athens, from Athens to Solun (Thessalonica) and finally to their native places Zeleniche and Zhelevo. Later they visited Lerin, in the Aegean part of Macedonia.

The author of this book waited for them at the border crossing Medzitlija nearby Bitola. Their meeting was cordial and pleasant like a meeting of long-year family friends. We immediately left for Skopje where we stayed several days. During their stay, Steve and Lilly had many meetings with their friends from Macedonia; most of them have visited Canada and been guest in the house of Pliakes family.

During the stay in Skopje, Steve Pliakes had pleasant memories of his meeting with the Prime minister of the Republic of Macedonia, H.E. Nikola Gruevski, which took place in the evening in the Government building. They talked about many issues and problems related to the recognition of Republic of Macedonia under its constitutional name, about the election of Members of Parliament from the Macedonians in the Diaspora, as well as about many other issues of interest for the future of Macedonia and Macedonian people.

The next day Steve had a meeting with the Head of the Macedonian Orthodox Church H.B. Stefan. On that occasion they talked and presented their positions regarding the conditions, opportunities and problems of the church life in the North American continent. Later, Steve met the former ambassadors Denko Malevski, Sashko Nasev and Ljuben Tevdovski, Todor Petrov, the President of the World Macedonian Congress, Joe Petreski of the House of immigrants from Macedonia, as well as other persons.

Steve and Lilly visited the Foster Home "11 Oktomvri" in Skopje, where they donated 2,500 Canadian dollars. Steve and Lilly also organized a dinner for all athletes who competed in the Olympic Games and the team which accompanied the Macedonian competitors in the Olympic Games in Beijing, where they were one of the main sponsors. In Beijing Steve was honored to carry the Macedonian state flag on behalf of the Macedonian athletes and he was the happiest Macedonian in China.

After the stay in Skopje Steve, Lilly, my wife Nada and I left for Ohrid. There we visited the churches of "St. Sofia", "St. Clement of Ohrid" and "St. Panteleimon" in Plaoshnik, as well as the Samoil Fortress where the guest were informed about the historical development of Ohrid considered to be the



second Jerusalem for the Orthodoxy. We also visited the monastery "St. Naum of Ohrid" where we spent a pleasant time by the wells.

Next day we left for Ljubojno, in Prespa, where we stayed several days. There we visited the graves of my parents who were friends of Steve and Lilly in Toronto, as well as the graves of my grandfather Alekso who was fortune seeker entire 40 years in Detroit, as well as my grandmother Kata, after whom I have my nickname, that is my surname – Katin. Then we visited the villages of Brajchino, Nakolec and Lower Dupeni in order to allow our guests to see the "end of the world" at the borderline nearby Markova Noga.

Next day, early in the morning we left Ljubojno and directed to Oteshevo, and then we headed to Mala Prespa. We passed the Macedonian – Albanian borderline at the border crossing Stenje. We headed to our destination – Pustec which is located in Mala Prespa, or Lower Prespa, as the inhabitants of Prespa call this Macedonian area along the south-western Coast of Prespa Lake. The entire area consists of approximately ten villages which are organized in the Municipality of Pustec. And, Pustec is the largest settlement in Mala Prespa, and a seat of the municipality as well, which mayor and all members of the Municipal Council are ethnical Macedonians.

However, the part of Macedonia known as Mala Prespa, or Lower Prespa was given to Albania after the signing of the "Peace" Treaty of Versailles in 1919. This unjust treaty completed the division of the ethnic Macedonia between the newly established states: Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria and Albania, followed by the beginning of the era of denationalization, forced assimilation and emigration of the Macedonian people from their homes.

The destiny of the Macedonian people until the World War II was basically the same in all parts of the divided and enslaved Macedonia. The Macedonian people was and still is (in Bulgaria and Elada – Greece) denied the fundamental human rights, assimilated, divided and expelled, but also spiritually and physically assimilated. Because of these reasons in some areas of ethnic Macedonia major migration and ethnic changes occurred which have had catastrophic consequences for the Macedonian population.

After the World War I and the liberation of a part of ethnic Macedonia, it was taken a special care of the Macedonians who lived in the neighboring countries regarding their education on their mother's Macedonian language. It was especially actual in the period from 1945 to 1948 when Albania asked the previous Yugoslav government to send teachers for Macedonian language in the regions where Macedonian population lived. The teaching staff, first of all, was needed in the villages of Tuminec, Pustec, Lower and Upper Gorica, Globochani, Shulin and Zrnovsko which are located in Mala Prespa, and belong to Korcha region, as well as in the villages of Vrbnik and Cerje in Bilishte area, then in Lin, the region of Pogradec and in other populated settlements.



We arrived in Pustec at noon. We went immediately to the municipal building where the mayor Edmond Temelko and his associates cordially welcomed us. On that occasion Lilly and Steve donated 2,500 Canadian dollars as a support for the Macedonian children in Mala Prespa. We also visited the new church "St. Archangel Michael" when the guests from Canada donated 1,000 dollars for this Macedonian spiritual temple.

During our stay in Pustec we met and talked to a number of Macedonians who were good-hearted and friendly and spoke readily with the guests from Canada. We were informed that according to the available data, the real number of ethnic Macedonians with Islamic religion was over 200,000. Their largest concentration is in the bordering regions of Gora, Golo Brdo and Mala Prespa. There are also many Macedonians who live in Tirana (approximately 20,000), Pogradec, Korcha, Kavaje, Elbasan and other places.

However, we should mention that Albania and Serbia are neighboring countries to the Republic of Macedonia which recognize the status of the Macedonian ethnic minority. Since 1945 there are teaching lessons in Macedonian language in Albania, more precisely in Mala Prespa for the elementary education from 1-5th grade, and the state has published relevant textbooks. Also, there is a library with enormous fund of books in Macedonian language within the school in Pustec; the author of this book has also donated several hundreds of books to the library. In fact, it is the first case of official use of the Macedonian mother's language in the Republic of Albania.

During our visit we were informed that there were several organizations and active associations and a party of Macedonians in Albania, but the possibilities for political activity were small, because the state did not provide financial support to their organizations. However, the Macedonians in Albania make great efforts for their self-organizing. So, the first periodical journal in Macedonian language "Peace" ("Mir") was published in 1993, then "Prespa" followed, as well as many electronic portals. There was also radio and TV program in Macedonian language in Korcha.

Unfortunately, the position of the ethnic Macedonians in Albania is far away from the position of the ethnic Albanians in the Republic of Macedonia. While the ethnic Albanians in the Republic of Macedonia are ministers and members of parliament and their large party is in a coalition with the actual government, the Macedonians in Albania still do not have opportunities for real political participation. At this moment, there are no ethnic Macedonian MPs, and the number of Macedonians employed in the institutions of the state and local administration is small, compared to the overrepresentation of the Albanians in the administration of the Republic of Macedonia.

Regretfully, during our visit to Mala Prespa, we noticed that it was one of the poorest regions in the Republic of Albania. In this case, the Albanians authorities, as well as the authorities in the Republic of Macedonia seem like



they “have forgotten” their obligations and left that people to itself. The population is engaged in fishing, agriculture and cattle breeding, but in very modest conditions and very small scope. After the fall of the previous Stalinist regime and the opening of its borders, most of the inhabitants have reoriented themselves toward trade and seeking fortune in the Republic of Macedonia and Greece, and some of them work in the larger Albanian cities, in the European Union and in the overseas countries; they are especially present in Toronto, where they have established their association.

Pustec is the pivot of Mala Prespa. This beautiful Macedonian village is located along the hill above the Prespa Lake. The houses are built of stone; they are Macedonian-styled, modest, just like in many Prespa and other villages. Its inhabitants speak beautiful Macedonian dialect from Prespa; the students learn their mother's Macedonian language in all four years, there is an ambulance, agricultural cooperative, cinema, house of culture, several shops, fishermen's cooperative, there is the gorgeous Macedonian Orthodox Church “*St. Archangel Michael*” (*Sveti Arhangel Mihail*) in the centre of this urban village, as well as many other institutions.

But, the most important is that they have genuine Macedonian spirit and faith in the future of the Macedonian nation, of the Macedonian language, and of all which is Macedonian. Pustec is the only Macedonian municipality and one of the biggest settlements in the region of Korcha, as well as the largest Macedonian village in Albania. And there, in Dolna Prespa, people sing songs, laugh, dance, grieve in Macedonian mother's language.

The Municipality of Pustec is registered in the Registry in Macedonian language as Pustec, and in Albanian language as Likenas. The name of Pustec had been changed in the 1970-es. It was renamed by Hodza Leshi, the secretary of the Communist Party of Albania at that time. However, today all road signs and other public signs are bilingual in the entire Mala Prespa – both in Macedonian and Albanian languages.

It is interesting to mention that the coat of the municipality includes the ancient Macedonian symbol, 16-beam sun of Kutlish (Palatica – Virgina) above which is placed bilingual inscription in Macedonian language Municipality of Pustec, and below is the title in Albanian language.

We ended our visit to Mala Prespa with the joint lunch at the restaurant in Zrnovsko where we had Prespa carp and other Prespa specialties. On that occasion we talked about many issues, problems and future plans for better tomorrow for the Macedonians in Mala Prespa and entire Macedonia. Our host Edmond Temelko showed great respect to Steve and Lilly, his hosts during his stay in Canada.

However, it should be noticed that the Macedonians in Albania succeeded to register their political party “Macedonian Alliance for European Integration”



with lot of difficulties. It was an important event for the Macedonians, because they showed maturity and voted for themselves, for their party, their president, the respected mayor Edmond Temelko and the secretary Vasil Sterjovski. On that occasion they showed the Albanian society that they were also a part of that society and that they would take active participation in the dealing with the unsolved issues of that country.

The party made enormous efforts to develop projects with foreign companies, embassies, as well as with the Republic of Macedonia in order to help the people from Mala Prespa regarding their decent and normal living standard. All the states worldwide know that the Macedonians from Mala Prespa are loyal citizens of Albania; they pay taxes and obey the laws, but they demand better living conditions.

At the local elections in Albania which took place on June 21, 2015 the party "Macedonian Alliance for European Integration" won one mayor seat and nine counselors. On June 21, the Macedonian party won 3,641 voices. Edmond Temelko became a mayor of the Municipality of Pustec for the third time. Based on the 7 counselor's seats won this party will also have its counselor in Pogradec and Malikj.

It should be emphasized that Edmond Temelko, together with the secretary Vasil Steriovski and other members, supported by the businessman Gjorgija George Atanasovski from USA, are the founders of the party "Macedonian Alliance for European Integration" and tireless fighters for the rights of the Macedonians in Albania and worldwide. They have also close cooperation with the World Macedonian Congress, OMO "Ilinden" – Pirin "Vinozhito" ("Rainbow") and other Macedonian national organizations and parties both from the Diaspora and the Republic of Macedonia.

The Author



FROM IZMIR TO EPHEBUS (7)

It was the morning of a warm and pleasant day when the Sun had just risen over the Asian part of Istanbul, and the plane had taken off for the East, towards Izmir. We continued our flight on the iron bird ("Boeing 747") of Turkish Airlines. In less than an hour we were in the three-and-a-half million city of Izmir. This metropolis is situated in the bay that bears its name and spans over its lowlands and the surrounding hills. We were met there, and welcomed by the people's representative in the Parliament of the Republic of Turkey, Mr. Kemal Vatan, born in the village of Zleovo, near Radovish, Dr. Melih Inan, the Director of the Airport, and other Turkish citizens of Macedonian origin.

It appears as though the regions of Dolna Reka, Veles and other regions of Macedonia have moved to Izmir and its surroundings. There are large numbers of these Turkish citizens from Macedonia, amongst which the greatest in number are the Macedonian Muslims. There are more of them in Turkey than there are in Macedonia. This is what we were told by our hosts because according to their unofficial statistics, there are from 300 to 500 thousand Turkish citizens from Macedonia living only in Izmir and the surrounding cities.

There are people from Vranovtsi and Orizari, near Veles, from Skudrinje, from Ĵupa and Debar, from near Pehchevo, Delchevo, Shtip, and other places in Macedonia. They all have a good life in democratic Turkey, which has accepted them as honest, kind, and good-hearted people. Many of them have become famous and respected businessmen, intellectuals, doctors, shop owners, and loyal citizens of their second fatherland, Turkey. At the same time, these Turkish citizens from Macedonia love and respect Turkey, but their grandfathers' land, Macedonia, too, which they carry in their hearts and in their souls.

In the House of the Holy Mother of God

Our hosts from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, and the Mayor of Bornova, organised a visit for us to the city of Selchuk and the ancient city of Ephesus. In Selchuk we visited the City Museum where many exhibits from Ephesus and other localities in Anadolia and the coast region are displayed. The museum is an unavoidable stop for visitors to this part of Turkey.

We continued towards the well known, ancient treasury of Ephesus, situated less than 200 kilometres south of Izmir, 20 kilometres north of the summer resort, Kushadasi. Ephesus, the famous city of the past and the present, is situated at the foot of Mt. Bilbil, Koressos, where the Kaister river enters the Aegean Sea, and on the lowland region near the sea.



This significant ancient city is first mentioned in the middle of the 7th century BC. Ever since its foundation it has played an important role in the Anadolian region. Because of this, it was often attacked and conquered. It was under Persian, Spartan rule. In 334 Alexander of Macedon conquered the city and the strategic military area surrounding the city of Ephesus. Ephesus was under authority of the Roman Empire and was a major city of the Asian province at the time. In the meantime, at the beginning of the first millennium, Christianity began spreading in the city very quickly.

However, the Romans opposed Apostle Paul's doctrines. This was confirmed by the residents of Ephesus, who demonstrated under threat against the spread of Christianity, gathering in the largest theatre in the city in order to express their anger against the "new" religion. However, according to many, Ephesus was God's chosen place, where the Holy God Mother and St. John spent the last days of their life.

Namely, the house of the *Holy Mother of God* is found very close to Ephesus, on the western side of Mt. Bilbil. The Church of St. John, one of the composers of the Bible, reaches high over the present-day city. At the same time, one of the seven churches in Asia, where St. John found his inspiration for religion, was in Ephesus.

The history of Ephesus records that, in AD 262, the Gothic destroyed the city together with the Temple of Artemis. The city never again regained its previous state of magnificent growth and development. It is also very significant for Ephesus that in AD 431 the Third ecumenical Council was held in the house of the *Holy Mother of God*. This council accepted the *Holy Mother of God* as Mother of God Jesus Christ.

During our visit to Ephesus we saw numerous structures and objects from the long history of this significant ancient locality. We visited the remains of the Temple of Artemis, Trayan's Fountain, the Marble Road, the Stadium, and other structures. However, the visitor is especially impressed by the great theatre, it being an exceptional experience. It is situated in a recess of the western side of the hill. Its size, expanse and magnificence gives one the feeling, and takes him in his thoughts many centuries far from the present. We were told here that in recent years Luciano Pavarotti, Julio Iglesias, and many other world famous artists presented their artistic qualities there before several thousand guests at this theatre.

Our visit to the house of the Holy Mother of God aroused in us a special feeling of excitement, which transformed into peace. It feels as though one is somewhere in Macedonia, in one of the monasteries of the Macedonian Orthodox Church. The picturesque area where the house of the Holy Mother of God was built reminds the visitor of the areas taken as models for the construction of Christian monasteries around the world. And here, according to the customs, after bowing in the church, leaving the temple and washing



with the holy water, according to customs and beliefs, the visitor becomes an "ad`ija" (pilgrim.)

The area attracts with its beauty and scenery, while the church represents a place where thousands of Christians and Muslims come to bow and to pray. It appears that this year the church will be most visited on 15 August, when the largest gathering to celebrate the third millennium of Christianity will be held. On this occasion thousands of believers, Christians, Muslims, and others are expected to visit the house of the Holy Mother of God.

According to written documents we know that St. John brought the Holy Mother of God to Ephesus during the fourth or fifth year, immediately after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The house on Mt. Bilbil, planned and constructed by St. John, is at 420m above sea level. According to the tales the house was discovered by the German nun, Anna Katerina Emerich, who devoted her entire life to God. She was paralysed and made spiritual connection with the Holy Mother of God. The documents claim that, while in a trance, she had a vision that the Holy Mother of God was buried somewhere near the church.

This was confirmed by some Lazarian priests, who in 1891 discovered the location of the house where the *Holy Mother of God* spent the last days of her life. Thus, it was discovered that the cross-shaped building and dome were ruined, but were later restored.

During our visit to the house of the *Holy Mother of God* we were familiarised with many details relating to the discovery of the temple, as well as the visits and respect of both Christians and Muslims towards this spiritual centre. The large statue in the garden of the church giving one the feeling that the *Holy Mother of God* welcomes guests and those of good intent with widespread arms, leaves one with a special impression. On the other hand, the statue of the *Holy Mother of God* found in the apse was erected about a hundred years ago and represents a magnificent structure before which everyone bows and pays respect to the Mother of Jesus Christ.

Macedonian is spoken in Izmir

During the evening hours we returned to Izmir where we stayed at the exclusive hotel of "*Ephesus*" situated in the centre of the city and is of a high category. The city, though, whose Turkish name is Izmir, is also known by the name of Smirna. It is a major seaport in Asia Minor, on the coast of the Aegean Sea, and is the third largest city in Turkey. Smirna is an old Ionic settlement which was renewed in the 4th century BC. During the Roman Empire and Byzantium, Izmir was one of the largest cities in Asia Minor. Its history claims that the city had been under the rule of the Tatars, who devastated it. Later it was under the rule of the Greeks, who built it and turned into Greek, and in 1922 it was



freed by the Turks, headed by Kemal Ataturk. This significant seaport and strategic land location has been an important NATO base since 1952.

The delegation of the the Republic of Macedonia will remember this visit to the metropolis of Izmir forever. During the first day the delegation was met by the mayor of the Bornova municipality, Mr. Chengiz Bulut, whose origins are in the village of Sirkovo, near Kavadarstsi, but he was born in Izmir. With his wonderful Macedonian he captivates as a collocutor. This prominent citizen of the Bornova municipality arranged a formal dinner for the Macedonian delegation. Here we were informed that the Bornova municipality has approximately 500 thousand citizens of whom, according to some statistics, 30% are Turkish citizens from Macedonia, mainly Macedonians converted to Islam.

We confirmed this during our walk by the sea where we met a large number of citizens who spoke Macedonian and were happy to stop and greet the guests from Macedonia. In addition to the prominent Turkish citizens, such as the representative in Parliament, Kemal Vatan, at the dinner we were also joined by the assistant Vali of Izmir, Mr. Ramazan Ugrandziolu. Again, our visit to Bornova municipality was a special experience for us. Here, at the Cultural Centre of this municipality an unforgettable reception was organised in honour of our delegation. Several hundred citizens anxiously awaited the guests from Macedonia.

The Macedonian music orchestra was also here to greet us with songs and Macedonian folk dancing. We heard songs such as *"Bitola moj roden kraj," "Makedonijo," "Zajdi zajdi jasno sonce,"* and other famous songs and dances. One feels as though he is in *!irovnitsa, Vranovtsi* or *!upa...* The reception was attended by the Vali of the municipality, the Mayor, a number of representatives from the "Rumeli" Association, students and other prominent citizens living and working in Izmir, especially in the Bornova municipality.

Also amongst them were Dr. Shaban Akarbai, sports doctor of the Turkish representation, originally from Veles, and Dr. Ismail Bairaktar, who translated from Turkish to Macedonian, and vice versa, as well as a large number of prominent Turkish citizens originally from Dolna Reka, Veles and other regions in Macedonia.

After this sincere reception a platform was organised with about 200 participants from a large number of associations of Turkish citizens from the entire Balkans, and wider, who maintain good collaboration with the Bornova citizens. In our talks we dealt with issues concerning collaboration in social, cultural, and other aspects, as well as the mutual interests of the citizens of both nations and both countries, the Republic of Turkey and the Republic of Macedonia.

The Author

IN ANCIENT STAMBOL (8)

We met Zeynil Moukoç - born in the village of Brod, near Dragosh in Gora - at the "Pelivan" restaurant in Istanbul. He is a perspective young man. He lives in Istanbul with his wife Servina, his son Ersan, his father Shefket and his mother, while his son Emil is in the eighth grade and attends school in Drachevo, a Skopje suburb.

We learnt many interesting things from our talk with Zeynil, who - by the way - speaks very fluent Macedonian besides the fact that he studied and lived in Gnilane. He showed great pleasure that we, and the general consul to the Republic of Macedonia in the Republic of Turkey, Mr. Hristo Kotevski, visited him at his family restaurant where we ate tripe stew and kebabs.

Zeynil spoke about his native village Brod, of Dragosh, of Gora, with much love and nostalgia. According to him, approximately 50,000 Macedonian Muslims now live in all seventeen villages which belong to Dragosh. However, in Istanbul alone, there are about 12,000 people who only manage to get together at weddings, Christenings, circumcisions, and other occasions.

The first people from Gora came to Istanbul after the Balkan wars. This number jumped significantly in the fifties when a large number of Muslims from the Balkans moved to Turkey massively. Otherwise, the Gorantsi (people who came from Gora) are known in Istanbul for the fact that their wedding receptions last seven days.

At every celebration organized by the Gorantsi, in addition to the Turkish they also sing Macedonian songs, celebrate old traditions, customs, and everything that they brought with them from Gora in Macedonia. Joking, Zeynil mentioned that many Macedonian Muslims from Gora who live in Istanbul, can only speak Macedonian, as among themselves they only communicate in Macedonian, while the young ones communicate in Turkish.

He also informed us that about 280 families from his village of Brod now live in Skopje and its surroundings; about 380 families are in Prizren; 150 in Prishtina; 80 in Pec; while about 1,500 people continue to live in the village.

A large number of Macedonian Muslims who live in Istanbul, come to their birth places in Gora and throughout Macedonia during the summer months. During their visits they attend weddings, circumcisions and other festivities, at the same time showing off their beautiful cars and high living standard which they have in Istanbul. This confirms the fact that the Macedonians, not only those in Istanbul, but throughout Turkey, are good family people and respected citizens.



The aim of our visit to Istanbul was to increase and deepen relations of the Turkish citizens from Macedonia, with our country; to widen bridges of collaboration; to discover new ways of better selforganization, of affirmation of the Macedonian state, people, church, and of the Macedonian truth. The visit was realized with the help of the Institute of National History "Kemal Atatürk" at the "Beazichi" University.

At invitation of this important Turkish educational institution, the author of this article held a lecture for the professors, postgraduates and other students interested in the religion of the Macedonian Orthodox Church and Macedonia. The lecture, presented in English, was titled "*The Development of the Macedonian Orthodox Church.*"

The "Beazichi" University was first established in 1863 as the American "Kennedy" University, but since 1970 it has been the state university of Turkey. The university is located on the coast of an elevation on the Bosforus of the European side. From where we were staying, one could enjoy and delight in the magnificent view of the Bosforus. One feels that God gifted this region with beauty and luxury, for the young generations to take advantage of the blessings.

According to records of the neat Turkish analysts, Istanbul has existed for many centuries. However, it achieved world glory when the Roman emperor Constantine decided to move his capital from Rome to Byzantium, or Constantinople, which later became the Turkish Istanbul, which the southern Slavs have always called Tzarigrad or Stambol. It is a city which abounds in numerous cultural and historical monuments, a university centre, location of the Asian - European wealth, a city of contrasts...

It is the city of about fifty palaces, more than 1,500 mosques, and one hundred churches. To us, Macedonians, Istanbul is also a very significant, and in many ways characteristic city. It has always been a challenge for both emigrants and intellectuals. According to unofficial information, more than one million people from Macedonia alone, moved to Istanbul during the last century. This took place as early as the Balkan wars, to the (bad) times of emigration during the 20's and 50's, and to more recent times.

Therefore, in addition to Turkish, Macedonian - ranging from every dialect to the modern Macedonian literary tongue - is also spoken in Istanbul.

The Macedonians went to Turkey in search of a better life, but many of them were persecuted and lost their lives in Anadolia and other places, of which there is historical evidence. Among them is the characteristic fate of the Miladinov brothers from Struga.

They were executed at the Yedi Kule prison, which is part of the defensive city wall that spans along the waterfront of the Bosforus. During our visit of the prison, we spoke of everything that could have happened to the two brothers,



Constantine and Dimitar Miladinov. For this reason, we wished to leave the prison as soon as possible, not to talk about the past, but about the future. May this same fate never again repeat itself.

Nevertheless, one part of the tower close to the entrance gate attracted our attention. Here, at about ten metres from the ground, on a stone in the wall there is an inscription of a sixteen-ray sun, like the one from Kutlesh. The tower was built in 1457, which speaks of the age-old existence of the Macedonian sun, which - like a mute witness - confirms the Macedonian connection with Istanbul.

The Author



A LESSON CONCERNING THE RELIGION IN MACEDONIA ON THE BEAZIGHY UNIVERSITY IN ISTANBUL (9)

Starting from the ancient period up to now Macedonia was, is and will be the place where different civilizations and religions have intersected. Thus, Christianity appeared many centuries ago in these Balkan areas, that is, from the time when Paul the Apostle came to Macedonia. It is mentioned as a land at several points also in the Bible. And, if we throw a historical glance starting from the ancient times of Alexander the Great, through to the Roman and Byzantine times, through the great migrations of the Slav people to the south, and than during the Ottoman period, Macedonia was a crossroads of nations, civilizations, cultures, languages and religions. Through this long and important period of time, only two nations chose the name of this land as a part of their identity – the Ancient Macedonians and the Macedonians today.

Macedonia occupies a central part of the Balkan Peninsula and has an extremely advantageous position at the conjunction of important roads and highways. The country is open along the valleys of the Vardar and the Struma to the Aegean Sea, itself a part of the Mediterranean. In the past the *Via Egnatia*, the most important of all the Balkan Peninsular highways, from Durazzo via Elbasan, Ohrid and Bitola to Thessaloniki and Constantinople stretched across Macedonia.

This geographical position placed Macedonia at the crossroad of East and West. All military expeditions were obliged to cross it, and it was the bridge over which passed the developing trade of the time and, together with it, a variety of cultural, religious and other influences. Macedonia was one of the first regions to be touched by Christianity. It was also one of the first areas to receive the Christian faith and it was through it that Christianity spread to the West.

In addition, the invention of the first alphabet by Cyril (Constantine) of Thessaloniki, a man famed for his rare learning at that time, was a historical watershed for all the Slav peoples. The alphabet itself and the first translations of the liturgical books marked the term of the three languages theory and the introduction of the Slav language into the ranks of the civilized language, Latin,



Greek and Hebrew, and from then the word of God was spread in Slavonic, so people began to write in the Slavonic alphabet and in the Slav language.

Inevitably, the creation of a Slav alphabet was of prime importance for the Macedonian people. First and foremost because the brothers Constantine (whose monastic name was Cyril) and Methodius were from Thessaloniki, in Macedonia, and yet more especially because the first books written in Slavonic were in the language of the Macedonina Slavs. Evidently, Constantine and Methodius could not use any language other than that of the Slavs who lived in their birthplace, Thessaloniki.

The arrival of St.Clement of Ohrid in Macedonia is also of a great importance for the first Slavonic alphabet, because the moment of destiny had come when the Macedonian Slavs found themselves able to be educated by their own teachers in their mother tongue. In addition to other missionary activity, in a period of only seven years, three thousand and five hundred students passed through Clement's univesity.

This was a true renaissance of the Macedonian Slavs. Here they were not merely confirmed in the Macedonian faith but even received a varied higher education since, in addition to theology, a whole series of other subjects was taught at Clement's university including preaching in Slavonic, singing, civil and ecclesiastical history, natural science, philosophy, medicine and languages. However, the most important thing was that the work of translation carried on here, together with transcription, constituted an entire literary school. Ohrid became the centre from which Slav literacy and literature spread to all the Slav peoples. At the same time Ohrid became a true center of Christianity – *"The Slav Jerusalem"* as it is still known today.

The arrival of Sr.Naum of Ohrid in Macedonia as a replacement for Clement of Ohrid in the schools throughout Macedonia created the conditions for Clement to devote himself entirely to the organisation of the church and to literary work. Actually, Clement and Naum united once again, continued the work of their teachers yet more vigorously. The death of St.Clement on July 16, 916 was a great misfortune for the nation.

However, numerous disciples continued the work of Clement and Naum, headed by the church whose foundations had been laid by Clement of Ohrid. This period was characterised by a growth of monasticism, as well as extensive building of churches and monasteries tghroughout Macedonia.

There is insufficient information available about church affairs during the period from the death of St.Clement of Ohrid to the creation of the Archbishopric of Ohrid – the Partiarchate. However, the coronation of Samuil was connected with the proclamation of an southomous church with its seat at the capital of Prespa where ecclesiastical activity was more developed than



elsewhere in Samuil's empire. The center of religious life till the proclamation of Samuil as Emperor had been on the island of Achill in Lake Prespa.

At the opening of the XI century Samuil transferred his capital from Prespa to Ohrid where the remains of Samuil's fortress are still to be seen. Naturally the seat of the Archbishopric was moved at the same time as the capital was transferred and the Archbishopric remained in the same place until the abolition in 1767. Here, once the patriarchate had been proclaimed, Samuil was anointed Emperor by the first Patriarch of Ohrid.

The Ohrid Archbishopric

Before the coming of the Turks in the XIV century, Macedonia was a land of rebirth, with rich artistic medieval churches and monasteries, especially in the Ohrid and Prespa regions, which today are symbols both of Macedonian culture and of a world civilization. However, in the last decade of the fourteenth century Macedonia was already under Ottoman rule. The Ottomans did not encroach upon the autocephality of the Ohrid Archbishopric. In their conquests, they showed tolerance towards the Christian faith.

After the capture of Skopje in 1392 and of Ohrid in 1408 the whole of Macedonia fell under the sway of the Turkish Empire. Since, according to the traditions of Islam, the Christians were "People of the Book", the Osmanlis treated them tolerantly to begin with. A short time after the conquest of the Balkans there were four autocephalous churches within the boundaries of the Turkish Empire: the Patriarchates of Constantinople, Trnovo, Pech and the Archbishopric of Ohrid.

After the conquest of Ohrid and Macedonia, the Osmanlis not only did not limit the independence of the Ohrid Archbishopric, but in order to weaken the authority of the Patriarchate of Constantinople they even increased its power. However, the strengthening of the feudal system in Turkey meant the weakening of the Archbishopric, due to heavy material levies and the worsening on the Christians position in Macedonia.

All of this tended to strengthen separatist movements in various regions, to which also contributed the opposed interests of Constantinople and Rome. This in turn touched Turkish interests and the government threw heavier and heavier burdens on the Christians. Thus, in their struggle with the Christian population the Turks introduced compulsory conversion to Islam. This, at the end of the XVI and the beginning of the XVII century, led to mass conversions to Islam in the Tikvesh, Kichevo and Debar regions as well as in Razlog and Bregalnica.

In the difficult situation in which the Archbishopric of Ohrid found itself during the Ottoman occupation, the Macedonian people and the Archbishopric itself were under constant pressure from the Patriarchate of Constantinople,



on the one hand, and Catholic propaganda on the other. Where as Catholic propaganda was directed towards the spreading of Catholicism, the Patriarchate of Constantinople was following a variety of aims. In addition to its attempts to hellenise the Macedonian nation it had as its main aim the destruction of the Archbishopric of Ohrid. Exploiting every possible means, entering into every conceivable form of intrigue with the Ottoman authorities, the Patriarchate of Constantinople managed to inflict its heaviest blow on the Macedonian people by initiating the abolition of the Archbishopric of Ohrid in 1767. The difficult position in which the Balkan peoples found themselves when subjected to the Ottoman Empire was complicated by the interference and intrigues in Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Using its influence with the Sublime Porte, the Patriarchate of Constantinople succeeded in securing the abolition of the Serbian Patriarchate of Pech in 1766 and the Macedonian Archbishopric of Ohrid in 1767. Here again, taking advantage of the financial difficulties which the two churches found themselves in, as a result of heavy taxes and other levies imposed on them, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, applying for their abolition, promised the Ottoman authorities that it would pay the debts. In fact the object of this dirty trick was to achieve the expansionist aim of the Patriarchate of Constantinople which wished to dominate completely all the Orthodox churches within the Balkan boundaries of the Ottoman Empire.

This is confirmed by the inclusion of the dioceses of Pech and Ohrid in the Patriarchate immediately after their abolition as autocephalous institutions. Moreover, the abolition itself was uncanonical since it was done by an act (*irade*) of Sultan Mustafa III and not by the appropriate ecclesiastical convention.

The Patriarch of Constantinople, Samoil, decided to deliver a final blow to the Ohrid Archbishopric. He convinced the Ottoman authorities that the Ohrid Bishops were the enemy of the Ottoman Empire and asked the authorities in Constantinople to call in Arsenij regarding the debts of the Archbishopric. In Constantinople, under the pressure of the Ottoman authorities, and the detained bishops of the Ohrid

Archbishopric who supported the abolition of the Archbishopric, Arsenij submitted his written resignation on May 17, 1767. His resignation marked the abolition of the Ohrid Archbishopric. The Patriarch Samoil, with the help of influential Greeks and Turks, arranged a Sultan's decree that abolished the Ohrid Archbishopric, and its bishoprics were joined to the Constantinople Patriarchy. The Sultan's decree forbade any appeals against the abolition of the Archbishopric, and any protest was rendered impossible.



The age - old process

During the Byzantine empire, and under Bulgarian and Serbian rule in the 13th and 14th centuries, the Ohrid Archbishopric enjoyed the reputation of one of the leading and oldest orthodox church institutions in the Balkans. Even the learned archbishops of Ohrid, Greek by descent, showed great respect for the missionary work of St. Clement and St. Naum, and toward their teachers, St. Cyril and St. Methodius.

Their monasteries on the coast of Lake Ohrid were considered to be the greatest shrines of the archiepiscopal city because the relics of these saints and teachers rested here. Traditions of the founders of the Ohrid church were also nurtured here. Hence, the archbishops of Ohrid left behind inspiring pages devoted to St. Clement of Ohrid, praising him as their own spiritual father.

During the middle ages and the Ottoman empire the Macedonians expressed their spiritual and intellectual potentials through the activities of the Ohrid Archbishopric. The nurturing of church literature, architecture, and every kind of applied art related to iconography and liturgy, has been highly evaluated by world scholars. This is proof that works of the highest artistic level were created in Macedonia at the time, which not only enrich Macedonian, but the world treasury of art and culture, too.

The centuries-old Christian life of the Macedonians, from the time of St. Clement through the long history of the Ohrid Archbishopric, until the time of its rebirth in the 19th century, all contributed toward the creation of art masterpieces with a universal significance, with exceptional esthetic value and deep humanistic message.

Thus, important works of art, the pride of the human race, were created in the churches and monasteries in Macedonia. The icons in Ohrid, frescoes in St. Sofia, Nerezi, Kurbinovo and Nagoricani, the architecture, constructors, and works of applied art, are included in every anthology of important works of the time. These works illustrate the original characteristics and features related to Macedonian cultural tradition and signify a huge contribution to Slavic-Byzantine cultural and spiritual relations.

Macedonia is the cradle of the iconography of Slavic teachers and the presence of several hundred portraits of St. Clement and his contemporaries. This is evidence enough of the cultural continuity of Macedonian tradition since the oldest of times. The question that emerges is this: Why is not the presence of these saint apostles of Slavic literacy not so emphasized in other peoples as it is in Macedonia? The answer would be because their work took place among the Macedonian Slavs, and because their work survived due to their life and belief throughout the centuries.



Macedonian spiritual space was never shut. Instead, orthodox spiritualists, writers, and artists, always followed noble humanistic currents which were founded on Christ's learning and on the traditions of St. Clement's church. Specific occurrences in the history of Macedonian culture include ornamental decorations as well as Glagolic and Cyrillic inscriptions from the Ohrid school, made in Kratovo and Slepche in the period 10th -16th century.

Many Macedonian artists gave their contributions to the neighbouring Balkan peoples. For instance, Christopher Zhefarovitch from Doiran, was the most distinguished artist in the development of art in Serbia during the 18th century, while the great builder, Andreja Damjanov from the Veles area, was invited throughout the Balkans to carry out the most sophisticated church constructions. The *Mijacki* wood-carvers also enjoyed the reputation of leading masters in the Balkans for quite a long time. A specific construction and art culture was established in Macedonia even after the Ohrid Archbishopric was abolished, particularly during the struggle of church-school communities to have services in the church-Slavic tongue.

During this, in every part of Macedonia hundreds of churches were built of Macedonian stone, of Macedonian timber, with Macedonian tiles, with a Macedonian heart and soul. Most often, these churches have monumental dimensions and a basilical form to remind of the greatness of the old church glory. The renaissance period in Macedonia brought a specific iconography in orthodoxy, with special emphasis on Slavic Macedonian saints, their hagiographies, and Slavic literacy in the Balkans.

All of the above is evidence of the great contribution of the Macedonians in the cultural and spiritual growth of orthodoxy in the Balkan and world artistic treasure. For this reason, the Macedonian orthodox church and the Macedonian people express their concern over the allegedly special rights of certain neighbouring orthodox churches to the ancient Macedonian Christian shrines. It is impossible to understand how the works of the builders, painters, carvers and writers of church books, created for centuries in the past on Macedonian ground, could be declared as non-Macedonian. It is surprising that the church founders and donations of Feudal rulers in the course of the 14th century, restoration and adaptation of older churches during the early Christian, Slavic, and Byzantine period, are also declared as foreign.

They have forgotten that the old church-founder principles of donating symbolizes deep respect and prayer of the gift-givers toward the old Macedonian shrines, and respect for the holy traditions of the Ohrid Archbishopric.

We need emphasize that the donation to a church does not represent the property of the church but a prayer for the salvation of the donator. The principle of church-founding as gift to the Ohrid Archbishopric as well as other churches represents a worship, and not feudal ownership for the amateur masters of the Middle Ages. Christian works in Macedonia are the works of its builders



and painters, every Macedonian citizen is their owner, while every well-intending person worships their spiritual and artistic value - everyone who believes in the human values of faith, love, and peace among all people.

Church monuments in Macedonia truly were holy places for bringing together Christians from every Balkan country and the world. For this reason, the Macedonians now protect them using the most modern scientific methods, guard them and care for these structures which are constantly open and accessible to the world, while the craftsmen and donators communicated through these structures in accordance with their spiritual virtues.

Macedonians have never treated the works of our creators in other countries as our possession, but rather as a natural circulation of cultural values and good religious relations among Christians and other believers.

Macedonians built spiritual and cultural shrines with a strong will, love, and faith toward orthodoxy. In order to survive in this Balkan environment, for about ten centuries the orthodox people in Macedonia helped each other with the other nations in the Balkans and the wider region. Offering each other a Christian hand helped them survive slavery, assimilation, persecution, and injustice. The Macedonian survived and will survive for as long as the world keeps turning and the Sun keeps shining because the Macedonian nation is biblical, with a great Christian soul, faith, hope, and love for its church.

Macedonian truth

The Balkan Wars (1912-13) marked the liberation of Macedonia, but, at the same time the Bucharest Treaty of August 10, 1913 marked the tragic partition of Macedonia among Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia. With the Bucharest Treaty, the present Republic of Macedonia had become a part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians (SHS) in which, unfortunately, the Macedonians were not recognized as a separate nation, and were denied their national identity, language, church... In addition, after the uniting of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in December 1, 1918, the question was raised concerning the uniting of the orthodox churches within the framework of the new state into one unique Serbian Orthodox Church of the Kingdom.

Then, in March 1920, on the basis of the agreement between the Kingdom of SHS and the Patriarchy of Constantinople a decision was made by which a blessing was given for the eparchies of Vardar Macedonia (at that time called South Serbia) as well as the eparchies of Bosnia and Herzegovina, to be under the umbrella of a united Serbian Orthodox Church.

However, this situation only lasted twenty years. During the Second World War, through active participation in the anti-fascist war, the Macedonians obtained political, social and freedom for their Church in one part of their territory, in Vardar Macedonia. In 1944, the People's Republic of Macedonia



was declared within the framework of the Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia. Not many years later this was renamed the Socialist Republic of Macedonia, still within Tito's Yugoslav federation of republics. When the communist blok collapsed from 1989 onwards, the Yugoslav republics also went their separate ways and Macedonia was constituted in 1991 as a separate, independent and sovereign state – the Republic of Macedonia.

Since the 1944's the Macedonian language became the codified and official language of the People's Republic of Macedonia and one of the three languages in Yugoslavia. That was the time when the literature developed and called the attention of the European and the world literature scene; that's the time when Macedonian cultural, spiritual, religious, social and political life developed.

The Macedonian Orthodox Church a significant role in gathering Macedonians within and outside the country. Therefore, the Macedonian people in its centuries – long struggle for its own state, national and cultural freedom and independence was at the same time struggling for the independence of its Orthodox Church.

The history of the Macedonian people in the last thousand years has always been closely linked to that of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, the Archbishopric of Ohrid. In the absence of a state of their own, the Macedonians established a certain national independence for a long period of time through Ohrid and its Archbishopric. It is the church that nurtured in its bosom a large part of the cultural and artistic activity of the Macedonian people, above all through the building of churches and monasteries.

The National Liberation War of the Macedonian people during the Second World War was not only aimed at national and social liberation, but also at solving the problem of the Macedonian Orthodox Church. In 1943 the first clerical assembly on the free territory in West Macedonia was held in the village of Izdeglavje.

In the autumn of 1944, a part of Macedonia was completely liberated. The newly created Macedonian state had become a fully equal member of New Yugoslavia. Therefore, the Orthodox flock and the Macedonian clergy held the First National Church Assembly in 1945, which passed the decision for the formation of a Macedonian Orthodox Church through the re-establishment of the Ohrid Archbishopric.

In 1959, the Episcopal Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church approved the resolutions of the Second Church Assembly of the Macedonian Orthodox Church held in Ohrid (4th-6th October, 1958) about the separation of the Macedonian Orthodox Church as an independent church, with the newly-elected head – the Archbishop of Ohrid and Metropolitan of Macedonia, Dositej. The representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church headed by the patriarch German took part in the investiture of the new Macedonian Bishop Clement.



The Third National Church Assembly of the Macedonian Orthodox Church was held on July 18th, 1967, in Ohrid, when it was decided to proclaim the independence of the Macedonian Orthodox Church and to have the Archbishop of Ohrid and Macedonia, Dositej, to head it. The diocese of the Macedonian Orthodox Church coincided with the boundaries of the Macedonian national state – SR Macedonia.

The last Constitution of the Macedonian Orthodox Church was passed in 1974, according to which the Macedonian Orthodox Church shall govern and arrange its ecclesiastical affairs independently, in churches. The Macedonian Orthodox Church has its coat of arms, its flag, and Macedonian is the official language. The church-eparchy bodies and administrative organs of the Macedonian Orthodox Church are: 1. the Archbishop, 2. the Holy Episcopal Synod, 3. the Archbishop's Religious Court, 4. the eparchies, six in the Republic of Macedonia and three in overseas and European countries (the American-Canadian, the Australian and the European eparchy) governed by the bishops helped by the archpriest deputies in the cities of the eparchy. The basic units of the territorial division are the parishes led by the priests.

The Holy Episcopal Synod is in charge of religious and educational activities and of the publication of religious literature, as well as the education of the clergy and the monks.

At present the head of the Macedonian Orthodox Church is the Archbishop of Ohrid and Macedonia, Stefan, who was elected and enthroned on in Ohrid, the ancient capital of the Ohrid Archbishopric.

The history of the Macedonian Orthodox Church is closely connected to the history of the Macedonian people. They have existed together for centuries, and simultaneously suffer and fight against the assimilation, denationalization and the injustice towards the Macedonian people on the Balkans and on the other places all over the world.

The Church has played a first-rate role for the Macedonian people during the difficult periods of slavery. Therefore, it is said that the Church has been the base of the national recognition and cradle of the renaissance of the Macedonians in a longer period.

The Macedonian Orthodox Church plays an important role in gathering of the Macedonians, both in the state and in the world. It is especially stressed by the constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, after the restoration of the Archbishopric of Ohrid in 1958 and after the proclamation of its autocephality in July 1967. The Macedonian Orthodox Church made a strong penetration among the orthodox Macedonians in the state and among the numerous Macedonian emigration in the overseas countries – the USA, Canada and Australia, as well as among the Macedonians, in the West-European countries.



The Macedonian Orthodox Church as an autocephalous one is a part of the Holy Ecumenical Apostolic Church. It preserves the dogmas, canons and unity of the liturgy with the Eastern Orthodox Church and has an unique organization of the independent management of the church activities. It also protects the Bible (the Holy Scriptum), the rules of all ecumenical and indigenous Councils, as other autocephalous orthodox churches do, and discards all other schismatic teachings. It is steered in accordance with the Bible, the Holy Traditions, the Apostolic Rules and the Constitution of the Macedonian Orthodox Church.

According to the recent knowledge, the Macedonian Orthodox Church has about 2.000 religious objects only in the Republic of Macedonia; churches, monasteries, small churches, chapels, theological educational institutions libraries and other administrative buildings, and more than 70 churches and monasteries are located in the USA, Canada, Australia and the European countries. A great number of the churches and the monasteries originate from more than ten centuries and present important historical and cultural-educational monuments of the Macedonian people and Macedonia.

The Macedonian Orthodox Church has a Secondary theological school in Skopje. The instruction at the school lasts for five school years. Within the Macedonian Orthodox Church more than twenty years successfully works the Theological faculty "St. Clement of Ohrid". Although the Macedonian Orthodox Church permanently insists on it, the Theological faculty is not a part of the "St. Cyril and Methodius" University in Skopje. Each year about 50 full-time and part-time students are being enrolled in this educational institution.

The organization and the activity of the Macedonian Orthodox Church take place within its Constitution which enables good and correct relations between the Church and the state. The Church develops its activities, mostly on religious-spiritual plan, for what in a recent time the number of believers and visitors in the churches is increased, especially in the larger cities.

During the last few decades, the Macedonian Orthodox Church (MOC) has been, is, and most probably will be the topic of discussions, polemics, arguments, even attacks by the church institutions of the neighbouring countries and wider, who are trying to prevent and postpone its entry into the family of the equal church organization of orthodoxy. At the same time there are attempts to dispute the historical canonical foundations of the entire life of the Macedonian Orthodox Church.

A large part of the propaganda and media machinery has been engaged in the pressures, isolation, and negation of the MOC and its legitimate existence. Its aim is to distort and suppress historical facts from the past and present, which is done in order to bring into question the basic characteristics of the Macedonian orthodox people, its church institution, and its truth as a people that has existed for centuries, which has retained orthodoxy and for almost



six hundred years has its own sovereign and independent state - the Republic of Macedonia.

At the same time, it seems that certain circles and individuals of the orthodox churches in the neighbouring countries have forgotten how they achieved independence and the right to their own national church. They suppress the eight-century old existence of the Ohrid Archbishopric, whose essential nucleus - from its establishment until its illegal abolishment - represented Christians from every part of Macedonia.

They suppress the centuries-old activities of the Macedonians during the 19th and 20th centuries for renewal of the Ohrid Archbishopric, which means a denial of the continuity of this institution within the Macedonian orthodox church as legitimate representative of all orthodox believers in Macedonia and the entire Macedonian people in the Diaspora.

One of the important regulations of the Church is the registration, the work and the activities of the Macedonian Orthodox Churches and Church communities outside the state. It is performed on legal basis, because these spiritual centres are also religious, national, social, humanitarian, cultural, educational and sports institutions.

For realization of their activities, these communities have got a wide support, first of all, by the governments of the appropriate countries and the Mother St. Clement Church. The foundation of these Macedonian Orthodox Church communities abroad has a great contribution to the determination of the national identity of the Macedonian emigrants in their new surroundings, no matter which part to Macedonia they originate from.

Through these big spiritual, cultural and educational centers, through the priests in the church parishes, the Macedonian immigrants also get documents which testify about their determination as Macedonians, such as: birth, marriage and death certificates and other necessary acts which are officially and legally recognized by the appropriate legal administration.

Within the most of the church communities are organized internal Sunday schools where the mother's Macedonian language is being learned, the national history, geography and religion instruction. Also, in the church communities is developed the system of sections, such as: the literary, folklore, sports, cooking and others. A great number of newspapers, magazines, bulletins and other publications are being printed, and TV and radio hours which play a priceless role in the enrichment of the whole activities of the Macedonian emigrants are broadcasts.

The Author

GRECOLISATION OF THE MACEDONIAN SPEECH OF MACEDONIAN IMMIGRANTS IN CANADA, ESPECIALLY OF THOSE FROM AEGEAN MACEDONIA (10)

The first processes of migration from Macedonia to overseas countries started at the end of the eighteenth century, owing to economic, political and other reasons. The waves of emigration were more intensive after the Ilinden Uprising in 1903, the Balkan Wars and the partition of Macedonia, and in the period between the two world wars.

However, these processes became more pronounced after the Second World War, especially after the Civil War and the defeat of the Democratic Army of Greece, on whose side the Macedonian people from Aegean Macedonia fought in the hope of achieving their national and social rights and freedom.

After arriving in Canada, the Macedonian immigrants make efforts to adapt to the new environment and to involve themselves in the cultural events in the society. However, the English language, which is the basic characteristic of the Canadian culture and social life as a whole, is a big problem for them.

The Macedonian immigrants have difficulties with the English language both because they did not have an opportunity to learn the language and because they did not have contact with English-speaking people. Actually, Macedonians did not have their own state *de jure* and *de facto* from 1912 to 1945.

They achieved their rights of freedom and independence after the Second World war, with the proclamation of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia with the framework of the former Federal Republic of -, after the re-establishment of the independence of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, and especially in 1991 when the Republic of Macedonia became an independent and democratic state.

However, the destiny of the Macedonians from Aegean Macedonia differs from others. They did not have any opportunity to go and study at Macedonian schools, as their mother tongue was prohibited in their native country. They experienced democracy and freedom not in their native country but in the overseas countries, Canada, the United States of America, Australia and



other countries, where they are able to speak and learn Macedonian, to have their own Macedonian schools, churches, clubs, folklore groups, literary and other associations, radio and television, newspapers, etc.

This paper considers the characteristics of the language that Macedonian immigrants use in Canada and the creolisation of Macedonian speech, especially in the area of Metropolitan Toronto, Ontario.

The peculiarities of that "separate language" which is used by Macedonian immigrants appear and start with the process of creolisation of Macedonian speech and the entry of English words, whose number increases from day to day.

It is of interest to mention that the Macedonians in Toronto came from different places and societies from all parts of Macedonia. The greatest number of them are from Aegean Macedonia, especially from the districts of Lerin, Kostur, Voden, then from the districts of Prespa, Bitola, Ohrid, Struga and other parts of the Republic of Macedonia and Pirin Macedonia, whose number has reached over a 100,000. The greatest number of them came with a low level of education, being laborers, while a small number were educated.

Therefore, their speech carries all the peculiarities of the region from where they came, then of the social environment to which they belong, and of the period in which they have lived in the new environment in Canada.

After arriving in Canada, the Macedonian immigrants start to lean English, which has few similarities with the Macedonian language. Except for a very small number of Macedonians who emigrated to Canada after the Second World War and who know English a little, for the greatest part of them English was a new language, and because they do not speak English at the beginning, they have some difficulties at work and in everyday life.

Due to the above, a great number of newcomers of Macedonian descent, especially men, began to work in restaurants. Of course, because they were not much educated, they worked as helpers, dishwashers and in other hard jobs, where they did not have contact with the outside world who speaks English.

On the other hand, the women usually find jobs in the textile industry where a great number of workers and even managers, are Macedonians or from other Slavic speaking areas. Thus, the newcomers communicate at work with older immigrants and easily pick up a number of English words.

Otherwise, it was not hard for them to find a job in Canada, because it was estimated that in Toronto alone there were over 2,000 restaurants which were owned and operated by Macedonians. Quite a number of service industries associated with the restaurant business, textile and metal industries are also owned and operated by Macedonians. In addition, thousands of Macedonians at present are engaged in the various professions, such as doctors, lawyers,



engineers, writers, teachers, economists, actors, performers and teachers of music.

The creolisation of Macedonian speech in Canada, as well as in the United States of America, Australia, Great Britain, New Zealand and other English-speaking countries, is not due to the needs of making conversation with the Anglo-Saxon world which uses English as its means of communication, but it is a process which starts after the arrival of the immigrants in the new environment.

The process of creolisation of Macedonian speech in Canada, especially in the case of immigrants from Aegean Macedonia, starts with the adoption of nouns. English nouns are a very important part of the speech of the newcomers, usually, the nouns are adopted morphologically and their pronunciation is very close to English.

The following are the most characteristic groups of words adopted in the everyday language of the Macedonian immigrants.

1. At the beginning, the Macedonians learn the numbers. That is maybe because counting has got something in common with the 'magic' force of the dollar, for which most of the immigrants came to Canada. usually, the immigrants do not have problems with the numbers, except with the numbers 3, 13, 30, 300... It is estimated that the difficulties in pronunciation of these numbers is because the phonemes 'θ' and 'ð' do not exist in the Macedonian language.

2. The Macedonian immigrants in Canada quickly learn the English nouns connected with traffic and transportation. They are the following: car, bus, street car, ticket, highway, parking lot, traffic light, traffic sign, lane, stop sign and others.

It should be mentioned that the greater part of these nouns are not found in their Macedonian vocabulary, and therefore such words become part of the immigrants' everyday language. Macedonian suffixes and prefixes are added depending on which category the noun belongs to. The following expressions are used:

"Бил вози street car" - Bill drives a street car.

"Питер патува со car-от - Peter travels by car.

"На parking lot-от има бас" - There is a bus in the parking lot.

"Тој застава на traffic light-от. - He stopped at the traffic light.

"Купив два ticket-и за вечерашниот dance" - I bought two tickets for tonight's dance.

"Car-от е на parking-от" - The car is in the parking lot.

"Мајк купи нов car" - Mike bought a new car.



3. In the process of creolisation, the following nouns connected with the house and parts of the home are adopted in the immigrants' vocabulary:

The noun 'kitchen' is the most familiar word of the Macedonian women. That is probably because the kitchen in some of the villages was not a part of the house, but was an annex to the house and was used especially during the summer. In addition, the following nouns are a part of their everyday language: room, living room, sitting room, building, basement, garage, carpet, yard, floor, flat, bathroom, cupboard, veranda and others. These are some of the expressions that the immigrants use:

"Џими има многу nice basement" - Jimmy has a nice basement.

"Валтер има swimming pool во yard-от" - Walter has a swimming pool in the yard.

"Дон има два basement-и" - Don has two basements.

"Јас спијам во тој room" - I sleep in that room.

"Овој е новиот carpet" - This is the new carpet.

"Децата се во yard-от" - The children are in the yard.

"Валтер прави fence-и" - Walter makes fences.

4. Creolisation of Macedonians speech is also present in the nouns connected with food and nutrition, such as: beefsteak, chicken, toast, fruit, juice, pork chops, hamburger, cheeseburger, lunch, using them in the following expressions:

"Питер прави hamburger-и" - Peter makes hamburgers.

"Купив fruit-а за lunch-от." - I have bought fruit for lunch.

"Имам juice од јаболка" - I have some apple juice.

"Тој е owner на steakhouse." - He is an owner of a steakhouse.

5. The most characteristic process of creolisation of Macedonian speech in Canada is the case of changing personal names and surnames to Canadian ones, or as it is widely known, the American version, wherever possible. Because the English-speaking people have difficulties in pronouncing the Macedonian (Slavic) names, the Macedonian immigrants usually change their names as follows:

a) Male names

Марко	becomes	Mike
Васил	becomes	Bill
Ристо		Chris
Сталин		Stanley



Јован	John
Јордан	John
Цветан	Charlie
Михајло	Michael
Јандрија	Andy
Борис	Bob
Богоја	Bob
Спиро	Spero
Славе	Steve
Стево	Steve
Јосиф	Joe
Слободан	Frank
Љупчо	Louis
Маноли	Mark
Павле	Paul
Доне	Tony
Кирил	Carl
Пандо	Pete
Владо	Walter
Никола	Nick

b) Female names

Helen	becomes	Florence
Илинка		Elenka
Марија		Mary
Ристана		Christy
Голаба		Dove

c) Surnames

Павлов	becomes	Paul
Иванов	becomes	Evan
Младенов		Mlalden
Паспалов		Pissol
Весилев		Basil
Бранов		Brown



d) Surnames relating to places and other names

Lerinski, Pirinski, Radin, Talin, Stojchin, Katin, Moriovche.

6. The process of creolisatoin of the Macedonian language in the field of sport is also present in Canada. There are many nouns from sports games that are borrowed from English, such as: bowling a bowler, hockey, golf, soccer club, out, skiing, competition, tournament, and the like. Thus, the Macedonian immigrant in Toronto will say:

“Bill е најдобар hockey player” - Bill is the best hockey player.

“Македонците имаат soccer club” - The Macedonians have a soccer club.

“Тој оди на bowling во Thornklife “ - He goes bowling in Thornkliff

7. There is creolisation of the Macedonian speech of different words of events and the following nouns are used: office, book, bank, club, picnic, hall, party, boyfriend, girlfriend, present, stage, publication, airport, City Hall, Scientific Center. Thus the immigrant will say:

“Имам book во Royal Bank” - I have a saving account (book) in the Royal Bank.

“Бев вчера на party” - I was at a party yesterday.

“Мери има boyfriend” - Mary has a boyfriend.

“Manager-от ми даде present за Christmas” - The manager gave me a present for Christmas.

8. There is also a number of English verbs adopted in Macedonian speech, such as: to drive, to shop, to dance, to clean, to know, to like, to thank, to wash, to phone, to call, to rent, and the like. These verbs are used in such cases:

“Mike ja like-a Elizabeth” - Mike likes Elizabeth.

“Helen dance-a” - Helen dances.

“Suzy го ис-clean-a living room” Suzy cleaned the living room.

“Pete drive-a убав car” - Pete drives a nice car.

“Ние shop-аме во Eatons” - We do our shopping at Eaton’s.

“Му phone-ав на John” - I phoned John.

“Таа rent-a еден flat” - She rented a flat.

9. There is a number of expressions which are adopted in the language of the immigrant, such as: Thank you; I do not know’ Do not worry; Oh, yes; Oh, no; Sure; Excuse me; Please; Sorry, and others. These expressions are used in some of the cases:



"Thank you за presen-to." - Thank you for the present.

"Oh, yes, ќе ти phone-ам утре." - Oh, yes, I will phone you tomorrow.

"Sure, ќе дојдам." - Sure, I will come.

"Do not worry за ticket-ите, ги добив." - Do not worry about the tickets, I've received them.

"Please, дај ми еден whisky" - Please, give me one whisky,

"I am sorry што ти вела." - I am sorry to say.

10. This is a telephone conversation between two Macedonian ladies who do not work but look after their grandchildren:

- Good morning, Петкано. Ти phone-ам да те прашам како да го платам bill-от за garbage-от и да ти кажам дека John ќе оди до hospital-от да и направи visit на girlfriend-ката на Louis."

(I am phoning you just to ask you how to pay the garbage bill and to inform you that John will go to the hospital to visit Louis' girlfriend.)

- Thank you, Божано, право да ти кажам ич добро не се feel-ам.

(Thank you, Bozhano, to tell you the truth that I do not feel well.)

- Денес имам headache." (I have a headache today.)

- Да бидам honest, не знам како се плаќаат bill-овите, а Mike и John отидоја со car-от на airport-от и кога ќе се вратат ќе дојдам на кафе кај тебе.

(To be honest, I do not know how to pay the bills, and Mike and John are at the airport, when they will return I will come to you to drink coffee together.)

- A сега, good bye.

-(And now, good bye.)

It should be mentioned that the creoled language of the Macedonian immigrants in Canada is mostly used by the first generation, while the second and third generations are mostly bilingual. The generation which is born in Canada clearly speaks Macedonian till the first grade in the English schools.

After that, English becomes the first language, while Macedonian in many cases is only spoken as a second language. Usually, the second generation speaks their Macedonian with English accent, and of course the range of their vocabulary is limited.

The Author



APPENDIX



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SLAVÈ KATIN - MEMBER OF LITERARY SOCIETIES IN THE DIASPORA (1)

The literary society "*Miladinov Brothers*" works as part of the ecclesiastical municipality "*St. Kliment Ohridski*" in Toronto. It was established on March 6, 1987. The first literary evening was held in May 1987 on the occasion of the 126th anniversary of the publication of the famous "*Collection of the Miladinov Brothers*" and in honor of the establishment of the society.

Then on July 1, 1989, the Society printed the first publication "Literary Thought". In the first issue of this magazine, all members of the company are represented with one poem each. The second issue of "Literary Thought" was published the following year, and in it the members of the society are represented with several poems each.

The third issue appeared in 1990, and in September 1991, the fourth issue was released. In the same year, the book of poetry by the members of this literary society was published under the title "*Tragi vo vremeto*" (Traces in Time), and in 1993 the work under the title "*Glas od dalecinata*" (Voice from afar) was published.

In 2001, the poetry collection "*Mostovi*" (Bridges) was published, in which all the members are represented with several poems. It is published by "*Makedonska Iskra*" from Skopje, and editor in charge of the poetry collection is Slavè Katin.

It should be particularly noted that since May 1990 the Society has been the organizer and host of the "*Days of Macedonian Culture*" event, which has become a traditional form and content in its work and action. Not infrequently, their guests and collaborators were writers, cultural and scientific workers from the republic, and they also became honorary members: Ante Popovski, Orde Ivanovski, Bozin Pavlovski, Blaze Ristovski, Meto Jovanovski, Jordan Plevnesh, Vera StojchevskaAntic, Kole Mangov, Slavè Nikolovski-Katin, Ljubisa Georgievski, Petar Temelkovski, Petre M. Andreevski, Vangel Bozinovski, Kata Misirkova Rumenova, Ilinden Spase, Rade Siljan and others. There is no affair, commemoration or celebration of important events or individuals from Macedonian history and culture in which these creators and aficionados of the written word do not participate, and which are held in Canada or in the United States of America. Lasting, and the most important thing for them, is their bond with the homeland.



Cooperation with the Writers' Society of Macedonia, the traditional participation in the Struga Poetry Evenings, Racin Meetings, articles have been published on the pages of Macedonian newspapers, magazines and literary periodicals, and other activities have been included.

The forty members of the Literary Society "*Miladinov Brothers*" are workers, intellectuals, pupils, students, pensioners... They are a group of chosen ones who fight and survive with the strength and power of the Macedonian word; by the way, let's note that several of them write in English and spread the truth about Macedonia in the world. Their creativity, both in the past and today, represents a necessary and essential activity of their own persistence in the history of the world. And their main weapon is the Macedonian literary language.

The Macedonian Literary Association "*Grigor Prlichev*" from Sydney, on the other hand, was formed on March 31, 1978, in order to bring closer and unite the Macedonian emigrants in Australia who actively participate in the field of literature; to preserve and cultivate the Macedonian literary language and Macedonian literature. In order to achieve these goals, the Association undertook various activities such as organizing cultural and literary meetings, seminars, prize competitions for the "Prlichev Award", publishing the magazine "*Povod*", establishing a Library with a reading room and archive department and publishing books in the Macedonian and English languages written by its members.

From the very beginning, the Association was actively involved in organizing Days of Macedonian Culture, film festivals, exhibitions, seminars and conferences, poetry meetings, theater evenings, public protests, debates and publishing written notes in the struggle to preserve the Macedonian identity, seeking human rights for Macedonians in the enslaved part of Macedonia and appeals to support the right to self-determination of the Macedonians in Australia and to stop the discriminatory policy of the European Community.

For the past over forty years, the Association has successfully held annual poetry and short story award-winning competitions for adults and children, through which poets and story-tellers are encouraged to participate; each year the Association organizes several poetry-literary meetings to mark its anniversary as well as the Macedonian national days "Ilinden", the poet Prlichev, the political revolutionary Goce Delchev and the promotion of books.

On March 31, 1917, the 39th anniversary of the establishment of the Society was celebrated in the premises of the "*Grigor Prlichev*" Literary Society. At the meeting, the famous writers from Macedonia, Slavè Nikolovski-Katin and Trajche Kacarov, were declared honorary members of the Society. They have been cooperating with the Society and promoting it for several decades.

The Book "Mirror"

SLAVE KATIN – LIFE TIME MEMBER OF THE “ATANAS BLIZNAKOV” FOUNDATION (2)

Atanas Bliznakov's role and work will remain eternal. He is the first and only humanist and donor of such a large foundation. Therefore, the saying that the “*Atanas Bliznakoff*” Foundation is permanent, of great importance and with great perspectives, is no coincidence. It is widely known and recognized, not only in Macedonia, but also beyond.

The “*Atanas Bliznakoff*” Foundation at the University “*St. Cyril and Methodius*” in Skopje to provide scholarships to talented students who show distinguished results in the course of their studies was established by the Decision of the University Council, adopted at the 148th session of 18.4.1977, based on the personal wish of our compatriot Atanas Bliznakov, as well as his last will and testament, from where other similar foundations are expected in the future.

Atanas Bliznakov lived in Gary, Indiana, USA for more than half a century. He returned to Macedonia in 1976 together with his faithful companion, his wife Slavka, and immediately set about realizing his old wish: to put his hard work earned in distant America into the function of creating material conditions for the study of our students.

Thus, this wish of his came true in 1977 with the establishment of the “*Atanas Bliznakoff*” Foundation at the University “*St. Cyril and Methodius*” in Skopje.

Since the establishment of the “*Atanas Bliznakoff*” foundation, more than 450 students from all higher education institutions have received scholarships, of which 350 have already graduated, some of them have also obtained high scientific degrees: masters and doctors of science. .

University “*St. Cyril and Methodius*” in Skopje is eternally grateful to Atanas Bliznakov and his name occupies the first place on the Memorial plaque of donors, made as a sign of appreciation and gratitude to all who made a significant contribution to the establishment and development of the creative growth of the University.

Secondarily, with the Decision of the University Council, adopted at the 148th session held on April 18, 1977, and based on the personal wish of Atanas Bliznakov, the Atanas Bliznakoff Foundation was founded at the University of “*St. Cyril and Methodius*” in Skopje for awarding scholarships to students who show particular results in their studies.



Expressing his bond with Macedonia and with the University "*St. Cyril and Methodius*" in Skopje, the late Atanas Bliznakov, with exceptional delight and willingness, put his hard earned funds, obtained in distant America to the function of creating material conditions for the study of students at the University of Skopje.

Scholarships are given to students for the academic months during the year, from September 1 to July 30. The fund has its own seal and stamp, the seal is circular, in the middle of which is the emblem of the University, and the following text is written around it: Fund "*Atanas Bliznakoff*" at the University "*St. Cyril and Methodius*" - Skopje.

From the funds of the "*Atanas Bliznakoff*" Fund, scholarships are awarded to hardworking and talented students who show results in their studies as recognition and stimulation in their further work. The selection of the scholarship holders is made through a competition, based on unique criteria.

All the assets of the Fund are kept in a bank with headquarters in Skopje and in Chicago and are named: Fund "*Atanas Bliznakoff*" at the University "*St. Cyril and Methodius*" - Skopje.

Furthermore, the "*Atanas Bliznakov*" foundation at the "*St. Cyril and Methodius*" University in Skopje is the first of its kind in Macedonia, which has existed for 44 years and which creates great interest among students, the public in the Republic of Macedonia and among Macedonian expatriates abroad.

That, above all, is the pride and joy of its donors Atanas Bliznakov and his wife Slavka; a gift for the youth and for Macedonia, but also an incentive for other benefactors, regardless of where they live, to help them speed up the economic and cultural development in their country.

The foundation has its own Statute according to which it operates. The Board of Directors, whose president is the rector of the University "*St. Cyril and Methodius*" in Skopje, and the vice president and lifelong member is the author of these lines, Slavè Katin.

Two monographic works have been written about the life and work of Atanas and Slavka Bliznakov. The monograph "*Atanas Bliznakov*" (2000), in the Macedonian language, published by the Rectorate of the University "*St. Cyril and Methodius*" and the then Ministry of Emigration of the Republic of Macedonia by Slavè Nikolovski-Katin and the monograph "*Atanas Bliznakov*" (2017), in Macedonian and in English, published by the Rectorate of the University "*St. Cyril and Methodius*" also by Slavè Katin

The "*Atanas Bliznakoff*" Foundation is managed by the Foundation Council. The Foundation Council consists of representatives of the University "*St. Cyril and Methodius*" and lifelong member Slavè Nikolovski-Katin, who has been a volunteer for forty years. In his absence, his daughter-in-law, Prof. Dr. Radmila Chrcева Nikolovska, professor at the Veterinary Faculty, is the deputy.

The Author

SLAVÉ KATIN - WINNER OF THE "CHARTER FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT" AWARD AT THE PELAGONIAN CULTURAL – SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS (3)

The Council of the Pelagonian Meetings headed by the President Dr. Vesna Kalpakovska at its session on May 17, 2022 decided to award the "Charter for Lifetime Achievement" award to the publicist Slavé Katin for his comprehensive work, writings, achievements and contribution to science, culture, journalism, religion and social life. The award was officially presented to him at the traditional Pelagonian meetings in October 2022.

The event "*Pelagonian cultural-scientific meetings*" is of great importance for the Municipality of Novaci, for the Bitola region and in general for the preservation of the cultural-scientific heritage in Macedonia. The bearers of the activity are famous writers, scientific creators and other culturologists who, with their personal work, have given exceptional contribution to the survival of the Meetings. Pelagonian meetings are held every year, usually in the first half of October, where fifty participants from different fields perform at each meeting, whose papers are printed in anthologies.

The "*Pelagonian Cultural-Scientific Meetings*" initiative was made official on September 20, 2000 in the Matric and University Library "*Sveti Kliment Ohridski*" in Bitola, when its initiative board was officially constituted and when the governing body of the Meetings, the Executive Board, was elected. Board Members are famous writers, poets, artists, university professors and scientific creators.

In 2018, the Council made a decision to introduce a special award "*Golden Class for Macedonian Ascension*", which is usually awarded to famous authors who, with their work, affirm the Macedonian language and culture abroad. This year's winner of the "*Golden Class for Macedonian Ascension*" award is Victor Bivell from Sydney. He is an Australian of Macedonian origin who dedicates his life to the Macedonian diaspora in Macedonia and the Macedonian people with special emphasis on the events in Aegean Macedonia.



His name and work are well known among Macedonians in Australia and among Macedonian expatriates around the world. He is a well-known journalist, notable publisher, editor and publicist. His portal "Pollitecon" is a mirror of truth about culture, history and the fight for basic human rights of Macedonian people in Greece.

According to the biographical data of the winner of the "Charter for Lifetime Achievement" award of the publicist Slavè Nikolovski - Katin, who is known simply as Slavè Katin and is a great enthusiast about his native Prespa and Ohrid, ethnic Macedonia and the Macedonian people, as well as the Macedonian Orthodox Church - Ohrid Archdiocese and in the Macedonian diaspora all over the world.

He is known to the Macedonian and international public for his numerous publications, journalistic and scientific works which are dedicated, principally, to ethnic Macedonia and the life of Macedonians in the diaspora.

Slavè Katin does not belong to a political party, as he is a member of ethnic Macedonia, Macedonian people in the diaspora and the Macedonian Orthodox Church-Ohrid Archdiocese (MOC-OA), which as an institution plays a significant role in the inclusion and cohesion of Macedonians outside of Macedonia, especially in overseas countries worldwide.

In the course of his work and creative activity, he published sixty publications, lexicographic editions, translations from Macedonian to English and vice versa. He is also the author of over five thousand journalistic texts and other units from science, feuilletons, reports, reviews, portraits, translations from literature, language, religion and culture in English and Macedonian, as well as other types of texts and materials that are published in the country and in the world.

He has participated in about sixty symposia, tribunes, conferences and other types of sessions in the country and in the world, where he has presented, mainly, essays related to culture, literature, language and religion, as well as informational and other activities of Macedonian emigrants in overseas countries as well as in Western European countries. Новаџи / Novaci.

The Author

AWARD FOR “LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT IN CREATIVITY” FOR SLAVÉ KATIN AT “THE 49TH LJUBOJNO EXPATRIATES’ GATHERINGS” (4)

On August 1 and 2, 2022, “*Ljubojno Ilinden expatriates’ gatherings*” celebrated 49 years of its existence. This confirms the fact that they represent a significant emigrant manifestation not only for Ljubojno and Prespa, but also for the Republic of Macedonia.

Ilinden is that glorious day of all the days and holidays of Macedonia that celebrates its libertarian spirit. It is a magnificent day of the national Macedonian desire for fighting and freedom of Macedonia. That’s why that big day for all Macedonians from ethnic Macedonia makes Ljubojno the most beautiful, the happiest and the most attractive place. On Ilinden in Ljubojno, people play and sing, eat and drink, feel the warm hospitality and cordiality from all those who come to meet and mingle for Ilinden in the beautiful Dolna Prespa.

This year, several thousand emigrants from overseas and from the European Union, Prespa natives living throughout Macedonia, a large number of Macedonians from the Aegean part of Macedonia who live all over the world, together with visitors and expatriates from other villages, tourists from Pretor, Slivnica, Dolno Dupeni and Krani, as well as a large number of returnees from Prespa, Bitola, Ohrid, Lerin and from Mala Prespa gathered in Ljubojno on Ilinden.

It was on Ilinden in Ljubojno that the turbulent past filled with defiance and struggle for survival stood out with pride. It is the result of the fact that on the first Ilinden, stormy and dramatic events took place, and during the occupation, Ljubojno was one of the hotspots of the revolutionary movement and the first territory in Prespa that was liberated.

Furthermore, as a result of the freedom of Macedonia and the Macedonian people, on November 15, 1945, the school in Ljubojno became the second school in Macedonia, after the one in the Kichevo village of Podvis, where classes were held in the mother tongue. It should be noted that from the liberation to today, over 6,000 students passed through “*Dimitar Vlahov*” school. With that, the school became a witness to a significant part of the Macedonian



history of education. For all of us who received our eight-year education in that school, the foundation of our education was laid there, from which the paths of the future opened up.

Unfortunately, time has taken its toll. Today there is great excitement for every visitor to Ljubojno when they see the ruined building of the "Dimitar Vlahov" school. Especially for us from Ljubojno, the sight of the school is thrilling, because it was the originator of schooling and the educational processes of generations of students, teachers and educators that we all remember.

Now, from the "Dimitar Vlahov" school building only parts of the entrance and the outer walls of the former massive building with a distinctive architecture remain. The school has no ceiling, doors and windows, and instead of classrooms, the interior is overgrown with plants resembling wild animals' shelter.

The wooden stairs that led from the ground floor to the classrooms on the first floor, which all of us students and teaching staff fondly remember, are gone. There, in the premises of the "Dimitar Vlahov" school building, 77 years ago, the first lesson in native language was held, as evidenced by a memorial - plaque placed at the former entrance of the school. Thanks to the memorial plaque, which was placed in 2004 by educators and former students in honor of the 60th anniversary of Macedonian language teaching.

"Ljubojno Ilinden Expatriates' Gatherings" are held in the center, known as Polena in Ljubojno on the first and second of August. However, this year, a literary meeting was held in the yard of the old school "Dimitar Vlahov", where Prof. Violeta Achkoska, and the journalist and publicist Vele Mitanski as well as the director of the "Grigor Prlichev" Library in Ohrid, Milcho Jovanoski, spoke about some of Slavè Katin's works.

On that occasion, the long-time organizer of the "Ljubojno expatriate gatherings" Bosko Rajchovski-Pelisterski presented the "Lifetime Achievement in Creativity Award" to Slavè Katin

The Author

SLAVÉ KATIN – RECIPIENT OF THE “KRSTÉ PETKOV MISIRKOV” AWARD FROM THE ASSOCIATION OF JOURNALISTS OF MACEDONIA IN 1991 (5)

The Association of Journalists of Macedonia (AJM) is an association of professional journalists from the Republic of Macedonia. It was founded on February 17, 1946 in Skopje as an Association of Professional Journalists of the People's Republic of Macedonia.

“On February 17, 1946 in the hall of the Peoples' City Board of Skopje and upon call of the Action Board for formation of an Association of Professional Journalists of Socialist Republic of Macedonia, the journalists of the following Skopje redactions gathered: Nova Makedonija, Trudbenik, Edinstvo, Radio Skopje and the branch office of Tanjug Agency founded the first assembly of journalists in the history of Macedonia. Following the discussion for president of the Assembly of Journalists of RM, Mito Hadjivasilev Jasmin, editor-in-chief of Nova Makedonija daily, was unanimously elected for its first president. Asen Todorov, editor-in-chief of Tanjug branch office and Pietro Janura, editor-in-chief of Fljaka e Vlazrimit were elected Vice Presidents, Dejan Aleksikj-head of Tanjug branch office was elected Secretary, Toso Skartov, member of Nova Makedonija board was elected cashier. The assembly elected Plenum, Supervisory Board and Council of Honour. Dimitar Vlahov, Pavel Satev, Bane Andreev, Alekso Murtalkov, Dimitar PopEftimov, Kiro Miljovski, Veselinka Malinska and Liljana Calovska were elected as honorary members”. (Excerpt from the monograph “Silver jubilee if the AJY-Assembly of Journalists of Yugoslavia).

AJM was founded in 1946 and is an independent, autonomous, non-governmental and non-partisan association, whose goal is to be a promoter and protector of professional standards and freedom of expression.

It fights to defend the freedom of press, radio, television and other media;

It fights against their abuse, the creation of monopolies and any forms of censorship that affects the determination of truth, complete, unbiased, updated public information;



AJM aims to protect and promote the freedom of rights and responsibilities of journalists, based on the Constitution and laws of the Republic of Macedonia, Statute and acts of AJM, as well as international documents concerning the freedom of public media, and the exercise of expression and information as basic human rights;

Representation of its members, representation before the community, active participation in the preparation of legislation and international conventions of interest to the profession and defense of the professional interest in regards to the Code of Journalists of Macedonia.

From 1988 to 1992, Slavè Nikolovski - Katin was the secretary of AJM, and the president was the journalist Fidanka Tanaskova. He was also an accredited journalist from Macedonia for Melbourne for a period of three years and for "Megjunarodna politika" from Belgrade. The majority of his oeuvre of materials relates to and is connected with the activities and life of the Macedonian Orthodox Church communities in Australia, Canada, the USA and the European Union, as well as Macedonian expatriates overseas and in European countries, and about 50 translations from Macedonian to English in the column "From month to month" in the magazine "Makedonija" refer to the cultural, political and social life in the Republic of Macedonia.

As a result of his involvement in innovation, culture, religion and spiritual living. Slavè Katin is the recipient of a large number of awards and recognitions from numerous organizations, societies, institutions, churches and church municipalities in the Republic of Macedonia and abroad. He is also the winner in 1991 of the most prestigious award "Krstè Petkov Misirkov" of the Association of Journalists of Macedonia in the field of journalism.

The Author

UMD WASHINGTON "2022 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD" TO SLAVÈ KATIN (6)

Following the proposal of the president of the organization United Macedonian Diaspora (UMD) from Washington, United States of America, Metodija A. Koloski, the Board of Directors, whose chairman is Stojan Nikolov, unanimously awarded the global "Lifetime Achievement Award for 2022" to the famous publicist, journalist and analyst for the Macedonian diaspora, Slavè -Katin. The award will be presented to him at the 5th UMD Global Conference in Skopje, which is expected to be held in July 2022.

In the written notice of January 11, 2022, it is said that with the global UMD "*Lifetime Achievement Award for 2022*", the most influential non-governmental organization of Macedonian expatriates, recognition is given to outstanding individuals who have made a significant contribution to Macedonia, Macedonian people and society in general. With great respect for Slavè Katin and his dedicated work to 54 Славè Катин- "*Озлегалo*" Slavè Katin - „*Mirror*" the Macedonian community in the Diaspora and his numerous and significant achievements, the UMD Management Board unanimously chose him as the recipient of this award for 2022.

According to UMD, which advocates honoring all individuals who have contributed to Macedonia, this year's award is given to Slavè Katin, known simply as Slavè Katin, a publicist, journalist and analyst for the Macedonian diaspora. He does not belong to a political party, as he is a member of ethnic Macedonia, Macedonian people in the diaspora and the Macedonian Orthodox Church-Ohrid Archdiocese (MOC-OA), which as an institution plays a significant role in the inclusion and cohesion of Macedonians outside of Macedonia, especially in overseas countries USA, Canada, Australia as well as in the European Union.

Slavè Katin is known to the Macedonian and international public for his numerous publications, journalistic and scientific works which are dedicated, principally, to ethnic Macedonia and the life of Macedonians in the diaspora. Furthermore, his work and achievement refer to a number of other aspects related to Macedonian culture, literature, language, history, journalism and religion. He is the author of sixty publications, 22 of which bear the name Macedonia, he is the author of twenty monographs about famous and established individuals from the diaspora and the Republic of Macedonia, ten works dedicated to religion and the MOC-OA, ten lexicographic publications



and hundreds of scientific papers, presented at various symposia and other gatherings in Macedonia and worldwide.

He is also the author of over five thousand published journalistic texts and other units from science, feuilletons, reports, reviews, portraits, translations from literature and science and more. He is also the author of over five thousand published journalistic texts and other units from science, feuilletons, reports, reviews, portraits, translations from literature and science, language, religion and culture in English and Macedonian, as well as other types of texts and materials that have been published in the country and in the world, some of which can be seen or read on his website: www.Slavèkatin.com

As a prolific author, journalist, translator, publicist and defender of Macedonian truth with a multidecade career, Slavè Katin is one of the 55 Славè Катин - „Оглегалo“ Slavè Katin - „Mirror“ S C most distinguished and valued members of the Global Macedonian Community. He leaves a lasting and gratifying impression on every person he meets.

His expertise about Macedonia, about the MOC-Ohrid Archdiocese and for the Macedonian diaspora are quite distinguished. By publishing numerous works in the field of religion, culture and history of Macedonia and the Macedonian people, his goal is to present and affirm the Macedonian truth, especially in the diaspora.

The UMD global “Lifetime Achievement Award” recognizes outstanding individuals who have made a significant contribution to Macedonia, the Macedonian people and society in general. As a tribute to the dedicated work of the Macedonian community and recognition of his many achievements, the UMD Board of Directors unanimously chose Slavè Katin to be the recipient of this highest recognition of the organization United Macedonian Diaspora (UMD), based in the USA and Canada, with branches in Europe and Australia.

As a productive author, journalist and translator with a multidecade career, Slavè Katin is one of the most respected and valued members of our Global Macedonian community. He left a lasting and unforgettable impression on every person he met. His expertise on Macedonia, on the Macedonian Orthodox churches in the world and on the Macedonian diaspora is worthy of respect. With the publication of numerous works on the diaspora, religion, culture and history of Macedonia, he aims in his work, above all, to present the Macedonian truth.

Slavè Katin's achievements and contributions are truly numerous and immense. UMD could not find a better way to honor him and express gratitude for his achievement as a member of our Macedonian community, therefore, the UMD Organization awarded him the global “Lifetime Achievement Award for 2022”, among other things, it is said in the notice of the president of UMD, Metodija A. Koloski.

The publication “Mirror”

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Published by
Macedonian Iskra (Spark) – Skopje
Macedonian Literary Association “Grigor Prlichev” – Sydney

Editor-in-chief
Slave’ Katin

Translated by
Risto Stefov
Slave’ Katin
Zorica Angelovska-Kovachecic
Vesna Stefkovska
Violeta Hristovska

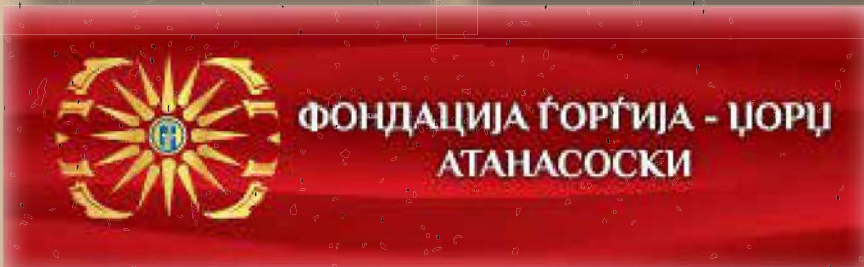
Reviewers:
Dushan Ristevski-Macedon
Victor Bivel
George Atanasoski

Grafic design
Kontura-Skopje

Printed by
Evropa 92-Kochani

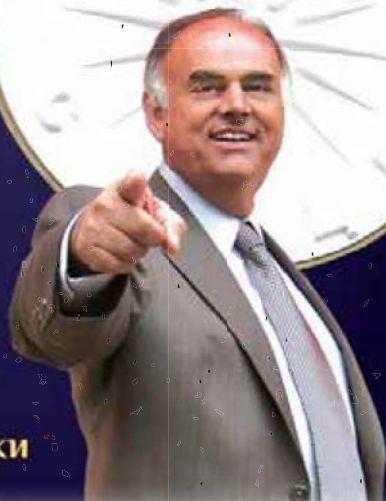
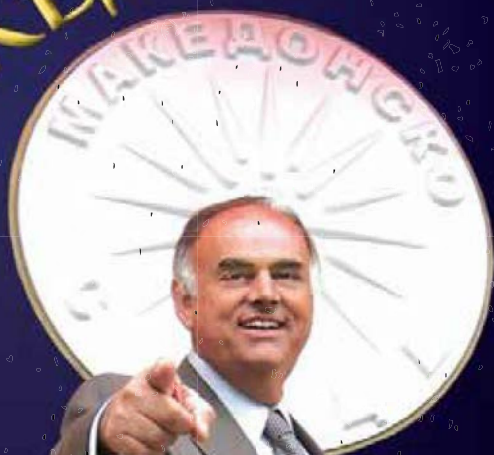
CIP - Каталогизација во публикација Национална и универзитетска библиотека “Св. Климент Охридски”, Скопје







САМО СОНЦЕТО Е ПОСТАРО ОД МАКЕДОНИЈА



Ѓорѓија Џорџ Атанасоски



