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George Vlahov

Editorial

From AMHRC Review to MHR Review – not a Revolution, just another Sensible Improvement...

Dear readers, you will have noticed a change in the title of the *Review*. The AMHRC and MHRMI have been cooperating very closely, for over two decades; so it should be no surprise that our organisations recently made a decision to issue the *Review* jointly. Though as indicated by the subheading, this is not a 'revolution' and in more than one sense of the word.

The new title does not indicate a drastic alteration and nor does it signify a changeless circular motion. The content of the *Review* will continue developing along its established path; will remain available for electronic download without charge, on the websites of the AMHRC/MHRMI and we shall carry on publishing

it four times a year, a month after the end of each season. Thus this is *not* issue number one, but nine; however, the fact that MHRMI will now also be distributing a full colour hardcopy of the magazine to all of its members/supporters in Canada and North America in general, is obviously a significant novelty.

That said, I hope you find use in this issue of the *MHR Review*, which is 'bookended' by two relatively long 'looks' at events from Macedonia's past. The 'in between,' as is usual, possesses updates on our current activities, reports from our colleagues in the Balkans and highlights the artistic efforts of some Macedonians.

George Vlahov



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Dr. Panayote Dimitras



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Trotsky in 1915



One Hundred
Years Ago:

A Review of
Trotsky's
Journalism on
the Balkan
Wars and the
Partition of
Macedonia
1912-13

by George Vlahov

At the time of the Balkan Wars, Leon Trotsky, the 'permanent revolutionary', was seconded by a daily newspaper within the Russian empire to cover events first hand. Although it has been many years since I ploughed my way through the considerable and apparently complete collection of Trotsky's writings on the Balkan Wars published by Pathfinder/Monad Press in 1980; I thought it opportune, one hundred years on, to revisit this eyewitness source that seems to have been neglected by the Macedonian world. Of course Trotsky was a proponent of "revolutionary Marxism," a worldview that has been largely discredited; however, this should not lead the researcher of the past to conclude that his Balkan War correspondence is not worth reading, far from it. Moreover we must keep in mind that he was present in the capacity of a journalist earning a livelihood by preparing reports for the most popular newspaper in Kiev (*Kievan Thought*), at the time of the Balkan Wars.

Difficulties with State Censors

Trotsky experienced the cen-

sorial difficulties that all journalists covering wars encounter. His accounts did however reach their public destination; as did the 'shots' he fired at the state censors. Here is an extract from a very socially aware and concerned tirade delivered to the Bulgarian censors:

"Needless to say, you accept the military censorship uncritically as a necessary and salutary institution. I am not a military man, any more than you are, nevertheless I will allow myself to declare, contrary to the affirmations of so-called military experts, respectfully supported by the philistines of all countries, that your military censorship lacks any military significance whatsoever, and essentially serves non-military purposes. It is beyond doubt that, if there were no censorship, isolated facts might find their way into the European press which would in one way or another prove detrimental to your army; but they might equally well get through by private correspondence or personal conversation. And yet you haven't so far forbidden people to enter or leave the country. You consider it

possible to describe the European journalists as spies and marauders who have been sent to Bulgaria by the usurers of Europe. But be so kind as to appreciate that those among the journalists who hide the profession of espionage behind the mask of a war correspondent have hundreds of ways available to them for sending their messages wherever they may wish, evading dread your censorship.

Against the illegal, roundabout methods that are always open to employment by ill-intentioned persons, you censorship has always been quite helpless. All the more vigorously, however, has it acted against serious political journalists whose task is not to serve their respective general staffs but honestly to inform the public opinion of Europe. You wanted to force us to see with your eyes and hear with your ears, to think and write 'Bulgarian', and in a 'Bulgarian' spirit to lead Europe into error.

Your censorship has not pursued military aims, it has not been concerned to safeguard military secrets, but rather to

conceal 'secrets' of quite a different order: all the black spots, all the cruelties and crimes, all the infamies that accompany every war, and your war in particular. That is what you have striven above all to hide from Europe! You have indulged in the senseless dream of hypnotizing European public opinion and making it believe not what was true, not what you yourselves knew to be true, but what you wanted to get accepted as true.

Alas, your practical sense proved to be extremely short-sighted. Precisely now, when the question has shifted from the battlefield to the conference table and you are more than ever before in need of pressure by a sympathetic European democracy upon European diplomacy – precisely now dozens of correspondents, having left Bulgaria, are spreading in concentrated form, all over Europe, that half of the truth about which you forced us to remain silent for so long!

You defined your war as a crusade for civilization against barbarism. You strove, with your pencils and scissors, to adjust all our telegrams and correspondence to those two categories. But now Europe will learn that the path of the crusading army was marked by crimes that must evoke shudders and nausea in every cultured person, in everyone capable of feeling and thinking.

Perhaps, Mr. Todorov, you have no idea of what I am talking about? Perhaps you don't know that at the very beginning of the war your troops in the Rhodope sector destroyed by artillery fire a Pomak village with its entire population – houses and farms, people and animals, women and children? Don't tell me that this brutal act is to be explained by the bitterness felt by the soldiers against Muslim Bulgars who had allied themselves with the enemy. I know this explanation as well as you do. But the fact that a report of this medieval reprisal against the Pomaks was completely struck out by your military censorship; the fact that then, while this crime was still fresh, no voices were raised sufficiently loudly in protest and warning – this fact must inevitably have deprived your officers and soldiers of any restraint, and filled them with a sense of complete moral freedom from responsibility.

Your public life is still only in its cradle. Ele-

mentary political and moral concepts have as yet not been established among you. All the more obligatory is it for the advanced elements of your people to watch intransigently over the principles of democracy, the politics and morality of democracy. In the last analysis, the basic historical capital of every nation is the social and moral consciousness of the mass of the people. And if history has now charged your monarchy, your diplomats, and your generals with carrying out the task of clearing your historical path by means of bullets, shrapnel, and the bayonet, then you, in any case, regardless of what your attitude of principal may be toward war, should have undertaken the task of protecting the people's consciousness from all these poisonous dangers that victorious war brings with it. You did not do this: so much the worse for you!" (Trotsky, 1980: 280 – 285)

Doubtless Trotsky would have similar problems even today as all states involved in wars still attempt to justify the veiling of atrocities by referring to "national security" etc. The assertion made by Trotsky in regard to the infancy of Modern democratic cultural standards, could not be more pertinent; though we may note with irony that this is essentially the same problem that later (1917) led to the degeneration of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia – a process in which Trotsky himself played a leading role and precisely as a military man, at that. He failed to heed his own advice in connection with violence and immature Modern societies. Furthermore, during the course of WWII, the spread from the Soviet Union into the Balkans of what came to be referred to as the Stalinist Communist model, ensured that public life would remain in its cradle for a long time to come, in certain important respects.

Not 'Liberation' Wars

By 1912, the Christian population of Macedonia had been under Ottoman Muslim rule for over five centuries. They constituted the vast majority of the inhabitants and were treated as second class citizens; this was especially so in the case of the peasantry, who were consistently over exploited by Muslim landlords and often the victims of a 'Hobbesian' like state of lawlessness.

These facts provided the neighbouring

Christian states of Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece, a pretext for submitting a collective ultimatum to the Ottoman government on the 29 September 1912, demanding that it grant "autonomy" to Macedonia. The demand was rejected and the allies responded by declaring war against the Ottoman state on October 17/18 1912 and on May 3 1913, the Ottomans surrendered. The allies now defined autonomy/liberation as annexation. This was a very predictable outcome:

"The emancipation of the Macedonian peasantry from feudal landlord bondage was undoubtedly something necessary and historically progressive. But this task was undertaken by forces that had in view not the interests of the Macedonian peasantry but their own covetous interests as dynastic conquerors and bourgeois predators. A usurpation of historic tasks such as this is not at all an exceptional happening. ... But it is not at all a matter of indifference who undertakes this task and how. ... No, there is, consequently no need to idealise the Turkish regime ... in order to express at the same time one's uncompromising distrust of the uninvited 'liberators' and to refuse any solidarity with them. If Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha [the royal head of the Bulgarian government], leader of the 'Slav' cause in the Balkans, had been offered the choice: free peasants in an independent Macedonia or retention of feudal fetters in a Bulgarian Macedonia, he would, of course, have chosen the latter without hesitation. Proof of this is provided by the whole of his policy toward Macedonia over the last quarter of a century, as well as by the objective sense of things. You Slavophile Liberals advertised as a war of liberation a war which, in order to satisfy military and dynastic appetites, took as its point of departure the desire of the Macedonian peasantry for liberation. Not a struggle by the Macedonians for their own freedom, but a bloody speculation by the Balkan dynasties at the expense of Macedonia ..." (Trotsky, 1980: 325-326).

Also quite foreseeable was that the allies would begin to quarrel among themselves about how to divide Macedonia, as they did at the London Peace Conference. On the night of June 29/30 1913, Bulgaria decided to attempt to settle the matter by force and launched an attack against its

former allies, Greece and Serbia. In this second bout of fighting, Greece and Serbia joined forces and toward the end of it, the Ottomans and even Romania joined in against Bulgaria, which of course, was forced to surrender on July 21 1913. Thus when a settlement was reached by the signing of the Treaty of Bucharest on the 10th of August 1913, over 85% of Macedonia was taken by Greece and Serbia. To those who doubted that the second war was a likely outcome of the first, Trotsky responded:

“If you don’t see the link between today’s disgrace and yesterday’s ‘glory’, that’s because you imagine that in the Balkans somebody is conducting a policy and answering for its reasonableness. In actual fact, policy is making itself down there, just like an earthquake. It was precisely the first war, the ‘war of liberation,’ that reduced to insignificance, to a negligible quantity, all the factors of calculation and political discretion. Blind, unthinking spontaneity came into its own – not the benign spontaneity of awakened mass solidarity, which already has so many good deeds to its credit in history, but malign spontaneity, the resoluteness of which is only the other side of blind despair” (Trotsky, 1980: 327).

The source of this spontaneity was not just dynastic greed or the blood thirst and paranoia that all wars breed. The royal rulers of Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece, had motivated the hundreds of thousands of soldiers who fought in these wars with ‘patriotic’ propaganda campaigns, underpinned by an ethno-nationalist ‘justification’ for an expansion of state borders. The respective armies operated on the basis that Macedonia must become Bulgarian, Greek and Serbian – the fact that these desires did not in general exist among the Macedonians themselves, did not deter the invaders from attempting to carry out their ‘patriotic’ conviction (Carnegie Endowment, 1914:50-51, 59). Trotsky was fully aware of this and was particularly scathing of Bulgaria:

“It was these principles – imperialistic, not national – that also determined the whole of Bulgaria’s Macedonian policy. The aim was always the same – to annex Macedonia. The Sofia government supported the Macedonians only in so far as it could

thereby bind them to itself, and it betrayed those interests of theirs which might have estranged them from Bulgaria. The well-known Balkan politician and writer, Dr. C. Rakovsky, whom I have met again in Bucharest after an interval of two years, told me, along with many other pieces of information, the following extremely eloquent fact. In 1903-1904 the Bulgarian exarch was lobbying in Sofia for the establishment of a peasant’s bank in Macedonia. This was after the Ilinden rising, when chaos reigned in Macedonia and the Turkish landlords were ready to sell their estates to the peasants for a song. The Bulgarian government firmly rejected the



Dimitar Vlahov

exarch’s proposal, explaining that if the Macedonian peasants achieved a certain level of prosperity they would become deaf to Bulgarian propaganda. The same point of view was maintained by the Macedonian revolutionary organization which, especially after the crushing of the revolt, became finally transformed from a nationalist-peasant organization into a tool of the imperialist designs of the government in Sofia” (Trotsky, 1980:3650).

Dr. Christian Rakovsky, a leading Bulgarian Socialist, was a good source to seek reliable information from. He was personally familiar with leaders of the Macedonian national liberation movement, like Dimitar Vlahov (who had been involved with the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary

Organisation – IMRO, since before 1903). Indeed the two of them, along with others had written and published a manifesto opposing the Balkan Wars, on the eve of their commencement (Vlahov, 1970:169).

However, Trotsky is only partially correct here – it was only one faction of IMRO that became a tool of Bulgarian imperialism after the Ilinden uprising. At the time of the Balkan Wars, this faction was led by Hristo Matov and Todor Aleksandrov. Trotsky interviewed Matov during the course of the first Balkan War and Matov refused to commit himself to supporting Macedonian autonomy and admitted that his faction operates fully in the interests of the Bulgarian army (Trotsky, 1980:233-234). Trotsky was probably unfamiliar with the fact that other factions of the Macedonian liberation movement led by Sandanski, Pop Arsov and Chupovski, had remained loyal to the original IMRO ideal of an autonomous/independent Macedonia and had no qualms about publicly asserting it.

At the first war’s end, they attempted to organise resistance against the partition of Macedonia and advocated before the Great Powers of Europe for the organisation of a plebiscite in which the Macedonian people would be allowed to decide Macedonia’s fate. This is why they were constantly hounded, attacked and deported by the forces of the invading armies (Hristov, 1971:49-50; Pandevski, 1985:115; Gjorgjiev, 1997:143-151).

The Waging of the Second Balkan War

During the second war, Greek, Serbian and Bulgarian ‘patriotism’ were duly implemented – the inhabitants of Macedonia were not accepted as they were and tens of thousands were killed and deported; dozens of towns and villages were razed and the new rulers established governing bodies with imported officials to carry out programs of violent assimilation (see for example, Carnegie Endowment, 1914:163-164).

At the second Balkan War’s end some Russian and Balkan politicians attempted to take the focus away from these facts and make the claim that ‘Macedonia was at least now free’:

“ ‘Free!’ And to whom, pray, are the Mace-

donians to pay the costs of their **'liberation'**? And exactly how much do these costs amount to? How easily people operate with words, and not with living concepts, when they are not involved themselves! You...say that peace is not an end in itself and so on, but you are letting **your vision of reality be obscured. 'Free'!** Have you any idea what the areas that were recently the theatre of war have been turned into? All through those places a terrible tornado has raged, which has torn up, broken, mangled, reduced to ashes everything that man's labor had created, has maimed and crushed man himself, and mortally laid low the young generation, down to the baby at the breast and even further, to the foetus in the mother's womb. The Turks burned and massacred as they fled. The local Christians, where they had the advantage, burned and slaughtered as the allied armies drew near. The soldiers finished off the wounded, and ate up or carried off everything they could lay hands on. The partisans, following at their heels, plundered, violated, burned. And, finally, along with the armies, epidemics of typhus and cholera advanced across the **'liberated'** land (Trotsky, 1980:330)...This astonishing struggle, in which brutality was combined with heroism, has ended – how? With a perfidious agreement for the **partition of Macedonia**" (Trotsky, 1980:365).

Macedonia was located on the periphery of Modernity – caught within a rotting empire trying to maintain no longer practicable pre-Modern traditions and surrounded by extremely immature virulent forms of Modern ethno-nationalism. Unable to find the means to liberate itself, the result was a horrible explosion of violence, in which the supposed beneficiaries suffered most – both at the time and for decades afterwards. And it is the same ethno-nationalist tradition that is still maintained at present, which denies the human rights and even the very existence of Macedonians in Bulgaria and Greece today. Some scholars/authors who, rather recently, have referred to Macedonia's **"liberation"** post the 1912/13 Balkan Wars, really need to think more carefully about that which they choose to put down on paper.

Reinforcing Negative Balkan Stereotypes?

Trotsky's Balkan War's journalism is full of

vivid descriptions of politicians, soldiers and ordinary citizens – the writing is often so good, that it seems at times, as if one can actually hear, see and even smell, the goings on. As a committed Socialist, Trotsky was not only concerned about reporting on the latest results of the fighting, but also in capturing the parameters of a culture/society. He often did this inductively by moving from an analytical focus on the particular to the general – a methodology that many Sociologists still make use of today. Take for instance his description of an encounter between himself and his friend Dr. Christian Rakovsky and a Romanian politician:

"Simeone, Simeone!" my companion calls across the square, in the direction of the monument to Ovid, **"come over here...."** Then, to me: **"I'm going to introduce you now to a local notable, a very interesting personage, a political figure in the true Romanian style – just study him closely...."**

"Simeone" approaches our table. Despite his short stature, he looks very imposing. While we are being introduced, I survey this thickset man in an elegant summer suit, with black moustaches streaked with gray, the crafty-cheerful eyes of a southerner above a fleshy nose, a too-thick gold chain across his stomach, and a too large diamond on his left hand. A splendid specimen of a southerner! He looks about forty-five.

"Monsieur Simeone N., president du conseil general."

"Monsieur N.N., journaliste russe."

"Enchante!" says Simeone and makes a benevolent gesture in the manner of a grand seigneur.

Le president du conseil general is, in our terms, something like a chairman of a provincial zemstvo board. By political tendency Simeone is a **"Takist,"** that is, a Conservative-Democrat, a supporter of the present (1913) minister of the interior, Take Ionescu.

"How are things, Simeone?"

Things? Simeone is dissatisfied with things. In general, he is dissatisfied with the political situation. Everything is at sixes and sevens. In the recent municipal elec-

tions in Constanta the Liberals routed the Conservatives; the same will happen tomorrow in the elections for the department. The liberals are winning because they have energy and discipline. In the last analysis, the only real party in Constanta, as in the country as a whole, is *entre nous* {between us}, the Liberals.

"I'm Takist, but I tell you: we can't survive."

"Oh, but you've become quite a pessimist, I hardly recognize you, Simeone! . . . Tell us, a propos, is the zemstvo going to buy your lamps?"

Simeone ignores this question, the point of which escapes me.

"No, no, things are going badly. The Liberals have control of the banks, the priests, the teachers, they've got everything, they do as they like and get away with it. And we Takists are going to have to close up shop. That's the long and short of it!"

"Could you, please, Monsieur le president, explain to me why your party is called the Conservative-Democratic Party?"

"That's very simple. We're opposed to these old cliques that stop anybody else from getting into power; we're against the monopolist dynasties that rule this country's politics, both the Liberal one and the old Conservative one. We demand that two things be rewarded in political life: service and talent. Voila, monsieur, nos principes {There, sir, are our principles: talent and service. That's why we are democrats."

"But in what sense are you conservatives?" What is it that you want to conserve?"

"To conserve? We want . . . but it's quite simple: we want to protect our country . . . our people . . . our nationality."

"And the budget, Simeone, eh?"

"The budget? Of course! Que diable! {Devil take it!} Why should the budget be used for the benefit of the old cliques alone? No, the budget too, must show regard to two new principles: talent and service."

"All the same, what's happening about your lamps, Simeone?"

"But, really, it seems you've got my lamps on the brain! Leave them out of it, please – we're talking about politics now."

"Hm . . . hm."

"Mais, a propos, what do you think of our women?" the "president" asks me, out of the blue.

"Simeone, Simeone, surely we're talking about politics."

"Yes, yes! But do you, then, imagine that our women have nothing to do with politics, with Romanian politics? Tais-toi, mon vieux! {Quiet, my friend!} No, no, tell me, please, how do you like our women, eh?" As he asks me this question the president winks his left eye, and with it his forehead, lips, and moustaches.

"Mes meilleurs compliments pour vos femmes, monsieur le president {My highest compliments for your women, Mr. President!}, I reply with all civility, at the same time recalling that nearly all the Romanians I have met have asked me this question, almost as soon as we have begun to converse.

"They're the ones who are ruining Romania! Yes, write this down, if you are making a study of our country. Not the latifundia, not the budget, not militarism, but the women! I ask you – how can there be order in a country where there are so many, many lovely women, lovely in the fullest sense of the word, monsieur! There, over there, look – see, see, how she moves? Just watch her, eh? Eh?" At this point the chairman of the zemstvo board gives a few elucidations which do full honor to his southern imagination.

"But Simeone, Simeone, you're 62!"

"Sixty-two?" I exclaim, with sincere surprise. "Surely not?"

"Yes, monsieur, it's true. But, glory be to God, I'm not done for yet. I can still give a good account of myself. . . . Our women – remember this – are at once the cause and the harbinger of our coming ruin. Why? It's very simple. I must tell you – this is a very important factor in the whole question – that our women cannot be described inaccessible. No, no . . . and every politician, lawyer, and official here

tries to get for himself the very best woman he can. That's the source of our ruin: everybody spends twice and three times as much as he earns. The result is utter chaos in the state. There you have the key to Romanian politics: the women are leading the country to catastrophe."

"And is there no salvation, Monsieur le president?"

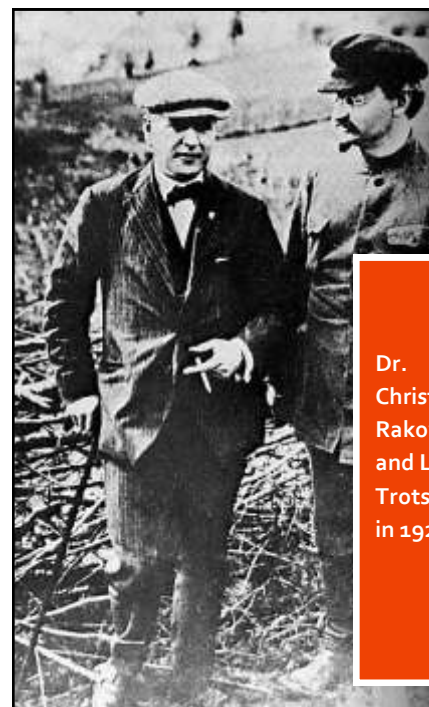
Simeone spreads his hands.

"I see none. The future looks dark to me. . . ." (Trotsky, 1980:437-439).

Trotsky's conclusion: *"Simeone is a national type. . . . He is not without wit, he is jovial and superficial; but he is also a sharpster, he knows all the tricks. He reveals-not without a personal interest in the matter-the superiority of Take Ionescu to the Eiffel Tower and the Statue of Liberty. He keeps a shop that sells lighting apparatus, and he does some business in these things with the zemstvo of which he is a chairman; and so he is not pleased when people ask him questions about lamps. The local police administration has its office in his house; and although Simeone is at daggers drawn with the prefect, he receives from the police a rent three times the usual amount for these rooms of his. Oh no, there are no flies on Monsieur le president du conseil general!*

Against this background of political sword swallows and verbal tightrope-walkers, the former circus acrobat Simeone Universul, now a leading provincial politician stands out, with his Chicago diamond ring on his finger, as no accidental case, but a symbolic figure. After that evening spent so pleasantly in the company of the "president", Romanian political mores . . . became intimately comprehensible to me" (Trotsky, 1980: 443).

*The sarcastic humour mixed in with the mention of cliques, patronage, uncontrolled lust, nepotism and corruption in general, makes a strong impression and still today, sounds awfully familiar. I am aware of the dangers of reinforcing negative Balkan stereotypes, as outlined by scholars like Maria Todorova (1997:184-189). Never-the-less there is little doubt at present, that **Simeone's lamps** signify an acute cultural problem throughout much*



Dr.
Christian
Rakovsky
and Leon
Trotsky
in 1924

of the Balkans. We have commented on this before (in the editorial of Review no.5) and we still think that the current generation of leaders need to make far more serious educational efforts to 'arm' the upcoming generation with the ability to implement a cultural shift. In other words, unlike Trotsky, it is a relatively peaceful/non-violent phenomenological type of 'revolution' that I am interested in seeing attempted.

George Vlahov

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Dimitrija Chupovski

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REDEFINING THE CAFE EXPERIENCE

MHRMI and AMHRC Reiterate Demand That Macedonia End Name Negotiations



Toronto, Canada and Melbourne, Australia (September 8, 2011)
- On the occasion of the Republic of Macedonia's 20th anniversary of its independence, Macedonian Human Rights Movement International (MHRMI) and the Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC) reiterate our demand that Macedonia immediately cease negotiations over its name.

It is a disgrace that Macedonia, by participating in the negotiations, is violating its own most basic human right, that of self-identification. It is reprehensible that the Western world, despite having recognized Macedonia, is insisting that Macedonia change its name.

MHRMI and AMHRC initiated the Our Name is Macedonia campaign in July 2010, an ad campaign which demands an end to the negotiations, and which has gained overwhelming support from Macedonians in the Republic of Macedonia and throughout the world.

As stated in the Our Name is Macedonia campaign, ***"We are winning. Over 130 countries have recognized Macedonia, including four of the five permanent UN Security Council members. We have the power to end this. Stop negotiating our own name".***

MHRMI and AMHRC demand that Macedonia vehemently defend our name and immediately end the name negotiations. Furthermore, we demand:

- an end to the "temporary reference" of "FYROM" or "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"
- that Macedonia revert to the original flag
- that Macedonia withdraws from the 1995 Interim Accord

Our organizations also:

- condemn every Macedonian government for capitulating to Greek racism and to the United States and Western Europe and continuing the name negotiations
- condemn the US government and Western European governments for threatening to withdraw "support" for Macedonia and demanding that it changes its name

Finally, MHRMI and AMHRC call on every Macedonian organization and individual to sign on to the Our Name is Macedonia campaign.

www.mhrmi.org/our_name_is_macedonia

Silence is not an option.
Our Name is Macedonia.



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22 ноември, 2011

ММДЧП и АМКЧП ги повикуваат Македонците од целиот свет да и' дадат поддршка на борбата за човекови права на Македонците во балканските земји.

ММДЧП и АМКЧП ги финансираат и ги организираат сите активности за остварување на човековите права на Македонците и директно соработуваат со секоја македонска организација за човекови права, вклучувајќи ги: **Виножито, ОМО „Илинден“ - ПИРИН, МАЕИ, Нова Зора, Народна Волја, Илинден Тирана, Домот на македонската култура** и сите останати.

Поддржувајќи не' нас, вие директно ја поддржувате борбата за остварување на човекови права за сите Македонци.

Ова се само неколку од многуте наши активности:

- ♦ Часови за Македонски јазик во Егејска Македонија и Албанија, вклучувајќи го и отворањето на нова градинка во Корча, Албанија;
- ♦ Покрај финансирањето на радио станицата во Лерин, неодамна се отвори и македонска телевизија во Корча;
- ♦ Поднесување на тужба против Грција за случајот „Деца бегалци“, за враќање на конфискуваните имоти, државјанства и финансиски

надоместоци;

- ♦ Финансирање на про-македонските весници и изданија во Егејска Македонија, Пиринска Македонија и Мала Преспа;
- ♦ Претставка до Европскиот суд за човекови права пресуди против Бугарија и Грција за кршење на човековите права на Македонците;
- ♦ Функционирање на канцеларии за човековите права на Македонците во Бугарија, Грција и Албанија;
- ♦ Организација на кампањата „Нашето име е Македонија“, со која се бара Македонија да ги прекине сите преговори околу името и
- ♦ Финансирање на успешните изборни кампањи на македонските кандидати во Бугарија, Грција и Албанија.

Исто така, силно лобираме за признавање на Македонија и македонските човекови права во Вашингтон, Отава, Канбера, Брисел и целиот свет, а особено:

- ♦ Средби со шефови на држави и пратеници од Канада, Америка, Австралија и европските држави;
- ♦ Средби со официјални лица за надворешни работи од Канада, Австралија, американскиот Стејт департамент, Советот на

Европа и многу други;

- ♦ Присуство на конференции за меѓународни човекови права во организација на Обединетите нации, ОБСЕ и други и
- ♦ Средби со амбасадорот во ОН, Нимиц со истакнување на нашето барање за поддршка од меѓународната заедница за прекин на "преговорите за името".

Македонците се организирани, полни со енергија и решени да ја продолжат нивната борба за универзалните човекови права. **Најголемиот предизвик со кој се соочуваме се финансиските проблеми.** Ве молиме дајте ни ја вашата поддршка со донација во [MHRMI Human Rights Fund](http://MHRMI.HumanRightsFund.org) или во [AMHRC's Macedonian Minorities Support Fund](http://AMHRC'sMacedonianMinoritiesSupportFund.org).

Однапред ви благодариме.

За повеќе информации контактирајте ги:

Македонското меѓународно движење за човекови права (ММДЧП) на 1-416-850-7125, info@mhrmi.org, www.mhrmi.org, twitter.com/mhrmi, facebook.com/mhrmi

Австралиско-македонскиот комитет за човекови права (АМКЧП) на +61 3 9329 8 9 6 0, info@macedonianhr.org.au, www.macedonianhr.org.au, facebook.com/AMHRC

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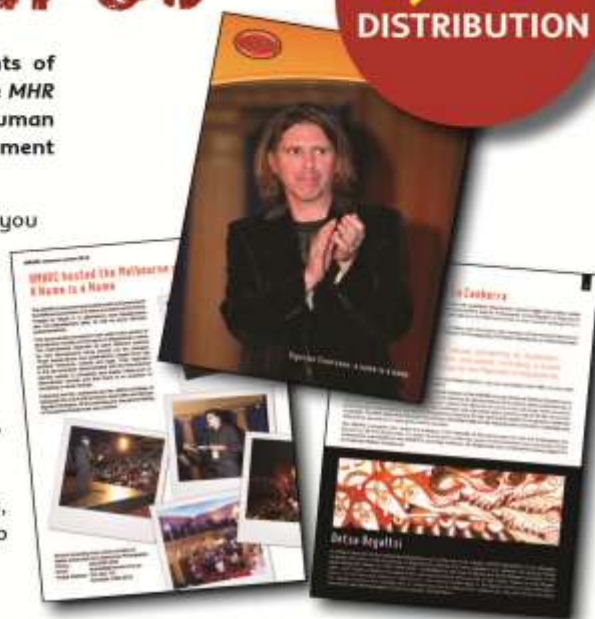
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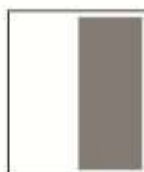
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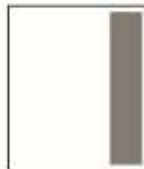
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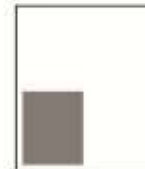
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MHRMI and AMHRC call on Macedonians throughout the world to show their support for human rights for Macedonians throughout the Balkans.

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

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

Among our many initiatives are:

- Macedonian language classes in Aegean Macedonia and Albania, including the opening of another new kindergarten class in Korca, Albania.
- In addition to the MHRMI/AMHRC-purchased and financed radio station in Lerin, we recently opened a TV station in Korca.
- The historic Detsa Begaltsi lawsuit against Greece for the return of confiscated property, citizenship and financial compensation.
- The funding of pro-Macedonian newspapers and publications in Aegean Macedonia, Pirin Macedonia and Mala Prespa
- The landmark European Court of Human Rights judgements against Bulgaria and Greece for violating Macedonian human rights.
- The operation of human rights offices for Macedonians in Bulgaria, Greece and Albania.
- The crucial Our Name is Macedonia campaign, which demands that Macedonia end all negotiations over its name. (www.mhrmi.org/our_name_is_macedonia)
- Funding successful election campaigns for Macedonian candidates in

Bulgaria, Greece and Albania

- Lobbying for recognition of Macedonia and Macedonian human rights in Washington, Ottawa, Canberra, Brussels and throughout the world, specifically
 - ♦ Meeting with Canadian, American, Australian and European heads of state and parliamentarians.
 - ♦ Meetings with Foreign Affairs officials from Canada, Australia, the US State Department, Council of Europe, among many others.
 - ♦ Attendance at United Nations, OSCE and other international human rights conferences.
 - ♦ Meetings with UN Ambassador Nimetz to reiterate our demand that the international community support the end to the "name negotiations"

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

(http://www.macedonianhr.org.au/wip/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=109&Itemid=95)

For more information, please contact: Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC) at +61 3 93298960, info@macedonianhr.org.au, www.macedonianhr.org.au

<http://www.facebook.com/AMHRC>

Macedonian Human Rights Movement International (MHRMI) at 1-416-850-7125, info@mhrmi.org, www.mhrmi.org, twitter.com/mhrmi, facebook.com/mhrmi

Thank you in advance.

Show your Support for Macedonian Human Rights

Silence is not an Option

The Hon. Kevin Rudd MP
Minister for Foreign Affairs
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

28/11/2011

Dear Minister,

*Report of entry bans into Greece of Macedonian-born
foreign passport holders*

We have received several credible and documented reports of discriminatory practices currently being implemented by Greek border authorities whereby foreign passport holders (i.e. Australian, US and Canadian passport holders etc) are denied entry into Greece if their place of birth is noted as "Macedonia". Such persons have been deemed to be "threats to public security".

Minister, has Australia been notified by Greek authorities of this apparent change in policy to deny Australian citizens and passport holders entry into Greece? Either way, Minister, we kindly request that your office makes the necessary inquiries and seeks an explanation from Greek authorities in relation to this discriminatory policy, especially as to what basis are Australian citizens and passport holders deemed to be a "threat to public security" in Greece. In particular, we would be most interested in official data as to how many Australian citizens have been denied entry into Greece in the last 12 months and the reasons for their entry ban.

We would write to the Greek authorities ourselves, however as you may appreciate history tell us that the chances of us receiving a response are rather remote. Therefore, as our foreign minister, we would kindly ask you to make the necessary enquiries on our behalf.

As this issue has the potential to disrupt the travel plans of many Australian citizens, we urge your office to promptly take action on this matter and advise us of the outcome as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

David Vitkov

Executive Member
AUSTRALIAN MACEDONIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE (AMHRC)

Similar letters were also sent by the AMHRC to the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs in Australia; the Australian Embassy in Greece and the US Embassies in Australia and Greece.



The Hon. Kevin Rudd MP
Minister for Foreign Affairs



Dear SBS,
11/11/11

Subject: Greek ruins - Insight SBS Friday

I watched with great interest the Friday repeat of the Insight's "Greek Ruins".

To be congratulated is Jenny Brockey's efforts to have such a variety of guests in the studio and participants located at different parts of the world.

I was quite saddened to see how the Greek people's living standard has now fallen to so unbelievably low levels. Coming from Greece's northern neighbouring country Macedonia I can somewhat relate to what Greek citizens are experiencing now, to the way that was once lived in Macedonia.

However I cannot neglect the fact of how biased SBS is!

Now that Greece's financial bankruptcy is making shockwaves across the world I am surprised to see SBS's sudden interest in showing to the Australian public only the misfortunes of the Greek citizens who have fallen victims to internal corruption and external global forces.

It seems to me like SBS pretends it is unaware that Greece's "democracy" had bankrupted long before their finances did.

To mention only a few points:

- To date Greece is still undermining the democratically chosen name of the Republic of Macedonia.
- Based on irrational grounds, thanks to Greece's tireless efforts to date, the Republic of Macedonia is prevented from joining international Organisations under its democratically chosen name.
- Still vivid in my memory are the long queues of cars waiting for petrol at the empty petrol bowsers in the mid 90's due to Greece's malicious economic blockade of the Republic of Macedonia.
- I still have are strong memories from during the time of the same economic blockade, when Greek border police prevented a group of students from heading to an international conference in Athens just because we were holders of legal Macedonian passports with entry visas.
- Macedonian minority living in today's northern Greece is still oppressed and prevented from enjoying their basic human rights.

There are many other things that could be mentioned and to be seen as a balanced TV medium, SBS should be looking at other sides of Greek life and investigate what troubles their government's have been and still are causing to their Balkan neighbour countries.

SBS should also make a story on why Australia is still not recognising the Republic of Macedonia under its official and democratically chosen name.



For once - be unbiased SBS!

Goran Babusku
Ivanhoe, Vic

Dear WUG,
12/11/2011

Having read a lot of good reports about your products I decided to attempt to download the IP tracker following your promotion.

However, during the download process I was very unpleasantly surprised to see the name of my country of origin, Macedonia, listed incorrectly in the list of countries as "Macedonia the former Yugoslav Republic".

I am sure that you are simply unaware of how highly offensive the naming of our country under this name is and that it was implemented around two decades ago because of irrational diplomatic pressure led by Greece. The name "Former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia" is for use in the realm of the United Nations and its bodies only.

As WUG to my knowledge is a non-UN related company, I sincerely hope I will see your website updated at earliest convenience with the correct name - Macedonia or Republic of Macedonia. I hope this update will filter down in the next revision of your software applications.

Failing that, I will be discouraged from recommending your products to my professional peers, clients and colleagues.

I am unsure of the source you received the current list of countries to be used on your website, however I would also strongly encourage you to contact your suppliers and urge them to also correct this unwanted error.

Sincerely yours,
Goran Babusku
IT infrastructure & Multimedia
Melbourne, AU

HAGUE JUDGEMENT REINFORCES NEED FOR MACEDONIA TO END SHAMEFUL NAME NEGOTIATIONS

Melbourne, Australia, Toronto, Canada and Skopje, Macedonia
5 December 2011

Not that any more incentive should be needed to stop negotiating your own name, but in a 15-1 vote, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague ruled today that Greece violated the United Nations' sponsored *Interim Accord* (a 1995 "agreement" between Macedonia and Greece) when it vetoed the Republic of Macedonia's entry to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in April 2008.

Following the Greek veto, in November 2008, Macedonia lodged an application at the ICJ arguing that Greece had violated the terms of 1995 agreement between the two countries. Under the accord, Greece pledged not to block Macedonia's entry into international organisations under the so called United Nations' provisional reference, "the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia".

Greece initiated the nonsensical "name dispute", objecting to Macedonia's name, in an effort to detract from its policy of non-recognition and persecution of its large Macedonian minority.

Ironically, it was not until 1988, when Greece realized that independence for the Republic of Macedonia was imminent, that it renamed "Northern Greece" to "Macedonia." Prior to this, Greece's policy was that Macedonia did not exist.

Despite Greece's intense propaganda campaign, more than 130 countries (over two thirds of all UN members, and including four of five UN Security Council members) have recognised the Republic of Macedonia.

While today's decision will be perceived by many as a victory for Macedonia, the Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC) and Macedonian Human Rights Movement International (MHRMI) urge Macedonians to put the decision into some perspective. Though the judgement demonstrates that Greece cannot be trusted to abide by international agreements, it does not endorse the Republic of Macedonia's name, nor does it put an end to the disgraceful name "discussions" between Macedonia and its

southern neighbour. Therefore to 'support' or 'welcome' today's ICJ decision, merely denotes an endorsement for the continued use of the demeaning and racist "FYROM" reference and an acceptance of the destructive 1995 Interim Accord.

The AMHRC and MHRMI have long demanded that the Macedonian government put an end to the name "negotiations" with Greece and today's ICJ judgment reinforces the obvious need for such a move. These "negotiations" are racist and contrary to the concept of human rights and indeed, the spirit of the UN charter itself.

Furthermore, MHRMI and AMHRC call on Macedonians worldwide to continue their support of the Our Name is Macedonia campaign, which demands that Macedonia immediately end all negotiations over its name:

www.mhmi.org/our_name_is_macedonia

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На Јорџос Н. Пападакис



Germanos Karavangelis and Ottoman military forces preparing to suppress the Macedonian liberation movement

Читав неодамна изјави на разни „важни,, лица, по повод експлозијата што израмни една морнарска база и околните села во Кипар минатиот месец и го чинеше животот на 12 луѓе и навистина неможев да поверувам на тоа што изјавуваа. Веќе се научив да очекувам се-апсолутно се- но секогаш имам една мала надеж дека некој момент некој си, некаде ќе избегне од пропишаното и ќе ги каже работите како што се.

Отиде значи во Кипар Министерот за Одбрана на Грција Панајотис Беглитис и најзначајното што најде да каже беше дека турската закана е тука. „Сакам да ви кажам дека оваа закана не е теоретска, е постоечка. И го гледаме на Егејот и во Кипар преку окупаторското присуство на турските армии, како резултат на инвазијата од 1974,, Тоа што не ни го кажа секако, зборлестиот министер, е што точно уништи големата експлозија во Кипар. Дали еден летен камп или еден парк за рекреација? Секако не. Уништи една воена база од тежок тип, која служеше за потребите на Националната Гарда на Кипар и на ЕЛДИК, на грчките значи сили кои

стационирани се во Кипар. Зошто не ни прече присуството на грчките сили и ни прече присуството на турските, кои дури ги карактеризираме како „окупаторски,, и тоа многу лесно?

Бидејќи едноставно сме хипокрити без срам. И на грчко-турските прашања, и на грчко-македонските и на грчко-албанските и секаде. Тоа секако го знаевме. Се ептен познати бомбастичните трансформирања на луѓето кои за една ноќ и бидејќи добија некој чин, почнаа да ни ги кажуваат работите поинаку.

„Македонското,, и Македонците во Грција се можеби нај карактеристичното поле на овие трансформирања. Не беа малку тие кои очекуваа поинаков пристап на прашањето од денешниот премиер кога тој ја презеде функцијата. Тој нели беше министер за Надворешни Работи кога стигнавме – се претпоставува- блиску до решение на смешната разлика за името во 2001год. Што видовме? Прошетки на Преспа и средби за очите на народот со Груевски, ист и непроменлив став околу

прашањето, исто и полошо околу Македонците внатре во границите. И нормално, кога газдата е така, што да се очекува од неговите чираци кои самиот Г.Папандреу создаде (Друцас, Беглитис итн)? Сегашниот градоначалник на Солун Јанис Бутарис зборуваше некогаш отворено на BBC пред неколку години за различноста, на (не Грци) Македонци и малцинствата. Сега, како градоначалник веќе, предложува и тој имиња и поставува како советник негов за комуникација и директор на TV 100 човекот кој на почеток на 90тите урлаше пред Европскиот Парламент да ги симнат рацете „*гјулцско-скопјаните*„ од Македонија...а да не ги спомниме „Зелените„ и глупостите на стариот пријател на Македонците М.Тримопулос и неговото друштво.

Малку подоцна, ред имаше архиепископот на Кипар Хрисостомос, од кој никој не очекуваше нешто по различно од „*подобро со фенер отколку да имаме електрична струја од лажната држава. Нека не го ставиме еркондиционерот. Јас го немам запалено од денот на несреќата*„ Овој голем хиерарх спомнуваше за одлуката на владата на Кипар да увезе струја од Северен Кипар со цел да ги покрие потребите што се создадоа поради експлозијата, поради штетите на енергитските структури на Југот. За среќа, владата не го слушна овој живописниот мрачен човек – буквално и метафорично- и ја зеде потребната ел.енергија. Ние останатите, едноставно останавме да се восхитуваме на Талибанците на Црквата. Сешто нај лошо намерно, нетолерантно и уназадено може некој да најде во едно, и така заостанато општество.

Имајќи повторно истото поле за точка на фокусирање, е лесно некој да потврди дека новогрчката држава, од кога се прошири земајќи го најголемиот дел на Македонија, ги искористи како најефикасно оружје поповите за да ги нападне бесно Македонците. Кој не се сеќава на „*легендарниот*„ Германос Каравангелис кој купуваше луѓе и свести, соработуваше хармонично со отоманските власти, додека им даваше плата на најлошите криминалци, од кои бараше и добиваше глави на Македонци како спомен? Помалку познат но уште полош беше прочуениот поп-Дракос кој пукаше на жени и колеше заробеници (не го велам јас туку Каравитис и Цондос-Вардас на нивните спомени).

Потоа, кога веќе беше „*ослободена*„ Македонија, овие „*херои*„ најдоа соодветно надополнување на лицето на диктатурскиот Августинос Кадиотис. Еден

човек на кој единствена мисија беше да уништи било што македонско наоѓаше на неговиот пат, да отпиши присуството на Македонците за векови во Леринско и пошироко, да посеи страв и вина на нивните души. На голем степен, овој „*играч на Бога*„ успеа. Уништи свети икони на цели храмови (сведоци храмовите на Свети Никола, Петрско, Свети Атанас Желево, Свети Ѓорѓи Бапчор, Света Петка Орово и десетици други), откорна гробишта и расфрли крстеве и коски на нивите, уништи антички работи со непроценлива вредност (богомилски гробишта на Баница, базилика на Свети Ајл во Ајл итн). Леринчаните уште се сеќаваат на неговите афорисми од говорницата – но и буквално- и забранувањата на бракови меѓу Македонци од двете страни на границата. „*Што ќе ви се валканите скопјанки, не можете да најдете жена да се земите од тука?*„ кажувааше на несреќните верници кои му бараа дозвола.

Но бидејќи изгледа дека се тука во животот се плаќа, овој лош човек на крај си го изгуби умот и последните години ги помина во потполно мизерување, живееќи во еден мал стан заедно со неговиот измет, до лани, кога умре на возраст од 103 години. Како што вели обичниот народ за овие случувања, ниту Господ што толку години хипокритично „*служеше*„ сееќи омраза и страв, не го сакаше до него и го остави да се мачи до последниот момент.

За жал, неговиот наследник во митрополијата, Теоклитос, солунскиот Антимос, Серафим на Пиреас и еден куп други, го продолжуваат ова „*Божји дело*„ со финансирање од страна на грчката држава, што значи со помош на сите нас. Точно како разните Беглитис, Друцас и други политичарчиња кои не натераа да ја гледаме Турција и да и завидуваме. А не само бидејќи таа има електрична енергија.

Special thanks to the editor of Nova Zora, Dimitri Jovanov, for translating this article - by George N. Papadakis of Vinozhito - from Greek to Macedonian. The article originally appeared in Nova Zora: <http://novazora.gr/>



Random Summer Thoughts (on Politics and Clerics)

by George Papadakis

I was recently reading the pronouncements of diverse important people on the explosion that destroyed a marine base and the surrounding villages in Cyprus last month where twelve people lost their lives, and I found what was being said really incredible. I am already getting used to expecting anything- absolutely anything – yet I still retain a small hope that at any moment, someone, somewhere, will avoid prevarication and speak of things as they really are.

Of course, the Greek Minister for Defence, Mr Panayotis Beglitis, went to Cyprus and the most significant thing he could say about the matter was that here was evidence of a ***“Turkish threat”***. ***“I want to inform you that this threat is not merely theoretical, but very real. And both in the Aegean and Cyprus, we note the menacing presence of the Turkish armed forces that has been the result of the invasion of 1974.”*** Of course what the garrulous Minister did not tell us, was what exactly the great explosion in Cyprus had destroyed. Was it a summer camp or a recreation park? Of course not. It destroyed a military base which served the interests and needs of the Cyprus National Guard and ELDIK – the Greek armed forces, in other words, which are **stationed in Cyprus**. **Why doesn't the presence of the Greek army bother us if the presence of the Turkish army**

does? Indeed, we even glibly regard the **latter as an “occupying” force**.

The simple answer is that we are shameless hypocrites. Not only on the above issue, but also on Greek-Turkish issues, Greek-Macedonian issues, and Greek-Albanian issues – everywhere. But we have all known this, in any case. All of us are very familiar with the total transformation into bombastic windbags overnight of people who, when ever-slightly elevated in the world, start to tell us that matters are not what we have believed them to be.

The “Macedonian issue”, and the Macedonians, are the most typical arena for such transformations in Greece. The people who had expectations of a different approach from the present Minister when he first assumed office, **were not few**. **Wasn't he, after all, the Minister for Foreign Affairs** when we nearly came - we can only assume – close to a solution on the ridiculous differences over the name in 2001? What did we see? Trips to Lake Prespa, and meetings with Mr Gruevski merely for public display, with the same attitude to the issue in dispute, and the same and even worse policy toward the Macedonians within Greek borders. Naturally when the boss is what he is, what can one expect of his underlings? After all, they (Droutsas, Beglitis, and so forth) are the creations of Mr G

Papandreou.

The present mayor of Salonika, Yanis Butaris, used to speak openly to the BBC some years ago about the differences between the (non-Greek) Macedonians and the minorities. Now as mayor of the city, he is also proposing name changes, and has even appointed as his public relations adviser and director of TV 100 the man who at the beginning of the nineties was howling before the European Parliament that the *“Gypsy-Skopjans”* should keep their hands off Macedonia, not to mention the Greens and the old friend of the Macedonians M Tremopoulos and his associates.

A little later, the Archbishop of Cyprus had his go, and nothing different was to be expected from him: *“Better with a lamp than electric power from a false nation. Let's not worry about the air-conditioning. I have not switched it on from the very day of the misfortune...”* This great cleric was referring to the decision of the Cyprus Government to import electric power from North Cyprus in order to meet the needs that were created as a result of the explosion which damaged the power supply in the South. Happily, the Government did not listen to this somewhat flamboyant but sombre man - literally as well as figuratively - and went ahead with supplying the necessary power. The rest of us, were left to admire the Taliban-like crew of the Church. All that is ill-intentioned, intolerant and reactionary could be found rolled into this one backward institution.

Bearing in mind this focus point, it is easy to claim that the neo-Greek nation-state since it expanded by usurping the **lion's share of Macedonia has used the clergy as the most effective weapon** in its arsenal to viciously attack the Macedonians. Who does not recall the *“legendary”* Germanos Karavangelis who bought people and their consciences, working in harmony with the Ottoman authorities as he paid the most malevolent criminals from whom he expected the cut heads of Macedonians as souvenirs. Less well-known but even nastier, was the notorious priest, Father Drakos who shot women and slashed the throats of captured men (it is not I who say this, but Karavitis and Tsondos-Vardas in their memoirs).

After that, when Macedonia was already *“liberated”*, these *“heroes”* found further gratifying fulfilment in the character of the dictatorial Avgostinos Kadiotis, Bishop of Florina for decades. A man whose monomaniacal aim was to annihilate everything Macedonian that he found in his path, to eliminate all trace of the Macedonians that had been present for centuries in Lerin and its environs, and to sow the seeds of terror and guilt in their souls. To a large degree this *“player of God”* had succeeded. He destroyed the sa-

cred icons of whole churches (Sveti Nikola, v. Petrsko, Sveti Atanas, v. Zhelevo, Sveti Giorgi, v. Bapchor, Sveta Petka, v. Orovo and tens of other churches). He desecrated graves and scattered the crosses and bones over the fields and destroyed invaluable old monuments and objects such as the Bogomil cemetery in Banitsa, the basilica of Sveti Ajl in Ajl and so on. The people from Lerin vividly remember his speeches and some of his aphorisms verbatim. His prohibition of marriages with people across the border was infamous: *“What is the attraction with these filthy Skopjan women that you cannot find a wife locally?”* was how he would reproach the unfortunate members of the faith who sought his permission to marry Macedonians from across the Greek-Macedonian border.

However, as it appears that everything is recompensed on earth, this evil man lost his mind in his old age and spent his last years in utter misery, living in a small apartment in extreme incontinence, until last year, when he died at the age of 103. As people say about these kinds of things, not even God, whom the bishop *“served”* for so many years by sowing hatred and fear, wanted him in His presence. So He had left him to suffer till the very last moment.

Unfortunately, his successor in the job, Theoklitos, as well as the men of the cloth in other parts of the country, like Antimos from Salonika, Serafim from Piraeas and a host of others have continued this *“holy work”* with the financial backing of the Greek state, which means with the help of all of us. Exactly as various types like Beglitis, Droutsas, and other small minded politicians have done and have even made us look at Turkey with envy. And that has happened, not just because Turkey has electricity.

By George N Papadakis of
Vinozhito.

Special thanks to Jim Thomev, for translating this article from Macedonian to English. The article originally appeared in Nova Zora: <http://novazora.gr/>

СТЕВАН КОЗМЕВСКИ, ГРАДОНАЧАЛНИК НА ВИТЛСИ: УСПЕШНА ПРИКАЗНА НА МИГРАНТ ОД МАКЕДОНИЈА

Мината среда, на 7 м декември, во Општина Витлси се избираше нов градоначалник. Како што прогнозираме во претходниот број на весникот, Стеван Козмевски ја доби довербата и стана градоначалник на Општината за наредна година.

Истата вечер таму ги сретнавме од Австралиско-

активист во Лабуристичката партија, Јанко Калинчев од Здружението на деца на бегалци и други.

Од деветте општински претставници што беа присутни, пет го дадоа гласот за Стеван Козмевски, додека четири гласа доби Крис Павлидис.

Номинациите беа поднесени по пет минути пауза



Претставниците од АМКЧП со градоначалникот: Џејсон Камбовски, Сашо Начковски, Стеван Козмевски и Васко Настевски



Фамилија Козмевски: Синот Дејвид, таткото Атанас со внуците Том и Џек, Стеван со сестрата Јагода

Македонскиот Комитет за човечки права (АМКЧП) Џејсон Камбовски и Васко Настевски, потоа Сашо Начковски, долгогодишен

бидејќи во првата можност за номинација немаше предложено кандидат. Со вториот почеток беше предложен Стивен Козмевски

Козмевски со своите родители стигнал во Австралија на 7 годишна возраст, во далечната 1965 година на бродот "Галилео". Неговиот татко Атанас е по потекло од Средно Египет а неговата мајка Кристина е од Присојани. Двете места се од битолската околина. Кога пристигнал во Австралија Стеван живеел со фамилијата во Ричмонд а се преселил во Томастаун во 1969 година. Има две деца: Елизабет (24) и Дејвид (20).

Препат е избран за општински претставник пред 14 години, во 1997 година.



На изборот можеше да присуствува секој граѓанин

од страна на Рекс Грифин кој беше претходен градоначалник за мината година. Додека Џон Фрај веднаш го номинира Крис Павлидис, како противкандидат. При гласањето, кога Стеван ги доби петте гласа, што е мнозинство, стана јасно дека ќе следува формално довршување на постапката за втората номинација на Павлидис, која доби четири гласа.

Со ова, во наредна година, до 27 октомври 2012 градоначалник на општината ќе биде нашиот Стеван Козмевски.

Во својот краток говор тој се обврза за обезбедување на првокласни сервис во Општината, која е една од најбрзо растечките во Австралија. Се планира населението во Витлси да се зголеми од сегашните 170 илјади на импресивни 250.000 жители до 2021 година.

Општината Витлси ги опфаќа мелбурнските населби Томастаун, Лајло, Елинг, Мил Парк, Бандура, Саут Моранг и приградските места Мернда, Донибрук, Вудсток Бевериџ, Дорин, Витлси и Хумвејл.

Како што нагласив, во Витлси живеат над 170.000 жители и има годишен буџет од преку 123.8 милиони долари.

Очекуваме Козмевски во својот мандат да биде успешен и за сите нас е гордост што имаме човек кој пристигнал од Македонија и успеал да се афирмира во австралиското општество.

Покрај Козмевски, во овој момент градоначалник од македонско потекло е и Бил Саравиноски од Рокдаел. Се очекува општина Бримбанк повторно да ја добие својата можност да создаде општинска управа, на наредните општински избори, во кои се надеваме дека Трајче Атанасовски



Во паркингот ја сликавме и Мери Лалиос со родителите и синот. Нејзините родители на течен македонски јазик ни ги честитаа Божиќните празници

или некој друг претставник од заедницата да се избори за место во самиот врв на општинската администра-

ција. Нив, се разбира, ќе ги следиме успехите на сите Македонци во Австралија.

И. Павловски

Во оваа општина се наоѓаат две македонски црковни општини: "Св. Ѓорѓи" од Елинг и "Св. Петка" од Мил Парк. Тука се фудбалскиот клуб Лајло Слога, КУД "Светлост" и КУД "Танец". Овде имаме единствено основно училиште на македонски јазик во кое се изучува македонски во нормалната настава, паралелно со англискиот во (Лајло Прајмари Скул) и потоа во средно во Лајло Норт Секондари и во Елинг Норт Колеџ.

Во оваа општина е и весникот што го читате "Today Денес", Битолскиот Клуб и многу други организации. Затоа имаме и право да очекуваме нашиот глас да се слуша погласно.

Малкумина знаат дека и Мери Лалиос, која беше два пати градоначалничка на Општината, во 2009 и 2010 година, има македонско потекло (од нејзините родители, кои се родени во Грција). Таа е и една од клучните советници, која со својот глас го овозможи прекилот на превласта на страната што ја протежираше Крис Павлидис.



Dr. Michael Seraphinoff

A Review of Meto Jovanovski's novel: *Cousins*

by Dr. Michael Seraphinoff

The novel *Cousins* by Meto Jovanovski, (Mercury House, San Francisco, 1987, translation by Sylvia Holton and Meto Jovanovski), originally published in Macedonian under the title *Budaletinki*, tells the story of two Macedonian cousins who become caught up in the First World War that is raging across their native land. Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece had allied themselves in the first Balkan War to drive Turkey out of Macedonia, and then fell into bitter conflict over their division of the former Turkish province in a second Balkan War and World War One.

Cousins describes the hazardous journey home of the two young Macedonians after trying to avoid the war by working abroad in Romania. Like many Bosnians in the war following the break up of Yugoslavia, Macedonians at that time were forced into the armies of neighboring lands or detained in camps or plundered and driven from their homes as the war swept through their villages.

For the Macedonians, whose lives were never easy under the Turks, life became truly hellish during the prolonged struggle that followed the end of Turkish rule. At one point in the cousins' journey home they meet an uncle who lays out the danger most succinctly, when he tells them:

"You're my blood and I hate to alarm you, but this spot is a glowing coal that will burst into flame again. They haven't yet finished dividing the world." (Holton and Jovanovski transl., 1987, p. 39)

It would have been hazardous to his health for a Macedonian to assert his separate identity during the violent struggle among his neighbors over Macedonia. Some, therefore, chose a side, while others chose to flee, or, as in the case of the cousins in Jovanovski's novel, many tried to simply stay alive by temporarily agreeing to the demands of whichever party held power over them at any given time. This third course, however, was fraught with as many, if not more unforeseeable dangers than the other courses open to them.

The Macedonian language has some characteristics of both Serbian and Bulgarian, varying from one settlement to the next depending on proximity to the one or the other neighboring language center, though, of course, the distinctly Macedonian features of the language allow Slavists to also describe its separate language status among the South Slavic languages. This makes it possible for the cousins in the story to more or less assimilate themselves into these neighboring societies when forced by circumstance.

This is reflected in the experiences of the cousins Srbin and Shishman. They leave home as the war approaches in hope of avoiding military service by working abroad. But before they can reach the border they are forced into the Serbian army. At the first opportunity they desert and make their way to Romania, where they work for two years until they are called to the Bulgarian Consulate and recruited into the Bulgarian army. They then attempt to make their way home by agreeing to serve in the Bulgarian army on the Salonika Front near their home village. However, when the actions of one of the cousins leads to the death of a fellow soldier who didn't understand the Macedonian's warning of danger blurted in his native dialect, they flee and surrender themselves to the French forces who face them across the trenches.

The cousins then enlist the aid of a Vlach (a member of a Romanian-speaking minority people in Macedonia) mayor of a nearby village under French control. The mayor attempts to explain the 'new' ethnic identity of their home village to the cousins:

"So you're from Breznitsa," he said. "From Breznitsa...from Breznitsa..., he kept repeating as he turned the pages. He slid his index finger from the top to the bottom of every page and then turned the page. Finally he said, "From Breznitsa. Here. Village of Breznitsa," he repeated in Greek. "The priest there is Hristos Hristomanos, Elenikos. That means that you're Greek. It all depends on the nationality of your village priest."

The cousins looked at each other. They remembered that nobody in the village could understand the language the priest spoke in church; he sang in a funny language the villagers used to say. The priest was from Breznitsa, but he had been educated in Greece, in Greek. On the cousins' faces there was a look of amazement, but of enlightenment as well, since they'd finally discovered why the priest was so important

"That's right," said Srbin.

"That's right," Shishman repeated.

"Do you see now?" asked the mayor, exulting.

"So we're Greek," said Shishman. "That's that." (Holt and Jovanovski transl., 1987, p. 104)

The mayor agrees to write the cousins a letter that makes their Greek nationality clear to anyone who should stop them on the road. However, he warns them that this will not be easy. He tries to explain how hazardous writing can be in these dangerous times:

"You make a mistake with a comma, and someone's head will roll. If a fly shits on a word, the whole letter means something else." (Holt and Jovanovski transl., 1987, p. 105)

After exploiting the cousins for free labor for a time, the mayor finally releases them. But he warns them:

"Now is the worst time. You have just a short way to go. You have been lucky until now - somehow. But be aware that the last trap is the worst." (Holt and Jovanovski transl., 1987, p. 106)

And he proves right, because on the outskirts of their home village they are stopped by Serbian soldiers. Dumb luck and their carefully contrived appearance as fools or simpletons no longer carries them and their carefully hidden earnings from their work in Romania the final few

steps home. Jovanovski describes what must have been a typical experience of the war and one that has been repeated in the war in Bosnia:

"The soldier demanded no answers. He only looked at them as if they were tables filled with rich food. He was sure that these chickens were full of eggs. Every Serbian soldier in Macedonia knew very well that in spite of all the poverty in the area, there were pearls in the oyster shells." (Holt and Jovanovski transl., 1987, p. 117)

Outsiders often tend to blame the victims. But a novel such as *Cousins* points up how most victims of ethnic conflict are simply caught in impossible situations. Macedonia has its intelligentsia who sought to objectively analyze the causes of the ethnic conflict in order to inform their conduct and reduce or put an end to the suffering caused by the competition for Macedonia. Their ideas fueled a revolutionary movement with lofty ideals at the turn of the century. However, as we know, the Balkan Wars degenerated into a vicious land grab by the neighboring states when the victorious allies against Turkey fell to quarreling over the division of Macedonia among them.

Macedonia's people at that time were, as Jovanovski's novel describes, reduced to using whatever cunning they had merely to survive. A few, such as the cousins in his novel, imagined that they might even somehow manage to prosper during war-time. But it is clear by the end of the story that only a few people in privileged positions, some public officials, arms merchants and plundering armies have discovered any profit in the war.

Dr. Michael Seraphinoff



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Greece is holding the EU and NATO hostage

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

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

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

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

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

THE MOST BASIC HUMAN RIGHT IS SELF-IDENTIFICATION.

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

DEMAND AN END TO 'FYROM' REFERENCE.

DEMAND IMMEDIATE INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION.

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www.macedonianhr.org.au

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

OUR NAME IS MACEDONIA



TIME.mk

Македонската дијаспора реагира на пописот во Албанија

Текст: Макфакс
07 октомври 2011

Македонското меѓународно движење за човекови права (ММДЧП) и Австралиско-македонскиот комитет за човекови права (АМКЧП) го осудуваат негирањето на македонскиот идентитет од страна на Албанија за време на спроведување на пописот, се вели во соопштението од овие две организации.

Од двете организации реагираат на информациите дека во регионот на Голо Брдо, одговорниот за инструкторите кои го спроведуваат пописот отворено изјави дека

македонскиот јазик ќе биде исфрлен како одговор на прашањето на кој јазик се зборува дома. Ова подоцна, според информациите на организациите, било потврдено и на теренот со прескокнување на прашањата 38 и 39 кои се однесуваат на јазикот што го зборуваат и на етничката припадност.

„Иако официјално е демантирано, албанската држава очигледно воведува ригорозна регионална малцинска политика“, се вели во реакцијата.

ММДЧП и АМКЧП ја осудуваат

албанската влада заради нејзиното спротивставување да ја измени праксата што ја спроведува врз своето малцинство и нејзиното одбивање да ја спроведува заедничката декларација потпишана од претставници на малцинствата во Албанија оваа година.

Од двете организации бараат ЕУ, ОБСЕ и другите релевантни институции да го прогласат пописот во Албанија за невалиден.

<http://www.time.mk/read/207254ff4e/dfdb6447a7/index.html>

AMHRC and MHRMI Denounce Albania's Denial of Macedonian Identity During its Census

Melbourne, Australia
and Toronto, Canada
6/10/2011

The Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC) and Macedonian Human Rights Movement International (MHRMI) denounce Albania's state-sponsored persecution of its Macedonian minority during the implementation of its census.

In the region of Golo Brdo, census taker instructors openly stated that the Macedonian language will be excluded as an answer to the question of what language is spoken at home. This was later confirmed in the field and other reports assert that census takers have been skipping questions 38 and 39 which pertain to language spoken and to ethnicity. *"We feel like a threatened species, we are simply erased"* declared Edmond Osmani, Vice President of MAEI.

Although it is officially denied, the Albanian state applies a rigid minority zones policy. *"If you leave a minority zone, like the Prespa region, you automatically lose your status as a Macedonian and become Albanian"* said Vasil Sterjo, from the Macedonian Alliance for European Integration (MAEI).

In Macedonia, on the other hand, the Albanian minority have illegally increased their numbers, evidently to show that ethnic Albanians amount to 20% of the total population of the Republic of Macedonia, so that Albanians can maintain a privileged **status among Macedonia's ethnic minorities**. Field reports indicate that two censuses are taking place: one in parts of Western Macedonia where ethnic Albanians live and another one in the rest of the country. In Western Macedonia, identification methods contrary to international regulations

have been implemented.

AMHRC and MHRMI condemn the Albanian government for its refusal to amend its minority policy practices and its refusal to heed a joint declaration signed by **Albania's minority representatives earlier this year**.

We call on the EU, OSCE and other relevant institutions to recognise the invalidity of the census in Albania and the severe irregularities in Macedonia and to take steps that will ensure proper census implementation.

Established in 1984, the Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC) is a non governmental organisation that informs and advocates before international institutions, governments and broader communities about combating racism and promoting human rights. Our aspiration is to ensure that Macedonian communities and other excluded groups throughout the world are recognised, respected and afforded equitable treatment. For more information please visit www.macedonianhr.org.au, or contact the AMHRC at info@macedonianhr.org.au or via [+61 3 9329 8960](tel:+61393298960).

Macedonian Human Rights Movement International (MHRMI) has been active on human and national rights issues for Macedonians and other oppressed peoples since 1986. For more information: www.mhrmi.org, twitter.com/mhrmi, [facebook](#), info@mhrmi.org, [1-416-850-7125](tel:14168507125).



Eftim Mitrevski

We Need to Reinvigorate and Quickly

The Second Balkan Conference for Macedonian Human Rights Activists

By Eftim Mitrevski

The Association of Macedonians from Aegean Macedonia in Bitola needs to be commended for organising both the first and second *Balkan Conference* for Macedonians from the states neighbouring the Republic of Macedonia. Not least, because such gatherings have until now, been a rarity.

At the recently held second conference, the participants agreed – at our suggestion – to holding the third conference in November 2012, at Elbasan in Albania. In order to make the next conference particularly worthwhile, we, the Macedonians in Albania need to begin preparing ourselves from now, as from an organisational perspective, we lag behind the Macedonians in Greece and Bulgaria.

While the next conference will focus on the usual problems faced by Macedonians in all three states, it was also agreed that it would be necessary for the representatives of all the organisations to prepare and present activity reports detailing all the concrete achievements and efforts made over the preceding 12 months. The intention is then to draft a documented statement to be presented before the international community.

Macedonian Organisational Problems in Albania

At present the concern is that the Macedonian organisations in Albania are not fulfilling their duties in terms of documenting issues, organising regular meetings and concrete activity. This applies to older organisations like *Prespa*, *Mir*, *Gora* and *Med*; as well as to newer bodies like *Ilinden*, the *Foundation Sterjo Spase* and the *Youth Union*. However, it is of course, quite possible for them to be reorganised so that they become proficient again and even to unify them in a *Union of Macedonians in Albania*.

During last September, with the support of Mr. George Atanasoski, the editorial board of the newspaper *Prespa* organised a symposium in Tirana that was attended by representatives of all the Macedonian organisations in Albania. An in-depth discussion and analysis of the many problems we face, was carried out. We seemed to arrive at a consensus on many issues and specific tasks were allocated to the various groups.

Unfortunately, we have again begun to lapse and run in circles. We still lack the ability to properly present the concerns of Macedonians to the Albanian state and there is little point in looking to blame others for our failures, especially in connection with the Albanian census.

The 2011 Albanian Census

In several of the previous issues of *Prespa*, we called for a plan of action to systematically visit all relevant regions to inform as many Macedonians as possible, regardless of religious faith, about the importance of the census. In general, we failed to do this. It was critical for us to have made a decent effort to sideline the fear that many Macedonians possess in regard to revealing their true identity. In the end, the fact that the Albanian government implemented a rigid minority zones policy that refused to recognise the existence of Macedonians beyond the region of Prespa, does not excuse our lack of disciplined activity.

If we had been more methodical in the lead up to the census, we could have raised a much more powerful and unified voice in protest against a census that was carried out on a fraudulent basis. It is our right to lift the level of our dissent – we fulfil our duties towards the state by obeying its laws, serving in its military, paying its taxes and in return, the state constantly treats us as second class citizens; does not recognise our existence and takes away our rights as Macedonians. How much more time are we going to waste before we do something about this?

Certainly there is no point in waiting for the aid of *others* or certain Albanian political figures, like Edi Rama who equates culture with barbarism; or Berisha, who says one thing and does another; or Kim Mehmeti who is repulsed by the true and the good; or by Pandeli Majko, who is attracted to medieval forms and methods. No, my dear Macedonians, we need to organise *ourselves* so that we can reach our common goals. If we honestly compare ourselves with the other minorities in Albania, which are in fact smaller, it is clear that they are superior in their progress, especially in regard to learning their languages.

MAEI – Macedonian Alliance for European Integration

The last meeting held by the Executive Committee of MAEI is also something that I am ambivalent about. The meeting was held last December in Tirana and although representatives from Prespa, Korcha, Bilishte and Pogradets attended, the absence of members from Gora, Golo Brdo and Tirana itself, is disappointing. Moreover, not enough time at the meeting was spent on analysing the party program and too much of it on differences of opinion about matters of slight importance.

Never-the-less, the Executive of MAEI has outlined the following program for 2012: a working team is to be appointed by end of January in order to prepare a wider regional attendance at a meeting to be held by the end of March. The aim is to prepare a general party congress to be held in May, which will be attended by representatives from all the regions Macedonians inhabit.

We are very thankful to the Executive for their efforts and this attempt to reinvigorate the party must be respected. As I have indicated, my concern is that we are moving too slowly and that many achievable aims have not been realised. To those who assert that the other minorities have their problems as well; I respond by pointing out that ours are much worse, because the other groups are fully recognised, while we only have partial recognition.

Dear Macedonian activists in Albania, with respect and sincerity, I say we need to begin to interact with our fellow Macedonians here, in general, in a much more extensive and meaningful manner. We need to seek them out, open ourselves and make ourselves regularly available. The issue of the rights of Macedonians is not a private matter belonging to activists; indeed, it has no meaning as such. There is no time to wait and I hope that we can reinvigorate the movement!

By Eftim Mitrevski – editor in chief of the newspaper *Prespa* and member of MAEI, a Macedonian political party struggling for the rights of Macedonians in Albania.

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

"НИКОЈ НЕМА ПРАВО ДА ПРЕГОВАРА ЗА МОЕТО ИМЕ!"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ЕУ и НАТО се заложници на Грција

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

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

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

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

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

НАЈОСНОВНОТО ЧОВЕКОВО ПРАВО Е ПРАВОТО НА САМОИДЕНТИФИКАЦИЈА.

МАКЕДОНСКИОТ НАРОД МОРА ДА И КАЖЕ НА ВЛАДАТА ДА ПРЕСТАНЕ ДА ПРЕГОВАРА ЗА НАШЕТО ИМЕ. ДА ПОБАРАМЕ КРАЈ НА СРАМНАТА РЕФЕРЕНЦА 'ФИРОМ'. ДА ПОБАРАМЕ ВЕДНАШ МЕЃУНАРОДНО ПРИЗНАВАЊЕ ПОД ИМЕТО РЕПУБЛИКА МАКЕДОНИЈА.

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и други македонски организации - www.mhmi.org/out_name_is_macedonia

НАШЕТО ИМЕ Е МАКЕДОНИЈА

Landmark Study into the Macedonian Language in Australia Nears Completion

by Dr. Chris Popov

The Macedonian language, in both its standard literary and rich dialectal forms, is a cultural factor that has contributed much to defining Macedonians. The diversity and richness of the Macedonian language is reflected in Australia where the Macedonian community is made up of large numbers of Macedonians from all parts of both Aegean Macedonia and the Republic of Macedonia, with smaller numbers of Macedonians from the Pirin part of Macedonia in Bulgaria present as well. However, as with the languages of many ethnic groups in Australia, the Macedonian language and the way in which it is spoken has undergone certain structural, lexical and grammatical changes, under the influence of the dominant English language.

In August 2010, the Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC) decided to participate in a unique study being conducted into the Macedonian language by a leading Australian tertiary institution. The purpose of the documentation to be produced by the study is to provide records and materials both to the Macedonian community in Australia and to the broader Australian community relating to the use of the Macedonian language and the attitudes and motives of those who speak it. In deciding to participate, the AMHRC also underscored its strong desire to document and record the life stories and experiences of Macedonian migrants to Australia and their children.

The AMHRC supported this study into the speech of first and second-generation Macedonian speakers by providing a researcher (the author of this article) to interview the participants on video and to administer and fill out questionnaires seeking information on the use of the Macedonian language. Interviews for the project were commenced on 28 October 2010 and completed on 23 June 2011. Approximately 450 to 480 hours were devoted to the project which encompassed the translation of questionnaires and other documentation required to initiate the project: contacting of people for interviews, travelling to interview locations, conducting the interviews them-

selves and filling out the questionnaires, as well as transcription of all the interviews. Forty-nine individual homes around the greater metropolitan Melbourne area were visited for the purpose of conducting the interviews.

In all, 103 persons were interviewed and 100 transcriptions of the interviews done. I conducted all the interviews - bar the one with me- and did all of the transcription work. While the interview questions differed for first and second generation participants- reflecting their life experiences and linguistic proficiency- the purpose of the questions was to elicit responses in Macedonian and to assess the extent to which the speakers communicate in Macedonian in their daily life. Most interviews lasted about 10-15 minutes, although several lasted for 30 minutes. The large majority of the interviewees spoke in their local dialect and only a handful of those from the Republic of Macedonia spoke in the literary standard.

After the initial 22 interviews, interviewees were interviewed together-where applicable- in order to expedite the whole process. Interviewee numbers 1 to 82 filled out the original questionnaire which had been devised for the project and numbers 83 to 103 a later one which sought slightly different information about the Macedonian language, the person's relationship to it and their view of its place in Macedonian culture.

Seventy-six of the interviewees were of the first generation (although several of these had arrived in Australia between the ages of 4 to 12) and 27 belonged to the second generation. The breakdown of first-generation speakers was as follows: 41 were from Aegean Macedonia, 34 from the Republic of Macedonia (ROM) and one was of Serbian origin who is married to a Macedonian from the Republic of Macedonia. Four of the first-generation speakers were child refugees from Aegean Macedonia and two were Macedonian partisans who had fought during World War Two and in the "Greek Civil War".

Of the second-generation speakers, 17 had their origins

a. H. d. T. b. P. v. T. g. D. i. T. e. E. x. H. s. T. o. S. w. H. j. T.
 w. H. v. H. v. H. n. H. n. H. o. H. o. H. p. P. e. C. a. H. n. H.
 y. H. q. P. x. T. y. H. n. H. y. H. w. H.

in Aegean Macedonia, 4 from the Republic of Macedonia, 2 of Aegean Macedonian/RoM origin, 2 of Aegean Macedonian/Croatian origin and one of Serbian/RoM origin. The first-generation speakers originated from the following parts of Macedonia: Lerinsko, Dramsko, Bitolsko, Prilepsko, Ohridsko, Skopje, and Kavadarci. The oldest interviewee was 90 and the youngest 22.

The overwhelming majority of participants spoke as they normally would, without affectation, and readily understood and welcomed the goal of the overall project. It is noteworthy that the question that some people struggled with—especially second-generation speakers—was the one where they were asked to say something funny or recount an amusing incident. Quite a few were unable to or did not want to answer. Some first and second-generation speakers were slightly puzzled by the Language Attitudes survey attached to the questionnaire and required further explanation in order to provide the relevant responses.

All in all, the participants provided an invaluable insight into the richness of the Macedonian language, the way its use informs their world view and the extent to which spoken Macedonian is considered essential to the continuation of a distinct Macedonian identity in Australia. In addition, the life stories of many of the participants were extremely interesting, often moving, and provided valuable information about their varied settlement experiences, their hopes for the future and their children and grandchildren and for many, their nostalgia for their life and youth in Macedonia.

I found my participation in the project to be both fulfilling and inspirational. It gave me an opportunity to become familiar with Macedonian dialects that I had not encountered before and to meet some very engaging and charming interlocutors. Many of the partici-

pants were very supportive of the project and understood its importance in attempting to preserve the Macedonian language as a major means of spoken and written communication for second-generation Macedonian-Australians. As was to be expected the Macedonian language is still being used as a first language by those who arrived in Australia in their teens or as adults and, once again expectedly, English is the first language of those who arrived very young or who were born in Australia. Without exception all first and second-generation interviewees were genuinely proud of their Macedonian background and ethnicity and saw the Macedonian community in Australia as having made a valuable contribution to the development of modern Australia and its institutions and culture.

The videos of the interviews, questionnaires and transcriptions were handed to the researcher at the beginning of September 2011. It is expected that the first papers detailing the findings of the research will be published in the first half of 2012. There are also plans being made for a larger study, possibly in the form of a book, to be published in the next 12 to 18 months.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all those persons who participated in the project and gave so generously of their time and hospitality so that the research necessary for its realization could be carried out. In so doing they have made an extremely valuable contribution to the continued use of the Macedonian language in Australia and its vital role as the bedrock of Macedonian culture in Australia and wider Macedonian Diaspora communities.

Dr. Chris Popov



Interview with DJ Mangal

Johnny Tsiglev does a little retrospection whilst interviewing **'DJ MANGAL'** aka ... **you'll soon find out!**

We conduct most of the interview in a lovely local beer garden over some lunch and then continue on into the afternoon out in my back garden.

Johnny Mangal, how are ya mate!

DJ Mangal *I'm fantastic!*

Johnny We'll get straight into it as we've already been chatting away for over an hour!

DJ Mangal *He he he, yeah let's do it!*

Johnny Ok, I'm going to ask right way. Why Mangal? What did you get up to, to get the moniker?

DJ Mangal *Mangal is actually my dad's nickname. He received it in Bitola when he was younger, and I inherited it because I'm my father's son in every aspect. We look alike, talk alike, are alike.*

Johnny Oh, so I should be asking what your dad got up to in his youth?

DJ Mangal *True. My dad was a bit of a fiery character in Bajro (the city of Bitola and his mates gave him the name.*

Johnny So, does the meaning of the name 'Mangal' apply to your character or personality also?

DJ Mangal *Yes it does. Especially if you don't allow me to identify as what I am.....*

Johnny And what are you?

DJ Mangal *...Macedonian!*

Johnny Mangal reacts with great enthusiasm.

I noticed on your Facebook page, some of your mates also have Mak/English nicknames, for example 'Bananata'!

I must admit I have a giggle every time I hear someone called 'Skapan', 'Zelen', 'Tikfa' etc...

Do you have any classics that you love or just laugh at every time you think about it?

DJ Mangal *There isn't a friend of mine who doesn't have one of those classic nicknames. I think everyone in Bitola has a nickname, so our generation has adopted this fantastic tradition!*

Johnny He he he... (We share a cheeky laugh).

I think the same could be said about almost all of Macedonia. I'm sure Dolno Doupeni has a few!

DJ Mangal *Well.... my own has gone from 'Mangal', to 'Mangs', to 'Bangs' to 'Banger'! If you figure it out, let me know what you think it means?*

Johnny Ok, but I think I'll have to tell you the answer in private!

I guess all this name calling naturally leads me to my next question. Can you tell us your real name? Or is it DJ-trade secret?

DJ Mangal *Nah. No secret. Just for you. It's Goran Ristevski.*

Johnny Ha!. I knew that already, but just wanted you to share it with our readers.

How old, or should I say young, were you when you decided you wanted to be a DJ? What got you started?

DJ Mangal *When I started DJing I was 18-19 years old. I always wanted to be a singer, and at 20 years of age I came in the top 5 of 'Popstars'. You know, that show before Australian Idol.*

Johnny Wow! Bravo be! So what did that lead to?

DJ Mangal *Well, being such a young age at that high level, I felt disappointed and let down at not getting selected for the final group. After all, I was Jackie O's favourite! So, after all that, I went back to DJing. Although in the end, I've combined my love of singing with DJing anyway.*

Johnny I guess that's a win-win outcome.

I remember staying up all night (or morning) listening to Triple RRR in the mid-late 80's. I can't remember the name of the funk/disco show? I rec-

ordered as many tracks as I could on my double cassette deck Ghetto Blaster and then made my own mix tapes. For a little while there, I too considered becoming a DJ.

Do you have any similar fond memories?

DJ Mangal *Ha ha ha. I have one perfect memory of when I was 14 years old. I remember it like yesterday with my twin cassette recorder. Basically, I stole a number of my brother's tapes from his car, him being an older brother. I tried to make the perfect mix between two songs that could never be*

DJ mate, the crowd was itching for some traditional Macedonian music. When I played the first song, it was the first time I had Goosebumps, seeing my fellow Macedonians erupt! I can't explain it any better than that.

Johnny That would have been something very special to witness.

What type of events get you going? Intimate small parties, or the big 'rockstar' gigs?

DJ Mangal *Both. Or all of them I should say.*

days where I just want to play English music, but when a Maco gig works, there's nothing like it!

Johnny You definitely have a knack for getting the Macedonian crowds going.

Have you been back to the 'Old country'?

DJ Mangal *Yes. I went for the 100 years (Sto Godini Ilindenski Dena) and I didn't want to come home! I finally found out where I belong and what I belong to.*



mixed. MC Hammer's 'Can't Touch This' and 'Rhythm is a Dancer'. Enough said!

Johnny Mangal does a great rendition and we both laugh away out loud.

DJ Mangal *I wish I still had that tape!*

Johnny What's the biggest gig you've played at?

DJ Mangal *It probably wasn't the biggest, but it was definitely the most memorable. Early to mid 2000's.... QBH.... Christmas Maco Night. While English was being played by a fellow*

Johnny You're well known for saving the day musically at Macedonian events. I personally witnessed this at the 20 years celebration of Macedonian Independence at Federation Square.

Do you do many non-Macedonian gigs, and which do you prefer?

DJ Mangal *I'm a full time DJ/MC, so the majority of my work is Weddings, Engagements and all sorts of parties. So there really isn't any type of music that I don't play. The Italians and Maltese are quite fond of me....and vice versa. We have a good time. I have my*

Johnny Yeah. I encourage any young Australian Macedonian who has never been, to go see where they came from. To go and experience it for themselves. I know some Australian Macedonians that have been to various European countries a few times, but still avoid going to Macedonia? I personally don't understand it and it actually upsets me. So much beauty. My wife and I have called Ohrid a mini Monaco for years. It's stunning and never fails to impress us.

DJ Mangal *I hear ya brother.*

Johnny What's your opinion about

the present-day music coming from Macedonia?

DJ Mangal *God Bless Tose Proeski for bringing Macedonian music to the Balkans. If they didn't know Macedonian music before, they sure do now. They loved him in every country.*

Johnny Music is definitely the most powerful medium to get you in a certain mood. What type of music do you most listen to, and what gets you going?

DJ Mangal *I love the older R&B funk. You know that older soul music that just hits the spot.... And it also calms me down after a crazy gig!*

Johnny Mangal breaks out into a song that I can't quite make out, but he possesses a great soulful voice himself. I'm impressed.

How did it go down with the crowd when you started singing over a DJ set for the first time?

DJ Mangal *The people right from the get go were quite surprised to hear me sing all the lyrics to the Macedonian songs. It gives the performance a live feeling. It's amazing how certain people who may have mocked the Macedonian singing at the time, are real fans now.*

It goes to show you how powerful Macedonian music can be and to always be proud of what you do and who you are.

Johnny I describe many of my artworks as being akin to a visual representation of a song lyric. Do you have a certain song which paints a picture of an experience that you can't forget?

DJ Mangal *Yes there is a song. It's my favourite Macedonian song called "Za*

Edna Sudbina" from Efto Popinovski, which reminds me that you really know what love is when you lose someone.

Johnny Are there any other exceptional or emerging Macedonian artists worth noting?

DJ Mangal *Yes there is. Aneta Micevska from the group 'Molika'. She's by far one of the best vocalists to come from Macedonia for a long time.*

Johnny I remember the large Macedonian village dances of the late 70's and early 80's. The songs of the time are embedded in my psyche. Classics like 'Zaiko Koukoraiko' and 'Biser Balkanski'. I guess you're probably the best person in Australia to ask this next question.

What do you find appeals more to the young Australian Macedonians who weren't exposed to those times? The mixed up classics or the contemporary Macedonian music?

DJ Mangal *The mixed up classics by far! They love to listen to those tracks.*

Johnny Wow! That's great to hear.

It's amazing that the depth of meaning in the music can transcend generations.

DJ Mangal Yep.

Johnny It actually reminds me of something my uncle's neighbour said to me in Lerin a few years ago. She said that for even some of the teenagers who don't or couldn't speak Macedonian, whenever an old Macedonian song came on, they went ballistic and couldn't get enough. It really did summarize the zeitgeist of my trip. So it's probably the same thing when you play the classics?

DJ Mangal Exactly.

Johnny Music transcends all generations, races and borders. Bravo DJ Mangal for preserving (for the older ones out there) and for contributing to the Macedonian consciousness of the younger generation. Thanks for taking the time out for this interview. It's been a blast, the AMHRC and I greatly appreciate it.

DJ Mangal Thanks heaps.



AMHRC Meets with Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard

Melbourne, 10 November 2011



From left: Prime Minister Julia Gillard and
AMHRC Executive Member Jason Kambovski

Representatives of the Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC) yesterday had the opportunity to meet with the Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon Julia Gillard MP and other government Ministers. The meetings took place in the context of the Community Cabinet day held in Werribee, Melbourne.

The AMHRC's engagement with the Prime Minister and Senior Ministers is part of a long running and sustained campaign by the AMHRC to lobby the Australian government on the issue of Australian's recognition of the official name of the Republic of Macedonia and the recognition of the right of self-identification of the Macedonian community in Australia. A more public "It's Time" campaign, calling on members of the Macedonian community to lobby their local MPs was also announced in the AMHRC Review earlier this year.

During all its meetings yesterday AMHRC representatives took the opportunity to implore members of the current Federal government to demonstrate leadership on these issues and adopt a change in policy on Macedonia. As a modern democracy based on the rule of law, Australia **should respect and accept Macedonia's democratic right to its official state name.** Australian policy in relation to Macedonia as well as being unjust is also out-dated and it should be revised to bring it into line with its major allies.

In 1994, the ALP-led Australian government recognised Macedonia **"using the nomenclature the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in accordance with the terminology used by the United Nations"** as claimed by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). It seems

only appropriate that the current ALP-led government conform with the now well established diplomatic practice employed by a majority of countries. Namely, the decision should be taken, without further delay, to recognise the official name of Macedonia in bilateral relations.

The AMHRC has also been pressing the Australian government on other issues of importance to the Macedonian community such as the possibilities to deepen bilateral relations between Australia and Macedonia by opening an Australian Embassy in Skopje; the need for Macedonian catered aged-care facilities in Australia; and possibilities for government support for Macedonian language education in Australia, especially at the secondary and tertiary levels.

The AMHRC continues to encourage Macedonians in Australia to write to their local federal MPs – regardless of their political affiliation - **demanding a change in Australia's policy in relation to Macedonia's name.** Contact details for your local representative can be found on the website of the Parliament of Australia:

<http://aph.gov.au/house/members/index.htm>

Established in 1984 the Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC) is a non-governmental organisation that informs and advocates before international institutions, governments and broader communities about combating racism and promoting human rights. Our aspiration is to ensure that Macedonian communities and other excluded groups throughout the world, are recognised, respected and afforded equitable treatment. For more information please visit www.macedonianhr.org.au, or email info@macedonianhr.org.au or via +61 3 9329 8960.

Community's of Interest-

Political Lobbying and the Macedonian Community of Australia

by Sasha Nackovski



Sasha Nackovski

Introduction

As a Macedonian community activist I am often asked the question *“Why, given the relative size of the Macedonian community in Australia, do we not have more influence in politics and policy making in Australia?”* This question is often framed within the context of the relative bargaining positions of other ethnic communities in Australia. To the layman, there is a basic assumption underpinning this enquiry, which is that **a community's size (in this case head of population)** is directly proportional to its relative political power and bargaining strength.

To quote a wise old law professor at the University of Melbourne, *“I have a very complicated answer to your relatively simple question”*. The strength of a **community's political bargaining power** has less to do with numerical advantage and more to do with other factors, which form the basis of discussion in this article. The idea that numbers equals political bargaining strength is at its core a simplistic fallacy.

The Macedonian Community as a “Community of Interest”

Within the processes of governmental and public policy making, the term

“Community of Interest” has had common usage amongst those responsible for policy creation and development for some decades. At its core, the term refers to a community of people who share a common passion or interest, and can encompass organisations from industry lobby groups to ethnic diaspora groups. It is perhaps indicative of the effects of globalisation that the definition of the term has changed somewhat to exclude a shared geographical interest (for example a community of interest within a local government area), so no longer is spatial proximity necessary to define a community of interest. The use of electronic networks and communications has allowed a community of interest to be transnational in scale, an important factor when applied to cases such as Macedonia where the originating and diaspora communities share the same interests. A case in point is the AMHRC, which efficiently conducts its lobbying activities on a global scale amongst a network of activists on several continents, generally possessing the same interests and objectives.

Examining the dynamics of governmental-interest group relations is a very complicated task (volumes of work have been produced on this topic) and is beyond the scope of this article. Of greater importance is an understanding of the net outcomes that these groups can produce. An entire industry has devel-

oped around the concept of interest group lobbying to the extent that many governmental policy decisions are *“outsourced”* to community interest groups. This has in a sense become a practical necessity, as the nature and breadth of policy making has become increasingly complex and the desirability of government to respond to policy making needs without considerable input from interest groups is now regarded as highly questionable. Add to this the increasingly prevalent role of mass media, and more recently electronic media, in channelling public opinion and allowing a forum for public debate. The net result is that communities of interests, within modern policy making processes, have considerable power in formulating and developing governmental policy.

The term *“community of interest”* is problematic when applied to the Macedonian community in Australia. Applying the basic principle of a community of interest – that is the basic assumption that the entire community has the same interests and objectives – it is clear that the entire Macedonian community in Australia cannot be described as a *“community of interest”* in its purest sense. Indeed, it may be argued that most if not all ethnic communities in Australia fail this basic test, so none can be described as a special interest group in the strictest sense. In the case of the Macedonian community in Australia,

this is an unfortunate result of the lack of cohesion amongst Macedonian community groups, and the ad hoc manner in which individual community groups have gone about supposedly promoting the interests of the Macedonian community as a whole. In the realm of political advocacy, there has not been a single unifying body emerge within the Macedonian community that has been able to effectively penetrate the tough shell of policy making in Australian governments. Further, many of the interest groups within our community expend valuable resources battling against other groups within the community (for a variety of reasons) instead of advocating for a common cause. In this environment of hostility, it is difficult for a community of interest to thrive.

It is interesting then to relate this discussion back to the original question – why is the Macedonian community not effectively represented in policy making in Australia? Any person that has worked in public policy making can tell you that it is not always the largest or best resourced groups that are the most effective in influencing policy outcomes. It is the manner in which these resources are used that is critical. The Macedonian community in Australia has large pockets of constituents in several safe Labor held State and Federal seats, but these numbers in themselves are insufficient to have any substantial influence on policy decision making. If this was the case, the AMHRC (for example) would not need to expend the considerable human and financial resources it does on its lobbying and advocacy activities, and I would not be expending my own resources writing this article. History has proven that in the parliamentary seats that have significant Macedonian communities, very little inroads have been made into convincing the parliamentary representatives in those seats to advance the Macedonian cause. Without the necessary strength in community of interest, backed with sufficient resources and advocacy techniques, these numbers are meaningless. Clearly then, a more sophisticated approach to advocacy is required than one purely

based on relative numerical advantage.

Political Lobbying in Australia – Theory, Processes, Outcomes.

Lobbying is generally defined as the attempt to influence legislators or officials to favour a specific cause. Professional interest group lobbying in Australia has been a growth industry since the **1970's. It is largely composed of communications specialists**, and is subject to vigorous debate regarding the moral and ethical appropriateness of lobby groups influencing policy outcomes. It has also been subject to various forms of regulatory control, some more successful than others. By contrast, in the USA it is entrenched in the constitution (S.1 Right to petition) and has long been accepted as an integral part of the political process in that country. It is important to note that, around the world, lobbying by both professional lobbyists and special interest groups is nowadays considered an important and highly influential part of the policy making process, so much so that legislators (politicians) and government officials are often excessive in their reliance on input from special interest groups in formulating public policy.

Effective lobbying can often be a question of financial resources. For example, a company or industry group looking to influence the course of policy may hire the services of a professional lobbying company, who will then implement a communications strategy based around influencing the parliamentarians or ministry officials directly responsible for that policy area, and include a media communication strategy if required. The reality is that these resources within the Macedonian community are few and far between, so in essence, our community needs to rely on lobbying strength and **expertise from within. What's more, lack of resources necessitates an even greater strengthening of the community of interest**, for a key ingredient in successful political advocacy is the ability to unite a community behind a clear, artic-

ulated and well communicated message. This is, in addition to numerical leverage, a critical component in successful political advocacy, as the ability to demonstrate that an entire community of interest is behind a set of goals and objectives is essential in influencing policy outcomes.

There is insufficient space to elaborate on a strategy for successful lobbying here. Suffice to say that a political advocacy strategy normally encompasses a number of steps, including strategic planning, determining of the central issues, message planning, key objectives and desired outcomes, determining of the key decision making institutions related to the desired outcome, targeting of key decision making individuals involved with this institution, targeting of individuals associated with key institutional individuals (for eg. Ministerial advisers), relationship development (extremely important), and mapping of advocacy networks and target prioritisation. Practically speaking, lobbying can involve anything from directly approaching key parliamentarians, ministers and staff members to engaging media outlets with carefully structured media statements and other forms of media communication. Of course, a precise strategy is dependent on desired outcomes and is devised on a case by case basis. Throughout the process, it is imperative that relationship development is practiced, whether it be with key decision makers or with members of the media.

The Macedonian Community as a Lobby Group

There are several key areas of state and federal government policy where the Macedonian community in Australia can be described as the major stakeholder. For example, the naming dispute has **occupied most of the community's interest and resources for the last two decades**, understandably as it goes to the **very heart of a person's or nation's right to self-identification**. It is very interesting

to examine the dynamics behind this lobbying activity. Several Macedonian community groups have attempted to lobby successive governments (Labor & Liberal), and have targeted officials within the Department of Foreign Affairs and trade, the responsible ministry in this case. Both have had limited success in penetrating the policy cocoon. Is this due to strategy flaws, or is there some other factor at play here?

From an insiders point of view, the first step in engaging any public interest group with decision makers is to exercise due diligence on that group. In other words, if I were a key policy decision maker, and I was approached by a public interest group seeking to influence a policy outcome, my first step would be to learn as much about that group as possible – history, structure, numerical (voting) strength, agenda, key actors, network with other actors etc. Whilst this sounds very clandestine, it is a practical reality of the *“briefing”* process, where a minister or official may want to find out as much as possible about the policy agenda of the people he is dealing with. And where the policy change being sought is highly controversial (and, let's face it, almost any policy to do with the Macedonian community is controversial), and the change is subject to the approval of party political machinery, it is this research that can determine whether the decision maker chooses to pursue the policy change or not.

So if we were to conduct due diligence on the Macedonian community in Australia, what would we find? We would find a community with large constituencies in safe Labor seats that have little bearing on the outcomes of State and Federal elections. Further, if we examine voting patterns in those safe seats, we would see that members of our community are reluctant to change voting patterns irrespective of detrimental policy. If we delve deeper, we will find that lobbying efforts in the past have been conducted on the recognition issue for example, not by a single unified group, but by several individual groups purporting to represent the community at large.

And whilst these groups all seemingly have the same end goal, they are comprised of different actors with different **agendas with very little interlinking** between these groups, meaning there is very little consistency in lobbying efforts. Delve even further, and you will find a community that is deeply divided, with a **‘hotch potch’ of community, political and religious organisations**, some operating with a high degree of professionalism and others, with none at all. To make matters worse, many of these groups expend considerable energy in perpetual conflict with each other, rather than for the greater good of the community.

Most people reading this with any experience of Macedonian community relations would respond to this with *“well obviously, we all know our community is divided”*. Yes, and so do key policy decision makers. Faced with a highly contentious policy change, one that is likely to alienate a considerable section of other influential communities, and balanced against lobbying efforts seemingly conducted on a disorganised ad hoc basis, is it not little wonder that we cannot have policy changed in our favour? This **is where the strength of a “community of interest” is critically important. A strong, cohesive and unified lobbying effort can overcome a lack of resources, if the message and objectives are clear and well communicated.** If the Macedonian community in Australia desires a beneficial policy change, then it will need its representative organisations to become a strong, unified **“community of interest”**. This does not necessarily require organisational amalgamation, but it *does require* the implementation of a cooperative/unified policy approach.

Conclusion - The AMHRC's role in Political Lobbying

Without seeking to engage in self glorification, the AMHRC has achieved significant results in its government lobbying activities, and continues to do so. This is especially true in the context of the limited resources (time and money) avail-

able to the organisation. An outsider would probably not appreciate or understand the amount of time and effort that AMHRC advocates expend in attempting to penetrate the tough shell of government policy making.

However, from a personal perspective - and I speak for many Macedonian community activists when I use this analogy - I sometimes feel like a soldier in battle who is not only concerned about fighting a common enemy, but also about the activities of my fellow soldiers (in this case, other members of the community) and whether I will be shot in the back - accidentally or otherwise. It is quite difficult and very disheartening to attempt to conduct a strong, unified lobbying effort in this environment. The AMHRC will continue to lobby and advocate on the **Macedonian community's behalf, to the extent that resources will allow.** One only needs to run through the issues of this publication to understand the extent to which the AMHRC is lobbying all levels of government in an attempt to change the policies that affect our community.

However, until a **“community of interest”** is developed within our community, our lobbying and advocacy work will continue to be very difficult. Special interest groups can achieve spectacular policy results, but they need to be unified behind common goals and objectives, and have a clearly enunciated message. Only then will policy decision makers take our policy needs seriously. Until something more concretely approaching this, occurs, I am afraid that our community will continue to be used as a political football, to be taken advantage of by both political parties as and when required.

Sasha Nackovski

Political Liaison Officer

AMHRC

Our Soul is Always There, In Our Villages

by Dimitri Jovanov

The seventh successive cultural event organised by the **“Setnitsi, Popadintsi and Krushoradtsi Association”** based in the Republic of Macedonia and the *Union of Macedonians from Aegean Macedonia* began with the sad words in the heading above. A large number of our political refugees, driven out by fascist Greek authorities during the course of the Civil War in Greece, a persecution which still continues on to this day, gathered on the 15th October 2011 in the hall of the Centre of the Army of the Republic of Macedonia in Skopje in order to witness a performance entitled **“Songs and Folk Dances from the Aegean Region”**, already a traditional event, and to see once again close up, youths from the villages that they come from, dance and sing the songs and folk dances with which they grew up.

The main attraction at the dinner was the folk dancing group of the *Home of Macedonian Culture* in Lerin (the cultural arm of *Vinozhito*) which goes by the name of *Belomortsi* and which is made up of male and female dancers from various parts of Greece, inhabited by Macedonians, who performed dances and songs from the regions of Lerin, Kukush, Kostur and Voden. The public was delighted with their performance and the organizers gave the group a plaque which was received by Dimitri Ioannou (Jovanov) who is the group's coordinator.

In addition, a great impression was made by the folk dancing group from the village of Ovcharani in the Lerin region, which moved the audience and brought to them in the words of Tanas Romev, the group's instructor, **“a small aroma and breeze**

from your villages”. The musical ensemble **“Tukashen Glas”** from the Lerin region accompanied the dance group and provided an extraordinary tone to the traditional Macedonian music and dances. The program of Macedonian dances was enriched by the performances of well-known singers whose origins are from Aegean Macedonia such as Marija Dimkova (from the village of Pozharsko, Kostur region), Lazo Andonovski (from the village of Krushoradi, Lerin region) and Risto Krapovski (from the village of Rupishta, Kostur region). Well-known singers from the Republic of Macedonia such as Ani Malinkova and Suzana Spasovska also participated.

During the event, there was a presentation of the book by Marija Dimkova entitled **“From the Folkloric Treasury of Marija Dimkova”**, a collection of traditional songs, stories, fables, legends, riddles and customs from the region of Meglen-Voden.

The event concluded successfully and the audience left completely satisfied as the Macedonians who had been invited from Greece filled their hearts with songs and dances from their places of origin, places which to this very day they are banned from visiting, places where their spirit still lives.

Dimitri Jovanov- Editor of the monthly, pro-Macedonian newspaper, *Nova Zora*, which is distributed throughout Aegean Macedonia, in Greece. <http://novazora.gr/>

Translated from Macedonian to English by Dr. Chris Popov of the AMHRC.



Historic Moments in Lerin

by Dimitri Jovanov



The *General Assembly of the CMC* (Centre-Maurits Coppiters), the European Foundation which financed the publication of the *Macedonian-Greek Dictionary*, was held successfully and in the presence of many participants on the 16th and 17th of September 2011 in the city of Lerin. *The Home of Macedonian Culture* in Lerin, which is the cultural arm of *Vinozhito*, is a member of this foundation and was the host of this entire event.

The program for the event was divided into three parts. The first part encompassed the proceedings of the *General Assembly of the CMC*, which is organised each year in a country where the relevant organization is a member of the foundation. The proceedings of the *General Assembly* were inaugurated and concluded at *Hotel Fedon* in Lerin. After welcoming speeches from the various representatives and brief expositions of the problems that they face in their countries and their activities, the financial report regarding the activities of the *CMC* was presented, followed by the election of the new *Bureau of the Foundation* as well as the proclamation of honorary members. Proceedings were concluded with the endorsement of new members, approval of activities for 2012 and selection of the time and date of the *New General Assembly of the Foundation*.

The *Home of Macedonian Culture* in Lerin was represented by Petse Dimchev (Petros Dimtsis) and by the long-serving member of the *Bureau of the Foundation*, Pavle Filipov Voskopoulos. That same day, from the afternoon until late in the evening, the second half of the event took place; namely, the dinner in honour of the guests and participants at the Assembly as well as many members and friends of

the *Home of Macedonian Culture*. The dinner dance was held in the big hall of *Hotel Plijades* in Lerin and all those present had the opportunity to get to know each other, to exchange ideas and thoughts and to be entertained by the music ensemble *Musikorama* and by the folk dancing group from the village of Ovcharani from the region of Lerin.

The beautiful Macedonian songs wonderfully sung by Kocho Talev (Kostas Talidis), the graceful dancing of the folk dancers and the extraordinary accompaniment of Tase Jovanov (Tassos Ioannou) on kaval and bagpipes, brought the guests to their feet who were delighted by the variety, richness and beauty of Macedonian culture; a culture which has for decades been persecuted and banned by the Greek authorities. All the foreign guests were very satisfied and grateful and one of them, the European Member of Parliament, Zhan Mari Bernar, even got up and sang a traditional song from his homeland, Catalunya.

During the course of the dinner dance plaques were awarded by the *Home of Macedonian Culture* to *CMC* and its president Javier Masias, to all the foreign delegates, as well as to many of the invitees who have for many years helped the Macedonian movement in Greece. Amongst them was Vlado Ralev, a businessman from Switzerland whose origins are from **the village of D'mbeni, Kostur region** and who had provided great assistance for the publication of the first *Greek-Macedonian Dictionary* and Slavko Mangovski from the USA and *MHRMI International Coordinator*, whose origins are from Smrdesht, Kostur region. In addition, plaques were presented to the eminent human rights activists and great supporters of the Mac-

edonians in Greece, Dimitris Lithoxou-historian, researcher and writer and Victor Friedman, the world renowned linguistics professor from the *University of Chicago* in the USA. An award was also given to the folk dancing group from Ovcharani which has for many years presented authentic Macedonian tradition and has not submitted to the pressure exerted by Greek policies. Plaques were also given to Jason Kambovski, a representative of the *Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee* from Melbourne, Australia, to the bag pipe player Tase Jovanov and to the music ensemble *Musikorama*.

Master of ceremonies of the whole event was the *Vinozhito* member and editor of *Nova Zora*, Dimitri Jovanov (Ioannou). All those present that evening left well satisfied and were particularly happy that they had the chance to be present at a multicultural evening, marked by the bright colours of the whole of Europe, a Europe which is so lacking from Greek reality.

On Saturday morning the event continued on with its third and last part. The first item of the program was the showing of a wonderful documentary film by the director Nikos Teodosiou entitled "**Gramos-Magical Scenes**". The documentary was filmed in its entirety on Gramos Mountain, where in the course of the civil war in Greece thousands of Macedonians were killed during their struggle for their national, cultural and language rights. The main subject matter of the film was the tens of razed villages on this mountain and the uprooting of their villagers by the Greek state. The Greek director stated amongst other things that "**in essence, genocide was carried out there**". The full to capacity auditorium at *Hotel Fedon* was rendered breathless by the awe that the film in-

spired and many of those present were weeping.

After that came the last and main item of the program, the promotion of the new *Macedonian-Greek Dictionary*, which was published in May 2011 and officially

promoted at the *European Parliament* in Brussels in June of the same year by Pavle Voskopoulos and Dimitri Ioannou and their European colleagues from CMC and the *European Parliament*. The promotion of the dictionary in Lerin was a historical moment of enormous importance for the Macedonians in Greece who **“have fought tooth and nail”** in attempting to preserve their language. The main presenters were Professor Viktor Friedman, Dimitris Lithoxou, Marija Aleksic Chicheva and Luk Boeva whose arguments left no doubt regarding the importance and usefulness of the dictionary. They stated that

the **“key role”** in bringing about an easing of relations between Greece and the Republic of Macedonia lay with the Macedonians in Greece.

The success of the whole event was underscored by the fact that upon the conclusion of the program, none of those present left and all moved to the beautiful large veranda of the hotel where they were met by other supporters of *Vinozhito* and continued socializing until late in the afternoon.

Such events and meetings, in the presence of many guests of world renown, are supported and assisted by all developed countries. However, this is not the case in Greece. Even though the advertising of the event highlighted only that part of the program which was held on the Saturday and the program for Friday was only known to the police as protection for the

invited European delegates had been requested - there was again an attempt made by members of the neo Nazi **“Golden Dawn”** organization (15 persons in all) to disrupt and prevent the event from being held and to intimidate the organizers. They were, however, unsuccessful. From where did they find out about the event? The upshot was that Greece, the **“cradle of Democracy”**, once again disgraced itself on a European stage.

Dimitri Jovanov – editor of the monthly pro-Macedonian newspaper, *Nova Zora*, which is distributed throughout Aegean Macedonia in Greece. <http://novazora.gr/>

Special thanks to Dr. Chris Popov of the AMHRC for translating this article from Macedonian to English.



Inside



Outside

Introductory Speech by Professor Victor A. Friedman of the University of Chicago at the Launch in Lerin of the Modern Macedonian - Modern Greek Dictionary by Vasko Karadzha



Professor Victor A. Friedman

It is a pleasure for me to be here with you to celebrate the publication, in Greece, of **the Vasko Karadhza's Modern Macedonian-Modern Greek dictionary** by the publishing house Zora. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my hosts for making it possible for me to join you. This is my first visit to Lerin since 1976, when I stopped here with a friend on our way to Visheni to visit **the sisters of my father's best friend, Atanas Panchev, who was known in America as Athan Pantsios.** It is also my first visit to Greece since the promotion of **Vasko Karadzha's Modern Greek - Modern Macedonian dictionary** in 2009. At the time of that promotion, I characterized it as *"an important step in the normalization of Greek relations toward one of its own linguistic minorities, and also, we might hope, toward one of its neighboring states, the Republic of Macedonia."* In that speech I also noted how I had been harassed by

Greek academics at an international conference in Thessaloniki in 1994 for referring to the Macedonian language, and I expressed the hope that such days of intolerance might be past. Unfortunately, members of the Greek political party Hrisi Avgi proved my hope was in vain. As many of you know, in an act of violence that I characterized as *"a tantrum from the cradle of democracy,"* a gang of them interrupted the promotion and, screaming threats and obscenities, vandalized the podium and assaulted me as I attempted to photograph their obviously illegal activities. The meaning of assault in law is a crime causing a victim to fear violence. The swing at my head with a huge, heavy helmet that the bearded thug was captured on video taking constituted assault. My colleague Riki van Boeschoten was told by the commander of the police force that the police had accompanied the thugs to the nearest metro station after the incident. The incident received no significant coverage in Greece, my official complaint to the US Embassy in Greece went unanswered, and as far as I can tell, Greece continues what German historian Stefan Troebst called *"its amok diplomacy toward Macedonia."* It is thus with less hope but considerably more ap-

prehension and defiance that I join you today.

It is worth noting that the influence of Greek anti-democratic forces reaches all the way to American organizations supported **by US taxpayers' money.** It was a sufficiently sad commentary on the state of Greek Studies in the United States that when an American member of the Modern Greek Studies Association (MGSA), an organization whose listserv is hosted by the University of California at Irvine, posted one of the videos of the Hrisi Avgi assault, not one Greek member of that organization condemned the actions of the thugs. Instead, on 19 October 2009, the MGSA distributed an ugly and hysterical call encouraging readers to pressure the University of Utah into canceling the Seventh Macedonian-North American Conference on Macedonian Studies that was held at the University of Utah on 5-7 November, 2009. Although the call did not originate with the MGSA, its unedited and unmoderated distribution by them gave academic support to the barrage of emails and telephone calls that inundated the office of the President and the Department of Languages and Literature at Utah demanding that the conference be cancelled. My protest to the University

of California at Irvine for allowing its resources to be used to distribute such materials went unanswered. Fortunately, the University of Utah stood its ground on principles of academic freedom, and they also provided security to prevent a recurrence of the June incident. Greek members of the fascist organization Stohos came all the way from New Hampshire to disrupt the meeting but were, fortunately, prevented from doing so. Instead, they intimidated one of the participants into not contributing to the volume of conference proceedings for fear that he would not be allowed into Greece again. The paper, was entitled *“Tasos Kostopoulos on Macedonia and the Slavs in Greece: When a Forbidden Language Speaks Truth to Power.”* The paper discussed Kōstopoulos’ 2000 book *I Apogorevmeni Glōssa ‘The Forbidden Language’*, for which, unfortunately, Kōstopoulos refuses to allow an English or Macedonian translation. But this brings me to more positive reflections.

The very fact that we are gathered here today to celebrate the publication of this Modern Macedonian - Modern Greek dictionary in Greece is a clear step forward from the situation documented by Kostopoulos. The European Court of Human Rights played an important role in this progress when it found the Greek state in violation with **respect to its ethnic Macedonian citizens’** human rights in 2005. It is ironic that the next year on September 29, 2006, at the inauguration of Latvian collector Juris Cibuls’ exhibition of primers in Thessaloniki, the Deputy Mayor for Culture and Youth of that city ordered the organizers to take the Macedonian primer out of the show case so that it could not be displayed. In 2009 I said in my speech that I wondered whether perhaps times had changed. Hrisi Avgi indicated that they had not. If I am delivering this speech right now, it means that what I am sure will have been the lovely banquet the night before was allowed to proceed without incident.

Just as it was appropriate to have the Greek-Macedonian dictionary promoted in Athens, so it is appropriate

for the Macedonian-Greek dictionary to be promoted here in Lerin. As the capital of the Modern Greek-speaking world, Athens was the place to promote a dictionary that had the potential to help Greeks learn another of the languages spoken in Greece. Similarly, as one of the major Macedonian-speaking towns in Greece, Lerin is an appropriate venue to help Macedonians understand their present and past in what is now the Greek state. With this dictionary, Macedonians in Greece can read the narratives of their grandparents and great-grandparents, and even further back than that. One of our oldest Modern Macedonian texts is the 16th century dictionary from Kostur. The recently published Sunday Gospel of Konikovo (Δυτικό), an 18th century manuscript with one column in vernacular Modern Greek and the other in Modern Macedonian is another example of Macedonian cultural heritage from the former Ottoman provinces of Greece.

The manuscript of the Konikovo evangelie was found by chance in the library of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria, Egypt, which almost prevented its publication when it discovered that a Macedonian text was **involved. This attitude is part of Greece’s** general denial of the existence of its ethno-linguistic minorities, which has even **reached the world of American Mens’** magazines. The November 2006 issue of *Maxim* featured a photo spread of international “Miss Maxims”, each, a scantily clad and provocatively posed representative of a different country with a putative quotation from the model and **a “hometown fact” about the country** such as the difference between Holland and Netherlands, the number of bulls killed annually in bullfights in Spain, and the number of tons of radioactive dust released in the 1986 Chernobyl disaster. **The hometown fact for “Miss Maxim Greece” was the following: “According to the Greek government there are no ethnic divisions in Greece”** (176).

But in addition to the older works that help us understand the history of Macedonian in the former Ottoman provinces of Greece, Modern Macedonian linguistic treasures remain to be docu-

mented right here in Greece today. As I said in 2009, dialects are the repository of the culture and history of their speakers, and—especially in the case of marginal and isolated dialects—of precious information about earlier stages of a language or the possibilities of how a system can change over time. In 2003, the value of dialects was recognized by UNESCO in its Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, which Greece ratified in 2007. At this point in time, the Macedonian dialects of Greece are endangered and/or moribund. While Greece continues to instill fear in speakers and obstruct researchers, we must continue the work—one can even say struggle—of trying to document these dialects.

As Riki van Boeschoeten pointed out in 2009, Vasko Karadzha was a man who loved both the Macedonian language and the Greek language. The dictionary grew out of longtime work as a translator. He translated major works of Greek literature including Seferis, Ritsos and Kavafis into Macedonian. In his foreword to the Greek-Macedonian dictionary, Mr. Karadzha expressed the wish that the dictionary might contribute to a better understanding between the Greek and Macedonian people by improving their linguistic skills. Vinozhito has now increased the potential of this understanding by publishing a Macedonian-Greek volume to accompany the Greek-Macedonian. **The quality of Marija Čičeva-Aleksik’s editing and enrichment of the Macedonian-Greek volume together with the grammatical apparatus is of the highest professional quality, and the Center Maurits Coppieters is to be congratulated for funding such a useful and important project, and the Dom na Makedonska Kultura can be proud of sponsoring such a fine dictionary.** We can continue to hope that despite Greek government policies, this dictionary will be used by Macedonians, Greeks, and others to become acquainted with the cultural richness each of these languages has to offer to the world.

In Review: the 2001 Civil Conflict in Macedonia and the *Ohrid Framework Agreement*

The following article is an analysis that was prepared in 2002 by Vasko Nasteovski of the AMHRC. It explains why the AMHRC had and continues to have, serious concerns about the Framework Agreement. Since that time, more facts have become available and others have written more detailed commentaries; however many of these appear to reinforce the exegesis written by Vasko Nasteovski in 2002.



Summary

In March 2001 an armed conflict occurred between the Macedonian State and certain ethnic Albanian communities. Various **'Western' interveners quickly concerned themselves with the assignment of settling the dispute.** Whilst acknowledging the causes to any armed conflict should presuppose any eventual attempts at settling the conflict, the attempts by **'Western' mediators to resolve the armed conflict in Macedonia in 2001** is perhaps best recalled for its remarkable incongruity to long-standing international practice. At the very least, it demonstrates a clear double standard, treating the conflict and the Macedonian State in a way that the **'West' itself would never subject itself to.**

Some Background

Unremarkably **'Western' media tended to regurgitate a simplistic position on the conflict, namely that the [Macedonian] Government had discriminated against and otherwise mistreated its Albanian population.** Consequently a small faction of extremists exploited this sense of alienation and launched an armed revolt (British Helsinki Human Rights Group, 2001: 7). In contrast to this claim, it has also been pointed out that there had been a **'continual political dialogue' and 'cooperation across ethnic party lines'** since Macedonia declared independence from Yugoslavia in 1991, consequently the Macedonian Albanians had enjoyed **'extensive civil and political rights'** (Engstrom, 2002: 5-7). Indeed, the largest Albanian political party in the country had been an active junior partner in the multi-ethnic coalition government and the

protection of the cultural rights of minorities in the country has been widely held up by the West as an example of ethnic tolerance, especially relevant to the traditionally dogmatic governments in the Balkans. (Wood, 2001: 1 and Carpenter, 2001: 6).

What remained largely unreported at the time was that American forces stationed in Kosovo as part of the K-FOR operation had strategically ignored the massive smuggling of men and arms across Kosovo's borders (Beaumont, Vulliamy and Beaver, 2001). Moreover, without exception, all the fighting in Macedonia had broken out on the border with Kosovo in close proximity to NATO bases or logistical centres in the country. Witnesses claim trucks had been waved across the border by US K-FOR troops, later to be observed unloading a cargo of guns (British Helsinki Human Rights Group, 2001: 3). Accordingly, the conflict was also portrayed as an extension of what took place in Kosovo.

The presidential elections of 1999 were further viewed as triggering tensions between the two major ethnic groups in the State. During the first round of voting, one of the candidates, Tito Petkovski, had secured a sizeable lead of about 100,000 votes. However, during the run-off that was held late in the year, a relatively unknown foreign ministry employee at the time, Boris Trajkovski, managed to turn this result around in his favour. He had entered what was described as an **'unholy' alliance with Albanian nationalists** during the election campaign. British Helsinki Human Rights Group observers had monitored the poll and subsequently **described what they believed to be 'massive voter fraud perpetrated by the leaders of**

the Albanian community' in the regions neighbouring Kosovo. The OSCE itself had officially recognised some of the obvious problems with the voting, but by downplaying the irregularities seemed to give Mr Trajkovski a level of legitimacy (British Helsinki Human Rights Group, 2001: 1-2).

Internationalising a Conflict

It is important to consider the effect *internationalising* an internal conflict has in the dispute settlement process. Kalshoven calls attention to what appears to be a fundamental legal inequality that exists between parties in a purely internal conflict. He states that:

The authorities in power are the legitimate Government, and their acts are in defence of legitimacy; their opponents are the insurgents, whose acts will be punishable as rebellion, treason or the like under the municipal law in force (Kalshoven, 1973: 13).

It is only when the insurgents receive recognition as a government themselves or as a belligerent party, will this perceived legal inequality disappear (Kalshoven, 1973: 13). Therefore, this lack of recognition of an insurgent group during an internal conflict limits the ability of the different international mechanisms to facilitate a settlement process. To be sure, the dictates of state sovereignty inevitably provides the *legitimate* government to deal with a rebel movement as they see fit. However, *internationalising* an internal conflict by according recognition to the

insurgent movement as *equal* belligerents relativises international law and notionally unlocks the possible use of different dispute settlement methods.

Zartman reinforces this in theory. He notes that of the more conspicuous characteristics that would generally distinguish an internal conflict is its asymmetry. Essentially there is one side (government) that is stronger than the other (insurgents) (Zartman, 1995: 7). As Zartman explains, **in 'internal conflicts and negotiations, one party-the rebels-is totally fixed on the conflict, which involves its very existence, whereas the other-the government-has many interests'. Thus, the rebels 'redress the asymmetry by opposing the government's capabilities with their own commitment' and 'overinvest in their attachment to ends'. The pre-existing asymmetry is reduced once the rebels achieve recognition and impose a similar commitment on the government** (Zartman, 1995: 8-10). It was this situation in Macedonia that seemingly led to negotiations over a peace agreement, which envisaged major changes to the political and legal structures of the country.

As Wilson proscribes, there are three categories of civil conflict. During a rebellion, the rebels have no rights or duties under international law and that traditionally the State has exclusive concern over matters within its borders, therefore the rebels may be punished under municipal law. During an insurgency the rebels are given recognition as insurgents on the basis that they have sufficient control over territory, therefore giving rise to limited relations with other States out of necessity. (Although, their rights do not appear to extend beyond the territorial limits of the state involved in the conflict). Finally, recognition of belligerency provides the insurgents with rights and duties in international law analogous to those of States (Wilson, 1988: 22-29). As Oppenheim has stated:

In so far as, in consequence of the recognition of the belligerency of the insurgents by the legitimate government, the conflict has assumed an international

complexion (Oppenheim, 1952: 211-212).

Whilst historically there might have been **'preponderance amongst legal literature** to give exclusive consideration to internal conflicts as events outside the scope of the system of control of international coercion' (Tanca, 1993: 5-7), it is increasingly evident that no civil war is entirely *internal*. Concerns over widespread human rights violations, the threat of escalating conflicts across borders and even the economic effects of large scale internal violence has resulted in international actors taking a **greater interest in the 'evolution and outcome' of conflicts** (King, 1997: 17).

Internationalising an internal conflict will also allow organisations such as the United Nations to intervene in the *general interest*. For example, under Article 39 of the United Nations Charter the Security Council is empowered to act to **'maintain or restore international peace and security' once it has determined that there has been any 'threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression'** (*Charter of the United Nations and Statue of the International Court of Justice*, art 39). Therefore, state sovereignty in these cases is surrendered to the legitimate mandate of the United Nations (Tanca, 1993: 5-6). However, even the intervention by a third force in internal conflicts will need to be complimented by serious attempts to settle the underlying dispute between the parties for any lasting peace.

It is interesting then to view the events in Macedonia with this background. The **'West' had initially denounced the UCK as 'terrorists' at the beginning of the conflict** in March 2001. Indeed, the leader of the NLA at the time, Ali Ahmeti, had been connected to a series of terrorist acts committed in Macedonia in 1997 and 1998 for **which the United States' president George W Bush included him and other leaders of the NLA in an executive order issued on 27 June 2001. The document highlighted that the Albanian UCK terrorists constituted 'an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States', therefore their access to funding and entry into the United States was restricted** (U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2001: Executive Order 13219).

Other NLA 'leaders' included on this 'Black List' that participated in the conflict in Macedonia include Xhevad Asani, Nuri Bexheti, Xhavid Hasani, Gzim Ostrani, Hisni Sakiri, Emrus Suma and Fazli Veliu. However, by early May the terminology had evolved to 'extremists' and by July the UCK had become 'guerrillas' (Taylor, 2002: 119). Arguably, the evolution in the terminology utilised by the 'West' was to pave the way for a type of legitimating of the UCK forces as belligerents in this particular conflict to enable the negotiation of a peace settlement.

The Framework Agreement

After weeks of 'negotiations' facilitated by international mediators, namely François Leotard on behalf of the European Union and James Pardew for the United States, on 13 August 2001 the leaders of the four biggest political parties in Macedonia (both Macedonian and Albanian) signed a Framework Agreement. The Albanian political parties were able to agitate effectively for participation in the negotiations revolving around changes to the political and legal structures of the country, despite the UCK having established the negotiating position. Unlike in the Rambouillet Conference concerning Kosovo, where the UCK were directly represented and in fact had one of their leaders appointed to head the tripartite presidency of the Kosovo team during negotiations, (Weller, 1999: 227) in the Macedonia 'negotiations' the UCK was conspicuously absent. Nonetheless, there is no doubt the Albanian political parties appropriated the conditions being espoused by the UCK, as their continued relevance necessitated it. In effect becoming the 'political arm' of the UCK (Engstrom, 2002: 7).

The rationale provided at the time for the construction of the document was that it would, in the first instance, go towards ending the fighting between the **Government's security forces and the ethnic Albanian insurgents. It also was meant to ensure substantive changes to the country's legal and political framework that 'redressed' the Albanian community's grievances and thus settling the dispute** (Engstrom, 2002: 7 and Brunnbauer, 2002: 2). The Agreement basically consisted broadly of three parts, which in-

cludes changes to the Macedonian Constitution, changes to existing legislation and a plan to end hostilities with an established timetable for its implementation (Brunnbauer, 2002: 4 and Framework Agreement).

State Sovereignty?

Axiomatic of the governing international order is the respect for state sovereignty that acts as a guiding principle in the international relations between states. The **United Nations itself was founded on 'the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members'** (*Charter of the United Nations and Statue of the International Court of Justice*, art 2). Sovereignty is therefore often the justification used by states to demand the non-intervention of other states in matters considered within their exclusive jurisdiction (Bodley, 1999:420-421). Generally international law has left the management of internal conflict to the absolute discretion of the national authorities of the state in which the conflagration takes place. As mentioned earlier, insurgents or non-governmental forces would then usually be dealt with according to the domestic criminal law of the country. However, this *right* of states to defend themselves against insurgency under their domestic law has gradually shifted to accepting some form of interference from outside (De Schutter & Van De Wyngaert, 1983: 280-281). At times this intervention appears subtler than that envisaged by the drafters of the Charter of the United Nations.

As this case study demonstrates, external forces including the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the United States and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) **'facilitated' the settlement** that was ultimately reached (Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2001). Commentary at the time described the **'Western facilitation' as more or less connivance by bodies such as the OSCE, the media, world financial institutions, 'think tanks' and 'mysterious [Non-Government Organisations]' manipulating events to suit an external intervention** (Deliso, 2002). Others go further and portrayed the UCK as America's proxy military force, especially given the level of assistance provided to this group. Moreover, the mandate of the so-

called mediator, James Pardew was described at the time as one that ensures **'through threat, intimidation, and political manipulation' the signing of the Framework Agreement** (Chossudovsky, 2001).

Indeed Engstrom suggests that the **'international diplomatic intervention'** in Macedonia has largely been characterised by **'the setting of a seemingly endless number of conditions for Macedonia, some of which amount to sheer blackmail'** (Engstrom, 2002: 13). Notably, contemporary intermediary interventions made under the guise of mediation, **sometimes will include 'more subtle processes than the use or threat of force. It may involve offers of aid or threats to withhold aid'** (Princen, 1992: 6).

Nurturing Discrimination

Implicit within the Framework Agreement is the objective of promoting the development of a **'civic state through ethnically defined measures'** that would have the effect of transforming Macedonia from a nation-state into a civic/multi-ethnic state by discriminating in favour of the Albanian population' (Engstrom, 2002: 13). However, given the **'institutional continuities'** present in the country and the formation of **'exclusionist identities'**, (Jabri, 1996: 131 and generally) the Agreement seemingly only fosters an eventual establishment of a bi-national state. Not only ignoring the interests of other minority groups, but potentially precipitating a return to the violent interaction between the two disputing groups. Underlying this process is the **'gravitation towards institutionalising group rights' and a 'failure to promote and protect individual rights'** (United States Institute for Peace, 2001: 1).

A report by the United States Institute of Peace issued in 2001 suggested that the inhabitants of Macedonia do not regard themselves as **'individual citizens with a defined and equal relationship to each other and to the state, but rather as members of collectivities that have to be defended from each other as well as from the state'** (United States Institute for Peace, 2001: 5). In examining the construction of a liberal theoretical framework of constitutional democracy, Daskalovski argues that the envisaged constitutional changes in Macedonia do not fully support

a liberal understanding of a political nation and the equality of all its citizens. He argues that the **'emphasis on the rights of individuals as members of groups rather than as individuals *per se*' does not support 'just solutions to problems in multiethnic societies'**. Moreover, the fixation of specific identities **'obscures the chances for their progress and paves the way for the domination of conservative structures in all the minority communities in Macedonia'** (Daskalovski, 2002: 2-3).

Notwithstanding these concerns, the amended Macedonian Constitution did in fact adopt an ethnic element. The Preamble reads:

Citizens of the Republic of Macedonia, *the Macedonian people*, as well as the citizens that live within its borders, who are part of *the Albanian people, Turkish people, Vlach people, Serb people, Roma people, the Bosniak people, and others*, taking over responsibility for the present and future of **their fatherland ... they have decided to establish the Republic of Macedonia as an independent, sovereign state ...** (Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, 2002: Preamble).

It is significant that there appears a reference to the different ethnic groups as **'peoples' as opposed to 'minorities', which seems to emphasise the 'importance of ethnic belonging rather than the bonds of common citizenship'**. Moreover, the **citizens of Macedonia are 'automatically and principally regarded as members of ethnic groups rather than simply counted as citizens'** (Daskalovski, 2002: 24). In fact, by and large, some of the changes to the Constitution as a result of the Framework Agreement establishes a system where the treatment of all the citizens is not equal, rather certain ethnic groups [Albanians] are placed in a more privileged position.

The Agreement introduced by the intervening powers was essentially a document that sought to provide a power-sharing arrangement between the differ-

ent ethnic groups. However, previous attempts at implementing similar arrangements in Lebanon and Malaysia, creating a unitary state with provisions for positive discrimination quotas and other preferential treatment for the minority groups failed. As the British Helsinki Human Rights Group conclude, it is a **'logical inconsistency and a political dead end'** (British Helsinki Human Rights Group, 2001: 7). Nevertheless, in Macedonia this arrangement targeted the Albanian community in an attempt at redressing the **'asymmetrical power base of the Albanians vis-à-vis the Macedonians'**. However, this would be achieved at the expense of the other minority groups in the country and thus falling short of developing an **'inclusive consociational' political system**. The Agreement merely fortifies the **'ethnicization of Macedonian political life'** and instils even further discrimination (Engstrom, 2002: 16-17).

This is made particularly evident when considering the amendment to Article 69 of the Constitution. The Framework Agreement proposed the following:

For laws that directly affect culture, use of language, education, personal documentation, and use of symbols, the Assembly makes decisions by a majority vote of Representatives attending, within which *there must be a majority of the votes of the Representatives attending who claim to belong to the communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia...* (Framework Agreement, 2001: art 69).

A consociational democracy provides ethnic groups official recognition by the state in which all the necessary conditions to preserve their separate existence and identity is afforded. However, in some instances it can also result in a **'division of a plural society into more homogenous and self-contained elements'**. Thus a consociational democracy appears more concerned with the treatment of groups rather than individual equality, consequently the **'segmental isolation and autonomy'** creates obstacles for wider equality of

society in general (Daskalovski, 2002: 21-22). The changes to the Macedonian Constitution introduce a requirement for a **'double majority' on issues concerning the protection of the national minorities**. As the Constitution now stipulates, decisions considered of a vital interest to the national minorities require approval of the **'majority of the votes of the Representatives attending [Parliament] who claim to belong to the communities not in the majority in the population of Macedonia'**. This effectively grants the Albanians a right of **'veto' even without support from other ethnic minorities**. The Albanian representatives in the Macedonian parliament clearly exceed the total number of representatives who belong to the non-Albanian minorities. As Engstrom argues, **'the Framework Agreement fails to promote a multiethnic plural democratic system as the power-sharing mechanisms designed favour only the Albanian community'** (Engstrom, 2002: 10). Moreover, **'the Agreement sows the seeds for the creation of a bi-national, Macedonian-Albanian State, in which other ethnic communities remain marginalised in the political sphere'** (Engstrom, 2002: 10). Given that the **Agreements' primary focus is to ensure the social, economic and cultural rights of minorities, especially where they constitute more than 20% of the local community**, Amnesty International itself has raised concerns that the provisions of the Agreement do not adequately address the rights of non-Albanian minorities. Groups such as the Roma, Turkish, Vlach and Serb minorities do not comprise 20% of any regional population (Amnesty International, 2001).

This **'double majority' or 'veto' provision is reflected throughout the Constitution**. Surprisingly the Framework Agreement has even presented amendments that **bestows the right of 'veto' to minorities in areas that are clearly beyond the envisioned minority rights articulated in Article 69(2)**. The laws affecting local finances, local elections, boundaries of municipalities, the capital city of Skopje and the laws on local self-government now require the consent of the majority of the deputies that are not from the largest ethnic group in the country (Daskalovski, 2002: 23). Again this accords the Albanian community an enormous privilege in guiding the

outcome of various state responsibilities.

A distinction perhaps needs to be made between centralising and decentralising constitutions. For example, if the powers of government are organised under a single central authority, regardless of the subservient powers possessed by local units, the constitution is described as unitary. However, if the **'powers of government are distributed between central and local government and the central authority is limited by the powers secured to the territorial units, the state is federal'** (Palley, 1987: 12-13). One of the main objectives of the **'mediators' in settling what they perceived to be the underlying dispute was to develop a decentralised government**. Accordingly, the Framework Agreement made clear that:

A revised Law on Local Self-Government will be adopted that reinforces the powers of elected local officials and enlarges substantially their competencies in conformity with the Constitution (Framework Agreement, 2001: 1).

This decentralisation of the political system in Macedonia essentially delegates some of the political decision-making to local communities, which are dominated by Macedonians or Albanians. The parliament adopted the new law on local self-government on 24 January 2002 following immense pressures from the primary interventionist forces in the dispute, namely the United States and the European Union. An example of the pressures exerted included the condition for the organisation of an international donors conference for Macedonia to provide economic assistance, which would be held only subsequent to the laws being introduced (Engstrom, 2002: 10 and 17 and Framework Agreement, 2001: 4, para 8.3). However, as critics argue, decentralisation is only viable when no one group is sufficiently strong that it is likely to achieve a dominant position (Lake and Rothchild, 2001: 17). Territorial decentralization in Macedonia is likely to create a dominant position for either the Macedonian or Albanian communities, depending on the region and not the imagined symmetrical

'power balance between various ethnic groups'. Not only discriminating against the other ethnic groups in the country by distancing them from the 'power-sharing' arrangements, but establishing different spheres of political dominance by one group or the other (Macedonian or Albanian) and more critically multiple arenas for possible future conflict (Engstrom, 2002: 17).

Amnesty

The use of amnesties in a political and legal context in order to bring to an end civil wars or insurrections has been present for time immemorial (Robertson, 2000: 256). The international community provided support for the use of such an amnesty in Macedonia in order to encourage the Albanian insurgents to cease hostilities and consequently to set about settling the dispute. The amnesty was advocated at the time as important for inter-ethnic peace and reconciliation in the country. The Macedonian Parliament passed the requisite amnesty law on 7 March 2002, granting general pardons to **'all those linked with the crisis' except for persons who committed war crimes or related acts that are under the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY)** (Naegele, 2002).

On 7 October 2002 the Trial Chamber at the ICTY issued a formal request to the Republic of Macedonia to defer five specific investigations and prosecutions of alleged crimes committed by the NLA and the Macedonian security forces (International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, 2002). These cases **involve questions over the NLA's leadership, the 'Mavrovo Road Workers' case**, where on 7 August 2001 the NLA abducted five road workers, all ethnic Macedonian, then proceeded to brutally torture and sexually abuse them before mutilating their bodies (International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, 2002: 22 and Human Rights Watch, 2001). Also identified in the request were events surrounding the **'Lipkovo Water Reserve' case**, where the NLA had cut the water supply to the city of Kumanovo and its 100,000 inhabitants (Reality Macedonia, 2001). The **'Ljuboten' investigation was also cited**, where an attack by the Macedonian po-

lice on the predominantly Albanian village resulted in ten civilians die and over one hundred men arrested and reportedly beaten (International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, 2002: 222-223). **Finally the 'Neproshteno' investigation, which involved the exhumation of a mass grave that was expected to find ethnic Macedonians previously abducted and murdered by NLA guerrillas.**

Notably, the new amnesty law barred the domestic courts in Macedonia from prosecuting any war crimes committed during the conflict and the ICTY would only be able to pursue a few of the high profile cases. This arrangement appears *prima facie* **to be incompatible with Macedonia's international obligations under the Geneva Conventions.** For example, the relevant provision in the Conventions states:

Each High Contracting Party shall be under the obligation to search for persons alleged to have committed, or to have ordered to be committed, such grave breaches, and shall bring such persons, regardless of their nationality, before its own courts (*Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949: First Geneva Convention, art 49, Second Geneva Convention, art 50, Third Geneva Convention, art 129 and Fourth Geneva Convention, art 146*).

Perhaps some uncertainty exists over this **obligation given Macedonia's obligation** under Article 6(5) of Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949. The provision reads:

At the end of hostilities, the authorities in power shall endeavour to grant the broadest possible amnesty to persons who have participated in the armed conflict ... (*Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts, 1978: art 6 (5)*).

The Geneva Conventions were introduced as being relevant to international conflicts occurring between states whereas the Additional Protocol has been established to deliberately deal with non-international armed conflicts. Ostensibly it will depend on the interpretation given to the nature of the conflict between one being of an *international* character or one being a *non-international* conflict, which will determine whether Macedonia has fulfilled its international obligations. The decision of the Appeals Chamber of the ICTY in the case against Dusko Tadic perhaps offers some authority in this area. The Tribunal held that serious violations of international law that are committed within an internal conflict are still crimes of an international character. In this instance, regardless of the nature of the conflicts in Former Yugoslavia, the crimes are considered international in character (*Prosecutor v Tadic, Case no. IT-94-1-AR72, Appeals Chamber, Decision on the Defence Motion for Interlocutory Appeal on Jurisdiction, 2 October 1995, paras 79-83*). This presupposes that Macedonia would be under an obligation to bring to justice perpetrators of crimes against humanity, which inevitably poses questions over the legitimacy of the amnesty law.

There are some circumstances where states may justify the action of derogating from their international obligations to try persons who have committed war atrocities by reference to congenial provisions in international law (Robertson, 2000: 260). For example, Article 4 of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* states that:

In time of public emergency which threatens the life of the nation and the existence of which is officially proclaimed, the States Parties ... **may take measures derogating from their obligations** (*International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, art 4*).

This is consistent with the customary international law notion of 'necessity', which provides that 'obligations may be ignored to save a state from grave and imminent peril' (Robertson, 2000: 260). However,

the situation in Macedonia in 2001 had not escalated to a stage where the 'life of the nation' could be said had been threatened. Indeed, with the international concern being translated to international pressure on the warring sides, this ensured that any armed encounters were mostly vigilantly contained. In any event, the UCK had issued a declaration on 8 May 2001 stating amongst other things that they respected the Geneva Conventions and international law and were prepared to co-operate with the ICTY against any of its members who would be responsible for war crimes (Amnesty International, 2001: 14).

As Human Rights Watch commented in relation to the amnesty law in Macedonia, **any such action should 'preserve the possibility of prosecutions of violations of international humanitarian law by either the [ICTY] or the Macedonian authorities'**. Indeed any amnesty that bars the national authorities from hearing cases themselves would also be contrary to the norms of international justice as reflected most recently by the treaty establishing the International Criminal Court. The Statute of the International Criminal Court specifically reinforces national courts as the first line of prosecution under the provisions dealing with complementarity (Anderson, 2002). The Preamble to the Statute and Article 1 state that the Court **'shall be complementary to national criminal jurisdictions'** (*Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*, 2002: Preamble, para 10 and art 1). This is later reinforced under Article 17(1)(b), in which the Court determines on the admissibility of a case dependent on whether:

The case has been investigated by a State which has jurisdiction over it and the State has decided not to prosecute the person concerned, unless the decision resulted from the unwillingness or inability of the State genuinely to prosecute (*Rome Statute of the*

International Criminal Court, art 17(1)(b)).

Conclusion

There are a multitude of methods available for settling disputes that vary between diplomatic and political and different forms of legal settlement. As Macedonia demonstrated, attempts at resolving disputes that have degenerated into armed conflict, frequently entails some form of negotiation and mediation. Nevertheless, as Licklider somewhat pessimistically asserts, the settlement of civil conflicts cannot be sustained. The contention is made **on the premise that 'few of the conditions which led to the [conflict] are likely to have been much improved by the ensuing carnage'. Indeed civil war merely 'inoculates a nation against a second attack'**. Although, Licklider also suggests that **depending on the kind of 'polity' that emerges following the efforts of settlement, then this will influence the prospects of renewed violence, or a substantive peace** (Licklider, 1993: 313-315).

The **'Western' powers that intervened in Macedonia have hailed their efforts as a future model for multilateral intervention in order to 'contain a conflict'** (European Stability Initiative, 2002: II and 34). However, not only did their manner of intervening raise questions over the legitimacy of interfering with state sovereignty, but the approach of the intervention of merely **seeking to 'contain the conflict' has not produced the kind of 'polity'** Licklider refers to for a lasting settlement. Rather than attributing the nature of civil conflicts to **'incompatible identities, ancient hatreds or visceral animosities', the intervening powers must appreciate the different 'structure of political, economic and personal incentives' for the conflict in order to be able to construct more effective strategies for settling disputes** (King, 1997: 82).

Unfortunately in Macedonia the international community lacked a proper understanding of the complexities of the Macedonian situation and promoted the position of one of the sides at the expense of other minorities in the country, which were effectively marginalised from the political sphere. Instead of adopting the concept of a multi-ethnic, civic state, the outcome

of the **'intervention' was essentially a 'bi-national state'**. The Agreement ultimately reached merely assuaged the Albanian community's political desires (Engstrom, 2002: 18 and 11). This seems to contradict notions of liberal nation building, which guarantees a culture of protection of minorities without privileging members of certain ethnic groups, and far from promoting any association between individuals and ethnic belonging, it leaves the **choices 'pertaining to the development and preservation of culture and national identity to interested citizens'** (Daskalovski, 2002: 28). What was required in Macedonia was a transformation that sought **'altered interactions' that 'incorporate difference'** (Jabri, 1996: vii).

The legacy of the amendments that were made to the political and legal structure of the country through the so-called international mediation has only operated to encourage and nurture further discrimination. If anything, ironically, it neatly defines the arenas where future disputes may well arise.

Afterword – Written in December 2011

The Framework Agreement has permeated political, legal and social life in Macedonia since its prologue ten years ago. The intervening years have done nothing to instil any confidence in it as a legitimate form of dispute settlement or indeed as a basis upon which a state might proficiently manage its affairs. Having written the above article in the immediate aftermath of the Framework Agreement, ten years later the practical consequences, if anything, seem to confirm the many concerns expressed back in 2002.

For example, most municipalities throughout Macedonia have become more ethnically homogeneous. This ethnic segregation extends even more profoundly in the areas of education and language use, whereby what is essentially a parallel Albanian education system has established itself. The implementation of the Framework Agreement has clearly motivated a disconnect between the different populations within Macedonia not just demographically, but it seems culturally and by

extension politically, especially given that Macedonian politics, aside from some loose ideological positioning and a system of patronage, is largely conducted based on ethnic composition. This appears to be entrenching the existing suspicions of rival ethnic groups, ironically something the Framework Agreement, as a form of dispute settlement was supposed to address.

The changes made to the Macedonian Constitution as a result of the Framework Agreement to provide the Albanian minority with what effectively amounts to a 'veto' on any issues deemed to be of importance to the Albanian minority. There is evidence that since 2006, the dominant Albanian political party in Macedonia (Democratic Union for Integration - DUI) has used this discretionary power both as a political tool and as a mechanism to further privilege the Albanian minority in the country over and above any other ethnic groups. The use of the 'veto' power to block passage of various legislative measures seems to have ensured that the DUI political party remains an influential political force in Macedonian politics by being able to hold the elected Government and the Macedonian Parliament captive to its self interest. This is hardly conducive to democratic process and it is certainly something that would not occur in those same countries that imposed such conditions through the Framework Agreement on Macedonia in 2001.

But there are wider permutations stemming from the Framework Agreement. In October this year, the Macedonian Parliament brought an end to the national census that was taking place in the country following allegations that ethnic Albanians were attempting to artificially inflate the Albanian population figures by the use of illegitimate identity documents. The causal link to the Framework Agreement is obvious. The privileged status afforded to the Albanian minority over and above every other minority in the country as a direct consequence of the Framework Agreement would surely have incentivised such behaviour to ensure that privilege is not lost. For example, the benefits under the Framework Agreement regarding official use of language are premised on the Albanian minority constituting at least 20% of the population in Macedonia. Was this

'figure' in jeopardy? The implications of the Albanian minority not representing at least 20% of the population would throw a fundamental aspect of the Framework Agreement into question, the corollary being, arguably, that the Albanian minority loses a big part of their privileged status stemming from the Framework Agreement. Notwithstanding, allowing members of the Albanian minority to effectively wreck the national census is a disaster for Macedonia and should not be tolerated. In fact it should be condemned and those guilty of such wrongdoing officially sanctioned.

An even more disturbing outcome of the Framework Agreement is the complete amnesty from individual criminal responsibility provided to individuals and leaders from the Albanian minority for the commission of various war crimes. In July of this year, the Macedonian Parliament voted to abandon the prosecution of allegations for war crimes by ethnic Albanians stemming from the 2001 armed conflict. **This is clearly in breach of Macedonia's international legal obligations** (as articulated in the 2002 article above), but also an appalling breach of justice. In voting for such measures, the ruling party in Macedonia suggested that this now 'closes a painful memory from the past, and allows the country to move forward.' But such a prerogative does not belong to politicians, but to the victims. Moreover, as Primo Levi laments in his seminal work *The Drowned and the Saved*, whilst it is possible for the perpetrators to memorialise events to suit a reality that is convenient for them, the victims do not have such a choice, their pain and their memories never cease, no matter how much they wish them to. Accordingly, these measures neither close the memories nor do they allow the country to move forward. By voting for these measures, the Macedonian Parliament has more than just abandoned the prospects of bringing justice to the perpetrators by prosecuting the alleged war crimes, but much worse, they have abandoned any moral pretence to be able to judge atrocities, such as those committed in 2001 as being *wrong*. Effectively, saying that those actions were not a crime. Of course, if history has taught us anything it is that if we tolerate turning a blind eye to such heinous acts, we are unlikely to survive their repetition. This is a shameful

decision by the Macedonian Parliament.

Which brings us to the issue of sovereignty. The article from 2002 questioned whether the 'Western' intervention in Macedonia was consistent with the underlying principle governing independent states, being the non-interference in the domestic affairs of states. This is clearly a malleable principle, resorted to only when convenient. It certainly was not a principle that applied to Macedonia in 2001, especially given the nature in which the Framework Agreement was imposed on Macedonia. Indeed, if anything, the Framework Agreement seems to have embedded itself in both the national and international affairs of Macedonia. The same 'Western' interests involved in 2001 have consistently deferred to the Framework Agreement and its seemingly never-ending obligations whenever they feel the desire to impose their will on what is supposedly an independent state. In fact, the Framework Agreement gives formal expression to Macedonia's subservience to external interests.

In 2001/2002, the AMHRC expressed serious concerns about the Framework Agreement. Ten years on, not only have these concerns manifested themselves, but the Framework Agreement has become an institutionalising instrument from which Macedonia is being held hostage both internally and externally. It was a dishonest approach to dispute settlement back then and as experience has demonstrated, it continues to be an unbalanced vehicle that impedes the proficient functioning of Macedonia's polity.

By Vasko Nastevski

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



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

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

