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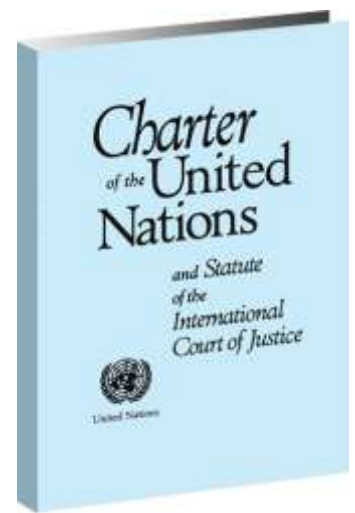
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Reeker Reeks and the Slav Racism of the US State Department

by George Vlahov



On the 19th of June it was reported by *Balkan Insight* that:

Deputy Assistant US Secretary of State Philip Reeker told Macedonian officials in Skopje that brave decisions need be taken in the longstanding dispute with Greece over the name of the country.

"A middle ground has to be found that will enable progress in solving the name dispute," Reeker added, after meeting Macedonian President Gjorge Ivanov and Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski on Monday. Greece insists that Macedonia's name implies territorial claims to its own northern province, also called Macedonia. Greece is blocking Macedonia's entry to NATO citing the failure to resolve the issue.

He noted that solving the Macedonian name dispute is crucial because its resolution will open the way for the faster integration of Macedonia into the EU. "Brave decisions are needed over the 'name', just as they were in the dispute between Serbia and Kosovo," Reeker said, according to party sources. Representatives of the opposition said that the US diplomat had highlighted the fact that "statesmanlike skills are needed".

In a statement to the media, Reeker noted that the US was satisfied with the latest compromise proposals of the UN mediator on the name dispute, Matthew Nimetz. "The process that we support is con-

tinuing. A will is needed for dialogue and progress, not only by the leaders but also by the public," Reeker said.

At first, we can safely assume that nobody believed the nonsense about "territorial pretensions" least of all Athens, but the Greeks have now repeated the lie so often over the last two decades, that sensible people are beginning to become weary of the necessity to continually expose it. We, on the other hand, make no apology for our rather unromantic or even rustic, regard for the truth in this abusive context; or for our refusal to endorse an iniquitous tumble into the basement of an edifice, the EU, which, in these circumstances, might deservedly be perceived as having been constructed upon a foundation made of excrement.

The saying that if a person is capable of expressing his thoughts clearly and honestly, then he should have nothing to do with politics, is obviously one that Reeker subscribes to; the same, just as obviously, *cannot* be said for his present interlocutor.

Yet another attempt has been made to lure the Macedonian political elite into an abyss, with a neatly trussed up chimaera, Reeker has named, apparently without blushing, "bravery". Good old fashioned diplomatic, "statesmanlike" crinoline, based on the precept that more flies are caught with honey than vinegar; designed to disguise as attractive, a suggestion to murder certain intangibles, which are no less precious for being so. Phenomena that cannot

possibly be touched, but which are known to exist, like one's dignity, one's identity, the memory of how one's self came to be, in short, one's rights; all to be abandoned for a deal to do what? To join a union, the dysfunctional bearing of which is given exemplary demonstration by the very conditions of Macedonia's membership! Veritably, after signing such an agreement it might be more fitting for one to reside with the Lord of the Flies himself, Old Nick, on the Isle of Almas Perdidas. We also remind 'neutral' observers in the media, regarding Reeker and his cohorts, that: "*Though he may*

be as good a gentleman ... as Lucifer himself, it is necessary ... that he keep his vow and his oath" (Henry V) as enunciated in the UN Charter.

Resistance of a Sort

Having enough sense to perceive that it exudes the odor of Hades, Macedonian political leaders appear to be refusing to accept Reeker's "bravery" award, quite unlike those missionaries of old who often accepted gold watches and alike, for their "bravery" in "educating savages" just enough, so that they would prove to be hospitable to their

grave diggers, the heads of Western industry; most definitely an example of when it is better to give than to receive. Plucky little Macedonians; though we would like them to strive more openly for the principled victory, known in this context, as self-determination, erga omnes.

That said, it should be repeated that the Republic of Macedonia is not in an enviable predicament. David only faced one Goliath, but the "progress" of Modernity – modernists all too often, unthinkingly equate quantitative increases with qualitative improvements – has pitted



three oversized Philistines against tiny Macedonia – Athens, backed up by coryphaeus's based in two of the current wannabe Zeus like centres, Brussels and Washington, all three gasconading, in their own peculiar fashion, yet in a manner, generically speaking, congruent with the original big bully.

All the same, little Macedonia still seems to be clinging to some of its rights, to some semblance of its remaining dignity. Athens posits that its beliefs, based on an incongruous combination of deep affinity for both Eastern Orthodoxy and ancient Athenian polytheistic paganism,

forbids this and the Macedonians aptly reply that *their* beliefs – legally enshrined universals which should indeed be governing the actions of all those involved in the so-called dispute, forbid ineffable absurdities.

It has all been previously said and in the not too distant future, we might again view Washington and or Brussels, with contradictory slip-page, offer a rejoinder in which the "bravery" carrot is dispensed with and replaced by the "*it's just a name, change it and we'll let you live*" stick. Optimistically, one imagines the Macedonians again responding in the negative by assert-

ing there is no truth or consolation in the reflection that it's just a name, or that many peripheral others are *materially* treated even more disdainfully – how does one measure such things any way?! If it is so trivial, then the opposite argument is even more applicable, seeing as it is in fact *prescribed* by the rules of the game: just accept the Republic of Macedonia's choice of nomenclature and let's move on to matters of more importance.

Maneuvering in a Difficult Position

It has been related in the treasury of

chess lore, lamentably and probably apocryphally, that the Englishman Sarratt, well bestowed of skill by Caissa, drew game after game with Bonaparte. The latter, for all his ability on the various grounds of Europe, in the 'management' of the continent's royalty, clergy and their castles, cavalry and infantry, was in reality no match for Sarratt's usage of symbols of the same on the 64 squares. Apparently, for Sarratt, it was a struggle between dignity and courtesy, the non-results giving just enough to each; thus it is that stalemate positions are continually reached in the so-called *name negotiations*. A process which the gaping acolytes of tossing veracity aside in favour of simply pummeling the line of least resistance, in order to 'resolve' the dispute, are "satisfied" with and will even deem to be "progressive" if the Macedonians decide to become submissive. It should be needless to say, but it obviously is not, so: it can only be viewed in such a way, if one accepts *progress*, simply as denoting movement per se, stripped of the sense it usually possesses, as steering towards some sort of principled improvement. It all amounts to a diabolical form of 'order maintenance' which often tramples on the rights of those least able to defend them.

In other words, Macedonian *courtesy*, as was probably also the case with Sarratt, is a euphemism for fearful foreboding on the part of Macedonians, in regard to the possible reaction of the gargantuan ones, if the Macedonians should decide to more overtly attempt to checkmate them with the simple truth. Thus, no matter how exhausting it has been and excruciating it is becoming, defending themselves from over two decades of puerile abuse, they feel a need to continue enduring perpetual check. This is more akin to an attempt to *out-sit*, rather than out-maneuver, their racist opponent. Unfortunately, the form of hate known as racism is a dy-

namically persistent motivator and it is necessary for Macedonians to shift the weight from their backsides, to their feet.

Racism and the most recent US State Department Report

Some scholars have argued that racism strictly refers to discrimination in the case when the members of the ethnic/national group discriminating against another ethnic/national group, have decided that it is not permissible for members of the discriminated against group, to alleviate the discrimination by joining their group or by making some other sort of cultural conversion, because they lack some essential biological characteristics. For the discriminators, the members of the discriminated against group are unalterably undesirable. A primary example of this is Germany's Jews during the NAZI era, as even converting to Christianity and sincere declarations of possessing a thoroughly ethno-German identity, made no difference to the NAZI's; German nationals with Jewish backgrounds remained a 'race' apart and nothing but undesirable.

We realise that in some quarters, the word 'racism' is still connected to a division of ethnicities and nations into biological groups, supposedly possessing a combination of substantially different physical, mental and behavioral attributes – an idea that was scientifically proven to be worthless, decades ago. Generally, however, throughout Western society, racism has basically come to refer to any kind of negative discrimination, based on ethno-cultural or national grounds, irrespective of whether some kind of *conversion* is permissible.

In our context, it is important to note that Greece has not only the right to name itself; it also has been *practically* given the right to object to the right of another group, the Macedonians, to name the country they call

home. Thus at bottom, the whole notion of denying fundamental legally enshrined human rights (spelled out in the UN Charter) to a particular ethnic or national group, is a form of racist discrimination, whatever has been used as the 'basis' for the denial. Moreover, the Greek authorities refuse to respect the self-ascription or even the existence of a Macedonian ethnicity in Greece and beyond, this again qualifies as racist discrimination; not only according to the Charter, but also the Copenhagen human rights criteria, by which Greece, as an EU member, is supposed to be bound. Generally, Greek state policy is to refer to the Macedonian minority as *Slavophone Greeks* – in other words, not an ethnic minority, just *some* Greeks who happen to speak both Greek and Slavic. Others, who follow the Greeks in this regard, are, at best, unconsciously supporting racism, and at worst, active racists themselves.

Some ethnic Greeks have even expressed a desire to compel Macedonians to forego their right to name their ethnicity and their language. They have not succeeded in this ambition and are not likely to, but it is none-the-less, a racist *attitude*. In all this, one can discern at least two perspectives, from which the discrimination can be described as racist. There are shades of both *cultural* racism and *biological* racism. If Macedonians were to decide to resign themselves, forego their human rights, re-name themselves and their language, i.e. willingly undergo a cultural *conversion*, the racist discrimination might end, because it had achieved its aim. On the other hand, there are grounds for doubting this, as the 'reason' Macedonians do not qualify to name themselves, has also been based on the notion of 'race' (biological makeup) by *some* of the Greeks who have commented on the name dispute. I am thinking of claims of the kind that Macedonians are by *nature*, or *congenitally*, inferior *Slavs*, etc.

Whatever the complexion of the abuse and to repeat the main point about the current meaning of racism, Macedonians are discriminated against in a manner which disqualifies them from access to certain *universal* human rights, this implies that they are sub-human; that is racism and forms part of the basis for understanding the AMHRC/MHRMI press release which appears on the next page of our Review.



The US signing the UN Charter on 26 June 1945

AMHRC, MHRMI and Vinozhito Condemn the US State Department's Negation of the Macedonian Minority in Greece



Melbourne, Toronto and Lerin/Florina (April 26, 2013) - This week the US State Department released its annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2012. In its report on Greece, under the sub-heading "National/Racial/ Ethnic Minorities", the following was stated about the situation and treatment of the Macedonian minority:

"The government did not recognize the existence of a Slavic dialect, called "Macedonian" by its speakers; nevertheless, a small number of its speakers identified themselves as "Macedonian," a designation that generated strong opposition from other citizens. These individuals claimed that the government pursued a policy designed to discourage the use of their language. Government officials and the courts denied requests by Slavic groups to identify themselves using the term "Macedonian," stating that approxi-

mately 2.2 million ethnically (and linguistically) Greek citizens also use the term "Macedonian" to identify themselves. The government has long refused to recognize an association with the name "Home of Macedonian Culture," objecting to the use of the term "Macedonian." The association took the case to the ECHR in 2009. In August the ECHR informed the government that it had accepted the case for judgment and requested the government to submit its position by January 15, 2013."

The terminology used in this passage; namely "Slavic dialect", "Slavic groups" and the use of quotation marks for the term Macedonian, represent nothing other than a negation of Macedonian ethnicity and language in Greece and a perpetuation of Greek racist stereotypes which have resulted in Macedonians in Greece being de-

nied their basic human rights since 1913. It is important to point out that the US State Department has consistently used such insulting terminology when describing Macedonians in Greece in its Human Rights Reports for several years.

The Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee, Macedonian Human Rights Movement International and the European Free Alliance - Rainbow/Vinozhito condemn the US State Department for its use of such terminology and calls on it to respect the inalienable rights of the Macedonians in Greece to use the term Macedonian in describing their ethnicity and language.

We also call on Macedonians throughout the world to contact the US State Department at <http://contact-us.state.gov/app/ask> in order to express their opposition to the use of such degrading terminology.



Attention:

Mr. Thomas Hounslow, The Age – Orthodox Easter

7/5/2013

Dear Mr Hounslow,

I write in reference to your report entitled "Orthodox faithful flock to celebrate Easter", which appeared on The Age's web site on 5 May 2013.

At the beginning of your report you correctly state that *"For most of Australia, Easter has come and gone. But for the massive Orthodox community - especially in Melbourne - the celebrations have only just begun."* However, in the ensuing lines your description of the midnight mass service at a Greek Orthodox Church in Clayton and the comments of a Greek priest about the significance of Orthodox Easter, create the strong impression that Orthodox Easter is celebrated exclusively or primarily only by Greeks which is most certainly not the case.

Orthodox Easter is precisely that and not "Greek Easter", as is often incorrectly reported in the media, in much the same way as the Lunar New Year is not "Chinese New Year." Orthodox Easter is celebrated not only by Greeks, but also by Macedonians, Serbians, Russians, Montenegrins, Ukrainians, Belorussians, Romanians, Georgians, Bulgarians, Armenians, Ethiopian and Egyptian Copts, some Albanians, Syrian and Lebanese Orthodox believers and many other communities in Europe and the Middle East. Many of these communities have their own thriving churches in Melbourne and their churches and places of worship were full over the weekend as well. All these different Orthodox communities have their own national Orthodox churches and hierarchies and do not come under the aegis of a single Orthodox Church authority.

Your report would have been more accurate and representative of Melbourne's heterogeneous Orthodox community had it not focused exclusively on Greek Orthodox celebrations and mentioned that many of the aforementioned communities also celebrate Easter at this time.

Further on in your report you state that *"Orthodox Easter celebrations annually draw massive crowds, as Melbourne is host to the world's second highest Greek population behind Athens"*. This statement is factually incorrect.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), at the time of the 2011 Census there were 154,253 persons in the Greater Melbourne Statistical Area claiming Greek ancestry. http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2011/communityprofile/2GMEL?opendocument&navpos=230).

According to the official Hellenic Statistical Authority, as of 2011, there were five cities in Greece itself with a larger Greek population than Melbourne (Athens: 3,074,160; Salonika: 790,824; Patras: 214,580; Heraklion: 173,450; Larissa: 163,380). <http://www.tovima.gr/files/1/2011/07/22/apograph22.pdf>

Additionally, outside of Greece, there are at least three cities with larger Greek-speaking populations than Melbourne. The population of the Greek-Cypriot controlled part of the Cypriot capital Nicosia/Lefkosia was 206,201 in 2001. In 2001, Limassol, the second city in Cyprus, had a population of 161,200 (See: <http://www.cyprus.gov.cy/portal/portal.nsf/All/817E9279C04E4480C2257023002B858C?OpenDocument>).

(Continued from page 7)

Also, according to the US Census Bureau, as of 2011, New York had a Greek population of 155,425 (See: http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_11_1YR_S0201&prodType=table).

On the basis of the above official statistics, it is apparent that Melbourne does not have the world's second highest population of Greeks after Athens. Rather, it has the eighth largest population of Greeks in the world after Athens.

I would request that you bear the above in mind when reporting in future on Orthodox Easter celebrations and the number of Greeks in Melbourne and Australia.

I look forward to receiving a response from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Chris Popov

Executive Member of
the Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee



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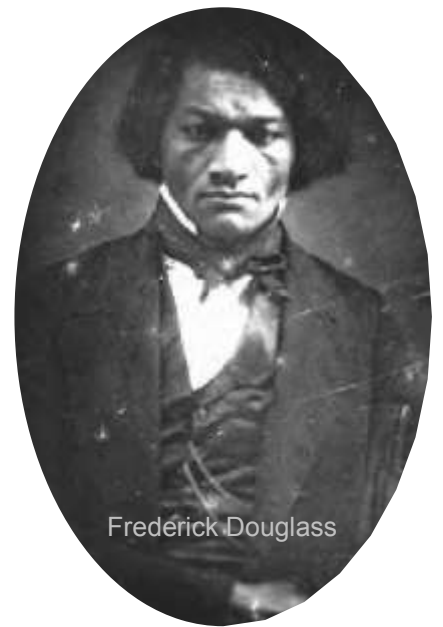
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How Does It Feel?

by Jim Thomev



Frederick Douglass

Introduction

Human rights are rights that people are entitled to by virtue of the fact that they are human beings. They have been a long time in coming to centre stage of international politics. It is generally agreed that the historic United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) was the culmination of millennia of struggle for rights focussed on social and political freedom and one of the great leaps forward. The right to have one's dignity and humanity respected is clearly the very foundation for any worthwhile life.

In its preamble the UN declaration refers to the 'human family' to encompass all human beings regardless of background. This is a great refinement on the notion of 'race'. After all, it is a word that has a tainted history because of its association with very dubious biological and anthropological claims that were far from value-neutral with a cultural bias asserting the superiority of the "white race", usually to justify the dominance and colonisation of other lands by the European imperialists.

The word "racism" denotes dislike, hatred and/or fear of people belonging to "races" other than one's own, often grounded on an assumption of the superiority of the group the offender belongs to. Rational debate on this type of discrimination

is disabled by the very irrational nature of its basis; it often turns on skin colour, perceived cultural difference, or just plain "fear of the stranger." In English, it has come to take in a broader semantic field by including the notion of ethnic background not just the "racial". But the boundaries here are often blurred and a broader vocabulary of vilification, discrimination, violation of rights on an ethnic basis etc has been appropriately developed. Indeed the word racist, like the words, sexist, and fascist, have become a little flabby through over-use, and the toxicity referred to in each instance has to be more precisely defined.

Most of the horrors in the 20th century, like the Second World War have been attributed to racist aggression as with the German Nazis, about whose evil deeds the media in the West doesn't seem to think we can get enough. But Eurocentred value assumptions about what human beings are or should be have also played a shocking role in justifying slavery and prejudices. Thus many African, Asian and Indigenous peoples practically everywhere in the world, have been colonised by imperialistic powers who assumed the unquestionable superiority of their civilisation and their particular reading of their Christian Bible.

The world is still reeling from these

intrusions and annexations. In the post-war period during the last seven decades, decolonisation and its aftermath has created immense havoc as well as humanitarian disasters. Apartheid was only dismantled in 1993. Racism is alive and well all over the world.

Australia itself has not come to terms and still has not got a solution to the problems created by the brutal British settlement of this continent. In the Balkans, as well as the world in general, nationalism is often a destructive force, based as it often is on notions of superiority. It erupted in violent struggles as we witnessed in 1990's after the break up of Communist Yugoslavia. The present Greek nation has been falling apart financially, but there does not seem to be any internal cultural or political mechanism to break with the prison it has created for itself with its crazy claim to the 'glorious heritage' of the ancient Greeks.

However, I think it is important to narrow the discussion from such generalities to cases that can illuminate the large issues that cluster round the struggle for basic human rights or freedom from oppression. In an article of this length I want to look at some specific cases that tie in with my paramount concern with the Macedonian historical experience. To focus on some basic issues that essentially boil down to trying to come to grips with the moral insanity of oppressive cultures that display racist (and sexist) aggression against its victims.

I will assume that Macedonian readers do not need too much detail about their own history and heritage of oppression to see how this discussion is relevant to it. One can take it as a given, that any dramatic cases of racism, or outrageous violations of human rights will have universal points of contact.

The first is a specific instance of racial slur against an Australian Aboriginal football player, a celebrity; the other is a brief note on the life and work of the incomparable, Frederick Douglass – writer, anti-slavery activist in 19th century America. I could have chosen other examples for the purpose of this discussion: however, the Australian example is an obvious choice as I have been a citizen of this country for most of my life; the African American is not a random choice either, as it was the literature of the African Americans and their struggles for civil rights during my early youth that opened my eyes to what it meant to belong to a maligned group and how the members of it tend to have different ways of accommodating or adapting themselves to the situation. It was in discussion with Jewish friends and the reading of literature that had a peculiar moral power and authority as that of the African Americans that I understood what political oppression meant for the psychology of one's family and group of origin. The parallels (and of course, the differences) were easy to perceive and always very illuminating. All these gave me analogies with which to work out and articulate my understanding of the Macedonian experience. The critical task of assessing the problems of discrimination and vilification become clearer when we apply the tools of comparison and analysis.

1. Three cheers for Adam Goodes

A few weeks ago there was an incident at an Australian Rules football match involving the champion Adam Goodes and a young female supporter of the rival team. As she had called him an "ape" when he came within earshot past the boundary line, he quickly requested security take the girl into custody. Of course, racial taunting goes on at many sports fields but

this incident became quite a *cause célèbre*, because Adam Goodes is a very high profile player in the Australian Football League (AFL).

Much media coverage and discussion of racism followed. Why was the three-letter word so offensive to the Indigenous player? He was a double Brownlow medallist (the highest annual award in the game for the best and fairest player in the competition) as well as a key player in winning a premiership flag for his club, the Sydney Swans. There was a small but vocal number of detractors who cried foul about how Goodes should have been above it all and some even had the nerve to suggest that he should not have "bullied" a thirteen year old girl who had no idea that such an insult was so serious etc. Once again, the self-betraying deep-seated dislike of the Aboriginal people by some Australians is revealed.

Fortunately, the response by Goodes who had spoken to the girl by telephone afterwards and explained to her why he was so upset, was seen as the appropriate and courageous action that it was by all sensible people. The sports editor Greg Baum at the Melbourne Age (28/05/2013) gave one of the best accounts:

From a white person to a black person, "ape" is more pejorative by far. It is freighted with centuries of treatment as a sub-species, of oppression and subjugation, and in this country, of a history that began with near genocide, withheld constitutional recognition until 1967 and that leaves indigenous Australians still among the most disadvantaged in the nation.

And

He [Goodes] was protesting the fact that racism exists at all in football, and had manifested at the

beginning of a round set aside to celebrate the progress football has made in combating it and to reset the vigil against it.



Adam Goodes

There are many issues here; I would like to focus on some of the more salient.

Anyone having the wariest inkling of what it is like to be the target of racial hatred will immediately recognise the aptness of the footballer's response to this slur. To suggest that his reaction is over the top, or that he should be "above it all", as a few of the more "well-meaning" critics suggested, is to ask him to get used to being treated as less than a human being with equal rights in our society. It is to ask him, above all, to habituate himself to the idea that within the society in which he is an eminent footballer, he nevertheless is still really "not up to much" because he is – of Aboriginal origin! What normal person from an oppressed group would not find galling such assumptions and attitudes from the director culture?

Of course, there was the characteristic imbecility as some men big on being white foamed about "bullying" a thirteen year old girl etc. They ignored that it was really the media who did the bullying by publishing the name and face of the girl in question, but their real intention was to belittle Goodes. The malicious could say what they

like, as they (almost) invariably tend to do – Adam Goodes acted within his rights. And in any case, he could hardly be expected to have guessed the girl's age given that she was merely a hostile and loud spectator who had shouted a horribly racist word at him.

But while the incident may have appeared to have little in it, especially for those who have never known the stinging scourge of racist vilification, the simple action Goodes had taken was very soon completely vindicated even for the worst sceptics.

On the night of the incident, it was well-publicised that Eddie McGuire, the president of the Collingwood Football Club, the opposing team on the night, immediately went to speak to Goodes after the game, and offer his deepest apologies. However, a few days later, McGuire himself caused a scandal when he made a blatantly racist remark on public radio to the effect that 'Goodsey' could be used effectively for promoting the King Kong musical that had come to town. Eddie McGuire is a very high-profile television personality, not just the president of the biggest football club. The disgrace was seen and heard by the whole nation. Of course, McGuire has tarnished his own reputation and the consequences of his massive faux pas are yet to be seen.

McGuire's racist quip is indicative of prejudices and ignorance that are ever-present in our society. Sexism is also appalling in the degree to which it manifests itself. The most highly placed victim of sexist viciousness is our first female to take the highest office in the land, the present Prime Minister Julia Gillard. In our society at least these two serious attacks against people's rights are widespread and have the same source – ignorance, fear and bad, continuous traditions which arbitrarily assume inferiority in

women and those with harmless differences.

Adam Goodes deserves praise for demonstrating with his courageous action the need for all groups who suffer oppression at whatever level never, but never, to habituate themselves to such insults.

2. A note on the Macedonian experience in Australia

In this context, it is important to put on record that the Macedonian immigrants to Australia have had some misfortunes, even though in terms of their welfare they have done very well as a minority. It would be insulting to the Indigenous Australians to suggest that the problems the Macedonians have experienced in Australia are equivalent in scope and moral horror. But there are subtleties – difficult to describe or delineate with accuracy that suggest more than a tenuous parallel if we look at the Macedonian experience holistically. The outcomes for the Australian - Macedonians locally are a dramatic contrast to the fate of the Macedonians in the Balkans for the bulk of their modern history. There are also the countries where they are still not recognised as a result of the partition of 100 years ago (August 10 1913). It is still very heavy weather for them in Greece and Bulgaria.

However, there have been violations of the basic human rights of Macedonians in Australia which should not be ignored. And here I do not speak just of the constant name calling and insults from the Greek immigrants who should know better, at least in multicultural Australia.

While the Macedonians have not done badly due to their hard work and loyalty in their new country, one can only lament the particular insensitivity and opportunism of the former Liberal Premier of Victoria,

Jeff Kennett, who went as far as to alter the reference to the Macedonian language throughout the bureaucracy and the education system at the behest of the Greek lobby. The timing could not have been worse. When relations between the Greek and Macedonian communities locally had fallen to an all-time low, Mr Kennett fuelled the conflict by siding with the Greek community in the dispute. Thus he also supported the Greek negation of Macedonian self-identification as well as Greek opposition to the newly declared (1991) independent state of the Republic of Macedonia.

The other bad decision by Australian politicians that was Greek-influenced was the change in the way Macedonians were to be referred to in the bureaucracy with the word "Slav" placed before "Macedonian". Also appalling is the non-recognition by Australia of the Republic of Macedonia, (by this official name), well after 130 countries in the world have done so, including our greatest ally, the USA.

In the larger scheme of things, these human rights violations may not be considered particularly egregious by an outsider. But it is like the word "ape" that was hurled at Adam Goodes, seemingly trivial, but actually opening floodgates of the deep-seated nightmares of one's personal heritage, memories of torment and discrimination, terror and humiliations, dispossession, destruction of identity, name change, all of which amount to a denial and violation of one's humanity.

What Jeff Kennett did is especially unpardonable, and should be recorded as it inflicted great pain on the Macedonian community in Victoria on both young and old. It took gruelling legal action of well over seven years led by the AM-HRC and dedicated teachers of the Macedonian language to get the

Australian courts of Justice to have Kennett's directive rescinded. (The Bracks Labor government which succeeded Kennett's was reluctant to do this even when the court had ruled against the directive! It again had nothing to do with fairness or truth – but Greek lobbying.)

3. A lesson in imaginative sympathy

Thomas Paine, a key early writer on the issues (The Rights of Man, 1791) made his presence felt in America as soon as he arrived there in 1774: he wrote an attack on slavery calling it a monstrous violation, "of every principle of Justice and Humanity..." Much agitation, legislation and a brutal civil war (1861-65), followed the great Englishman's revolutionary writings. But it took till the 1960's for some serious changes to the institutional racism of the remarkable commercially-driven USA. This may be cause for despair at 'how long it takes' to change such behaviour. On the vast issue of how does one teach others to feel? I have some reflections induced by one of the greatest leaders and writers in American history. I speak of a man who was born a slave, educated himself, escaped from an appalling slave-master, and wrote anti-slavery speeches and pamphlets of astonishing insight, eloquence and power. I speak of the wholly admirable Frederick Douglass (1818-1895).



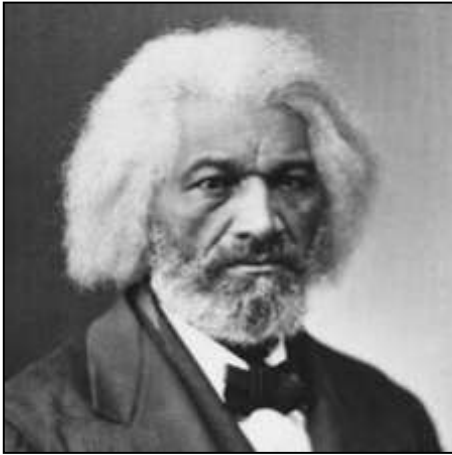
In one of the most unusual letters ever written – probably the only one

of its kind in the world – Frederick Douglass wrote to his former owner or master from England a few years after he ran away from him¹. It is a six page letter and the section of the text that most resonates for me is the attempt by Douglass to get his "old master" to consider the situation from the slave's point of view. This is what he writes:

How, let me ask, would you look upon me, were I, some dark night, in company with a band of hardened villains, to enter the precincts of your elegant dwelling, and seize the person of your own lovely daughter, Amanda, and carry her off from your family, friends, and all the loved ones of her youth – make her my slave – compel her to work, and I take her wages – place her name on my ledger as property – disregard her personal rights – fetter the powers of her immortal soul by denying her the right and privilege to read and write – feed her coarsely – clothe her scantily, and whip her on the naked back occasionally; move and still more horrible, leave her unprotected – a degraded victim to the brutal lust of fiendish overseers, who would pollute, blight and blast her fair soul – rob her of her dignity – destroy her virtue, and annihilate in her person all the graces that adorn the character of virtuous womanhood? I ask, how would you regard me, if such were my conduct? Oh! The vocabulary of the damned would not afford word sufficiently infernal to express your idea of my God-provoking wickedness. Yet, sir, your treatment of my beloved sisters is in all essential points precisely like the case I have now supposed. Damning as such a deed would be on my part, it would be no more so than that which you have committed against me and my sisters.

Such words of moral power were in the man, Frederick Douglass. The

former slave, who within a few years after he broke his chains was discussing with President Abraham Lincoln the way the future might shape up for the Union just before the end of the American civil war. In this letter, he asks the perpetrator to put himself in the shoes, or in the place of the victim, i.e. the man and his family whom the slave-owner so grievously outraged.



In 1848, Douglass was the only African American to attend the first women's rights convention, the Seneca Falls Convention. When there was a resolution put forward for the granting of the vote to women it met with resistance from prominent delegates. Frederick Douglas argued eloquently in favor of the vote for women; he suggested that the world would be a better place if women were involved in politics:

"In this denial of the right to participate in government, not merely the degradation of woman and the perpetuation of a great injustice happens, but the maiming and repudiation of one-half of the moral and intellectual power of the government of the world."

Clearly Douglass knew that slavery is slavery, and even if (white) women by comparison to the African American slaves were experiencing a milder form of it in 19th century America, they were nevertheless being subjected to fundamental injustices and inequalities. Wrongs against women, discrimination and

disadvantages, are still being perpetrated in America as well as Australia in spite of talk about the enormous progress made in those countries relative to most other nations in the world.

And here is another beautiful thought from Douglass:

I have often been asked, how I felt when first I found myself on free soil. And my readers may share the same curiosity. There is scarcely anything in my experience about which I could not give a more satisfactory answer. A new world had opened upon me. If life is more than breath, and the 'quick round of blood,' I lived more in one day than in a year of my slave life. It was a time of joyous excitement which words can but tamely describe. In a letter written to a friend soon after reaching New York, I said: 'I felt as one might feel upon escape from a den of hungry lions.' Anguish and grief, like darkness and rain, may be depicted; but gladness and joy, like the rainbow, defy the skill of pen or pencil.

Reading these words one gets a shock of recognition and an authentic explanation as to why the struggle for liberty and rights – for full emancipation - is one of those indestructible, permanent impulses in human beings.

And it throws light on why Adam Goodes does not take kindly to the suggestion that he is a second-rate citizen in the very land his ancestors occupied long before the arrival of Europeans. It tells us that the Macedonians have every right to be incensed by attacks on their freedom and identity. And it serves to emphasize what a necessary new beginning and promise for all the oppressed of the earth is enshrined in the UN *universal* declaration...

4. Some sobering and salutary considerations

One of the more unfortunate aspects of social and political change is that changing normative behaviour is exceptionally difficult, painstaking and requires immense persistence. Even a violent revolution cannot bring about the necessary changes as attitudes that have been ingrained for centuries cannot be changed or just expunged overnight or even within a generation. We have seen this to be the case with both racism and sexism. (At the time of writing Julia Gillard, the Prime Minister of Australia, has again been the target of outrageous sexist viciousness.)

It is clear that the most visible examples of vilifications or attacks on people's rights are publicised widely when the targets are "celebrities" or highly visible politicians. It would be hard to imagine any society where both racism and sexism were not rife – their degree of severity always dependent on how much public understanding and therefore support there is for action against such offences. Clearly legislation and education are crucial in combating the problems but they don't seem to be enough. Above all, facilitating legal enforcement of legislation will be crucial in the process of change. The enforcement of the law is the biggest bugbear for the UN declaration throughout the world. There are powerful states which see themselves as beyond the legal jurisdiction, leading one to believe that they seriously believe that might after all is right. The USA often seems to be of this view. People with an interest in the international law should consider a career as human rights lawyers, they are sorely needed.

One explanation for slow progress on enforcing human rights and changing prejudices is that negative

views of people on the basis of ethnicity, language, culture, and gender, have become habits. Something can be completely off the planet like the basis of most religions (if you will pardon the pun), yet if enough people agree about it, it is not seen as clinically insane. Even when there are views roundly declared unacceptable the fact that the prejudices are deep – seated paradoxically lead to some offenders believing they can get away with expressing them as jokes. This of course is not true, as Eddie McGuire, learnt to his cost. And this is also not true with so-called sexist jokes as well. The abuse of women and the stranger/foreigner and incidents of violence against them are still regular occurrences in a society as peaceful as Australia, proof that such hatred and malice is ever-present. This is not to mention the violence of the state against asylum seekers, past and present, alas.

I focused on the Adam Goodes incident, because, I had witnessed the episode on television during the direct telecast of the game where Collingwood my team was being soundly thrashed. Also it received much attention in the media and was intrinsically worthy of attention as a pointer to big problems not just with racism but also its very presentation by the media. But beyond this, I have always been deeply unsettled by a fundamental riddle in my adopted land: this is the mystery of why our Australian society has not been able to treat the Indigenous people with fairness and justice. My reading of articles like the one by Greg Baume and some of the more intelligent commentaries were very encouraging that awareness, discussion and public response could be moving in encouraging directions.

The Indigenous of this continent have probably been more “researched” than any other

comparable group in the world. Yet we are still witnessing utter ineptitude from the successive Australian governments: given a report six or so years ago about the plight of the Aboriginal communities with nearly a hundred recommendations for bringing about improvement, the Coalition Federal Government in a bipartisan approach with the then Opposition, sent the army and the police in for what is known as the Intervention...

I am still baffled by this basic conundrum. In the irrationality stakes it is a bit like the Greek approach to its minorities and especially the Macedonians, the *entopyi*² (natives, indigenous, locals), - could it be that the moral insanity-the lack of compassion, disabled empathy, leads to a guilty conscience that is corrupted into a self-hatred that can only be alleviated by perpetual detestation of the victims?

I made brief reference above to the extraordinary words and deeds of one of the greatest (African) Americans. Here was a man who inspires with his autobiographies and speeches. His very consciousness, or awareness, is a form of action. Articulating his experience and reflections on it with the rapier-like sharpness of his prose, he is definitely one of the best American writers of the 19th century, the century of Emerson, Thoreau, Melville, Walt Whitman and the incomparable Mark Twain.

Frederick Douglass demonstrated that for all the trials on the road to emancipation, justice and equality and respect for all – the human potential for courage and endurance can be awe-inspiring. His life and work exhibit a man who suffered profoundly, a man who had been there, and who yet had developed insight and powers of empathy with all who suffer. Liberation is not the end. It is the beginning. Douglass demonstrated

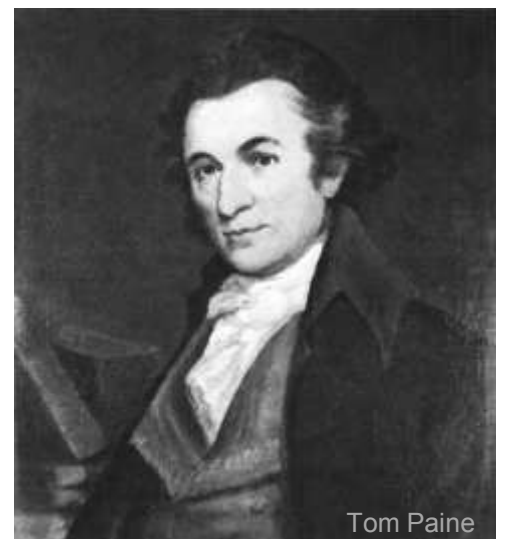
something else that is simple, true and profound – only those who are not afraid to live will not be afraid to die.

Jim Thomev

Endnotes

¹ Letter to his old master, in *Autobiographies*, appendix, page 417-18, Library of America, College edition, 1996.

² Ἐντόπιος, Gr. Native, indigenous, local -This was the word used to describe Macedonians in Greece in my memory. This appears anomalous but is another way of saying the Macedonians are Greeks who have been led astray if they are Saxophones. Of course the Greeks have used anything that came to hand to deny the Macedonians their true identity and are still at it with Fryomians or Skopjani being the most recent.



Tom Paine

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The Poetry of Gane Todorovski

by Dr. Michael
Seraphinoff



Gane Todorovski was born in May of 1929 and died in May of 2010. He had a long and distinguished career as a poet, translator, essayist, literary critic, historian, publicist and one-time ambassador. He graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Cyril and Methodius in Skopje. He received his Ph.D. for the work, "Slavs Veda and its mystifiers". He once worked as a journalist with "Tanjug", "Mlad borec" and "Studentski zbor".

But he was best known as a professor of Croatian and Macedonian Literature of the 19th century as a member of the Faculty of Philology at Skopje University. He was a former president of the Macedonian Writers' Association (1969-1971) and (1985-86), and a president of the Board of the Struga Poetry Festival, and editor-in-chief of the journal "Mlada literatura".

He was also a fierce and resolute defender of the rights of the Macedonian people, and as one eulogist wrote of his poetry: "His patriotic poems that depict the sufferings and the longing for freedom, the

ideals and the sacrifices of revolutionaries and poets, the struggle of the Liberation War and the exultations in freedom are remarkable pieces in the history of Macedonian literature."

The literary critic Georgi Stardelov commenting on his poetic works, said that, "inspired by everyday life, his poetry bears a social, political and intimate - national mark." The English translator of his poetry, Professor Ljubica Janeshlieva, in a book simply entitled *Poems Gane Todorovski*, University of Bradford, 1975, said: "Todorovski's poetry speaks for itself." His poetry certainly does speak for itself. Here is one of my favorite poems from that work:

(Continued on page 17)

The Macedonian Language

You were born in an evil hour, in darkness
To be recognized by us as a radiant rainbow
In sight after long centuries terror-struck -
You tore yourself off like a war cry
Of our uprisen rebels
Who first despised slavish quietude!

Through dirges you unfurled into a sworn word
Hardened flint like through harsh submission
Like the sacred oath of those who bore us -
Did you feel offended and cursed
With the bitter lot of everlasting exile
That so you became a fighter for freedom?

You stammered in a shaking voice
Turned into a bitter curse, into misfortune
Like a disease from a stinging gaping wound -
You bitter gurgling babbling
Trembling generous ailing
Inspiring breath of the motherland.

Were you left an unfinished sin
Of the Miladinovs', Dzhinot and Prlichev?
Affection? Dignity? Benevolence?
For old man Tsepenkov a light in a dark cage,
For Misirkov a shore unreachd, a bitter cramp
In the sacred act of our begetting.

Both the impudent and the evil insulted you
Just then you spread your wings, became a wind
Blowing encouragingly towards freedom -
They cursed you, denied you, would not believe
That long centuries of suffering had cherished
You like their own dearest offspring!

On Ilinden you became a lightning flash report
You were imprinted in the Krushevo Manifesto
And many the songs you wove about Delchev -
In a dark time you poured forth like a ray
Of the breaking dawn to become an interpreter
Of a day full of sunshine and splendor!

You became freedom's most precious gift,
Flow thunderingly through the throats of Pelister and Shar
Wherever hearts beat that thirst after you -
The mute Aegean in its breadth will calm you quite
Mount Pirin will shelter you like a trusty sworn accomplice
So as to hear you out, to joy in you to the full.

Sob with the emigrants who leave their native land
Seeking their bread throughout an unknown world
From the damned Americas to Australia's burning heat -
Be their bitter oath, both curse and blessing
When they set up their new homesteads
Sadden their souls with an old song!

And be a faithful guard of all our folk
Be like our motherland's prayer
That the ashes of all who loved you be at peace.
You - a kiss, a wrinkle, a blessing and a pain,
You - passionate embrace, you - the strongest alcohol,
You - the sigh in which we cried for the first time.

Македонскиот Јазик

Се роди ти во слобода, во мрак,
За да те препознаеме ко сјаен божилак
На повидок по долги векови глупотија
Се откорна ти како борбен вик
На востанатиот наш бунтовник
Што прв ја презре ропската мирнотија!

Низ тажачки се раздипли в клет збор,
Закренеме низ корав непокор
Ко завет свет ха тие што не родија
Се осети ли навреден и клет,
Со судба горчлива на вечно прогенет,
Та, стана војник за слободија?

Запелтечи низ тетерав ти глас,
Се престори во врла клетва, в небичас,
Како болештина од рана луто зината
Ти Бигорлив, ти жуборлив, ти болжлив,
Ти возбудлив здив на татковината!

Им остана ли недовршен грев
На Младиновци, на Џинот и на Прличев?
Разнежност? Достоинство? Добрување?
За деда Цепенков виделина низ опак век,
За Мисирков брег нестигнат, грч горкопек
Во чинот свет на нашето зачнување!

Те навредуваа и безочни и зли,
Ти токму тогаш се развиоре, се раскрили,
Накај слободата ни стана ти покревање
Те псуваа, те одречуваа, не поверуваа
Дека во рожба најмила ми те зачуваа
Галежно, долгите векови на поревање!

На Илинден се стори секавична вест,
В Крушевскиот се втисна Манифест,
За Делчев сплете наниз жални песни
Во темно време бликна, чунки лач
На разден што се раѓа, да стане толкувач
На ден полн сонце и чудеснина!

Ти, на слободата и стана најскап дар;
Громовно гргјај низ грлата на Пелистер и Шар,
До кај што бијат срца што те жедуваат
Нем Егеј в ширта своја до болка ќе те смири,
Ќе ми те засолни ко верен јатак Пирин,
да ти се изнаслушаат, да ти се нарадуваат!

Липај со гурбетчиите што роден кат
Напуштаат, барајќи леб низ светот непознат,
Од пустине Америки до припекон Австралија
Биди им жолчна клетва И пцост И благослов
Кога ќе си го задомат кај-годе животот нов,
Низ стара песна душата нивна разжали ја!

И биди верен вардач на сиот народ наш,
На молитва татковинска да прилегаш,
За да се смири правта на сите што те сакале
Ти бакнеж, бркчка, благослов и бол,
Ти преграб страстен, ти најлуд алкохол,
Ти воздишко низ која првпат сме заплакале!

And one more of Gane Todorovski's poems, translated by some lover of the Macedonian word and land and posted on the World Wide Web (Macedonia.eu.mk) for all of us to enjoy:

Map Of Macedonia

Would it be possible with such
aloofness,
with two or three talkative lines and
with two or three conversational
colours,
to splash on a canvas the idea of
one's native land?

Well yes, it would be possible!

Our destiny is framed
like something turned upside down,
doubled up in pain the horizons
of hope,
crushed the visions labelled refuge,
truth spread out on the palm
of the hand
and the pictorial perfection
of no way out.

But all you see is a compass and a map
and many pencils scattered about it,
sharpened if not smoothed,
so they can prove themselves
in a proud role:
looking at lines we look at grief,
we look at our history -

What we have framed here
is not just a sigh
preserved in another colour -

That, too, would be possible;
Quite possible.



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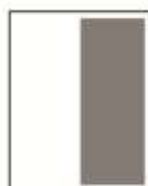
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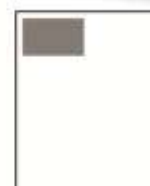
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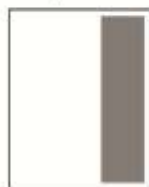
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We Want to Learn our Mother Tongue: Macedonian

Ovchareni
26 March 2013



Dear Mayor/Director of Western Macedonia/Minister,

As you are aware, we are passing through a very difficult period in Greece. On one hand there is the financial crisis and on the other, there is a continual growth of social problems, which have created many additional difficulties in our everyday lives.

This is especially so in regions like ours, which have always been deemed peripheral by the state, the citizens are cut off from everything. Unemployment is galloping, while there has been a simultaneous rise in dangerous phenomena like "Golden Dawn", which makes all of us who are carriers of a different language, culture or ethnic identity, feel that Greece is rapidly returning to the past, which was filled with expulsions/deportations, unknown islands, castor oil, bans and fear.

Luckily for us, some things have changed. Greece is a member of the European Union, a large family of peoples who have imposed strict regulations in defence of its citizens, who, like us, want to maintain our different characteristics. More concretely, Article 21 of the Charter of Basic Rights of the EU, states that

member states are obligated to protect linguistic difference and affirms that discrimination based on such difference against the speakers of the language, is forbidden. Additionally, a very important organ of the EU, the Commission for Peripheries, has been proposing to member states since 2008, protection of minority languages which are spoken within their borders, even if they are not officially recognized.

Permit me to also remind you that Greece has signed, though not ratified, the Council of Europe's Framework Convention in relation to peripheral and minority languages. Among other things, the Convention stipulates recognition of these languages as a manifestation of cultural capital; respect for the geographical region where the language is spoken and especially, the promotion of conditions which enhance the ability to use the language, in written and spoken forms, in both public and private.

On the basis of the above, I believe that the time has come to demonstrate that Greece does indeed belong to the European family which respects the rights of all the country's citizens, irrespective of their ethnic or linguistic origins. As the President of Ovchareni, I have received hundreds

(Continued from page 20)

of requests from the citizens of the municipality of Ovchareni and other places, to have the freedom to use/access their native Macedonian language, without any barriers in all segments of public life.

Accordingly, I ask you for the following:

1. For the Macedonian language to be given official recognition and for it to be taught in all educational institutions, schools in Ovchareni (primary, secondary and post-secondary).

2. To replace all the current topographical and building signs within the bounds of the municipality, with signs written in both Greek and Macedonian.

I think such actions will be beneficial for the citizens of my municipality

and for the country as a whole. On one hand it will very clearly show that even in periods when democracy is in crisis, Greece has not given in to the pressure from those who are nostalgic about Nazism/Fascism and is still looking forward. On the other hand, such actions will create conditions in which all those who speak the Macedonian language, will feel that they are indeed and not just on paper, equal citizens in a country governed by the rule of law.

Taking into account the current difficult economic situation, promoting the Municipality of Lerin as the first municipality to officially support and encourage linguistic diversity, will enable, with the appropriate advertising, the development of a powerful tool in the service of economic and tourist growth for the whole region as it would attract visitors do-

mestically and from abroad, as with other parts of the EU, like for example, South Tyrol, Istria and Transylvania.

I hope to receive a positive response from you, so that we can jointly eliminate a historical, social and financial injustice, which has regrettably been endured for decades, by Greek citizens who respect the law.

Respectfully,

Panayotis Anastasiadis
President of Ovachareni, Lerin.

This letter was sent to all the relevant departments of the Greek government on the 26th of March 2013. Translated from Macedonian by George Vlahov of the AM-HRC.



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Западна Македонија / Министре**

Како што знаете минуваме низ еден период многу тежок за Грција. Од една страна финансиската криза и од друга страна постојано зголемувани општествени проблеми, имаат создадено многу дополнителни тешкотии во секојдневието на сите нас.

Посебно на територии како нашата, која од секогаш наоѓаше на «посебна граѓа» од страна на државата, граѓаните се отсечени од се. Невработеноста галопира додека истовремено појавата на лоши феномени како што е Златна Зора не прави сите нас кои сме носители на посебен јазичен, културен и национален идентитет, да се чувствуваме дека Грција се враќа брзо во минатото, едно минато полно со истерувања, пусти острови, ризинус, забрани и страв.

Но среќа за нас, времињата се сменија. Грција е член на Европската Унија, на оваа голема фамилија на народите која има поставено строги правила за заштита на нејзините граѓани кои – како нас – посакуваат да ги зачуваат нивните посебни карактеристики. По конкретно, Членот 21 на Картата на Основните Права на ЕУ споменува дека државите-членки се обврзани да ја штитаат јазичната различност додека нагласува дека забранува било каква дискриминација против нив која се базира баш на оваа различност. Дополнително, еден многу значаен орган на ЕУ, Комисијата на Перифериите, ја предложи веќе од

2008 на државите – членки заштитата и користењето на малцинските јазици кои се зборуваат во нивните граници, дури и ако тие не се признаваат официјално.

Дозволете ми уште да ве потцетам дека Грција ја има потпишано но не и верификувано Рамковната Конвенција на Советот на Европа во врска со периферијалните и малцинските јазици. Меѓу друго, Конвенцијата предвидува признавање на овие јазици како израз на културно богатство, почитувањето на географската територија каде еден таков јазик се зборува и – главно – олеснувањето и поттикнувањето на користење на јазикот во писмен и усмен облик и на јавниот и на приватниот живот.

Врз основа на погорното, мислам дека дојде времето да докажеме дека навистина Грција припаѓа на европското семејство која ги почитува правата на сите нејзини граѓани, независно од нивното национално и јазично потекло. Како Претседател на Овчарани имам добиено стотици барања од граѓани на поранешна општина Овчарани па и од други места, кои ми бараат ослободување на нивниот мајчин македонски јазик и без пречки нејзино користење во сите сегменти на јавниот живот.

Како последица на тоа, од вас бараам:

1) Македонскиот јазик да се учи во сите образовни институции – училишта на Овчарани (основно, средно и посредно) и да се признава официјално и

2) да се заменат сите денешни топографски табели како и табелите на сите јавни згради во рамките на општината со други кои ќе пишуваат и на грчки и на македонски јазик.

Сметам дека едно такво дело ќе има само корист и за граѓаните на мојата Општина и за целата држава воопшто. Од една страна ќе покаже преку нај јасен начин дека и во периоди што демократијата поминува криза, Грција не потлегува на притисоци од страна на носталгичари на нацизмот – фашизмот и гледа напред. Од друга страна, ќе создаде услови кои ќе им дозволат на сите кои го зборуваат македонскиот јазик да се почувствуваат дека навистина а не

само на папир се еднакви граѓани на една држава каде владее законот.

Земајќи предвид денешната многу тешка економска состојба, извешувањето на Општина Лерин како првата општина која официјално ја подржува и поттикнува јазичната различност, ќе може преку соодветно презентирање да сочини еден извореден алат за економски и туристички развој за целата територија, привлекувајќи многу поголем број на посетители од целата држава и странство, како во останатата ЕУ, земајќи пример од Јжен Тирол, Истрија и Трансилванија.

Се надевам за ваше позитивен одговор со цел да отстраниме заедно една историска, социјална но и финансиска неправда против Грчки граѓани кои го почитуваат законот и што трае за жал многу децении.

Со Чест,

Панајотис Анастасијадис
Претседател на Овчарани Леринско

(Превод од грчки јазик / Писмо на Панајотис Анастасијадис-Пандо Ашлаков, Претседател на Овчарани, кое беше испратено до сите надлежни органи на грчката држава на 26 Март 2013 год.)

ΔΗΜΟΣ ΦΛΩΡΙΝΑΣ
Αρ. Πρωτ. 9259
26-3-13
Πρωτ. 9259
26-3-13

Προς : Δήμο Φλώρινας
Δημάρχο κ. Βασκόπουλο Ιωάννη

Κοιν. : 1. Υπουργείο Παιδείας και Θρησκευμάτων
Υπουργός κ. Αρβανιτόπουλος Κωνσταντός

2. Περιφέρεια Δυτικής Μακεδονίας
Περιφερειάρχης κ. Δακής Γεώργιος

Μελίτη, 26/03/2013

Αγαπητέ κ. Δήμαρχε,

Όπως ασφαλώς γνωρίζετε, η περίοδος που διανύουμε είναι ιδιαίτερα δύσκολη για την Ελλάδα. Η οικονομική κρίση που μαστίζει πια και τον τελευταίο πολίτη αυτής της χώρας έχει πάρει διαστάσεις πανδημίας και εξελίσσεται σε κοινωνική, αποσπαραχθέντος κάθε έννοια δικαίου και αλήθειας.

Ειδικότερα δε, σε περιοχές όπως η δική μας, που ανέκαθεν τύχανε της –όχι πάντοτε καλοπροαίρετης «φροντίδας» του κράτους, οι συμπολίτες μας είναι αποκομμένοι από όλα! Η ανεργία καληνάει και η φτώχεια εναγκαλίζεται με την δυστυχία, ενώ ταυτόχρονα η ολοένα αυξανόμενη εμφάνιση φασίζουσας συμπεριφοράς και φαινομένων τύπου Χρυσής Αυγής, κάνει όλους εμάς, που είμαστε φορείς αλλά και συνέχιστές μιας ιδιαίτερης γλωσσικής, πολιτιστικής και πολιτισμικής ταυτότητας, της Μακεδονικής, να αισθανόμαστε ότι επιστρέφουμε ολοταχώς στο παρελθόν, ένα παρελθόν γεμάτο εξορίες, απαγορεύσεις, φόβο και ρεταινόλαδο.

Οι καιροί όμως έχουν αλλάξει. Η Ελλάδα είναι μέλος της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, αυτής της μεγάλης οικογένειας των λαών, που έχει θεσπίσει αυστηρούς κανόνες για την προστασία των πολιτών της και τους αναγνωρίζει το δικαίωμα να διαφυλάττουν τα ιδιαίτερα χαρακτηριστικά τους. Συγκεκριμένα και με δεδομένο ότι και στη χώρα μας η πολιτισμική και γλωσσική ποικιλομορφία αποτελεί πραγματικότητα, το Άρθρο 21 και 22 του Χάρτη Θεμελιωδών Δικαιωμάτων της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης, αναφέρουν ότι τα κράτη-μέλη είναι υποχρεωμένα να προστατεύουν τη γλωσσική διαφορετικότητα, ενώ παράλληλα τονίζει ότι απαγορεύεται οποιαδήποτε διάκριση σε βάρος όσων επιθυμούν να εκφράσουν αυτή την διαφορετικότητα. Επιπρόσθετα, ένα πολύ σημαντικό όργανο της Ε.Ε., η Επιτροπή των Περιφερειών ήδη από το 2008 έχει προτείνει στα κράτη-μέλη την προστασία και κυρίως την χρήση των μειονοτικών γλωσσών που ομιλούνται στην επικράτεια τους, ακόμα και αν αυτές δεν αναγνωρίζονται επίσημα!

Και στο σημείο αυτό επιτρέψτε μου να σας θυμίσω ότι η χώρα μας έχει υπογράψει αλλά δυστυχώς όχι και επικυρώσει την Σύμβαση-Πλαίσιο του Συμβουλίου της Ευρώπης αναφορικά με τις περιφερειακές και μειονοτικές γλώσσες.

Μεταξύ άλλων η σύμβαση προβλέπει την αναγνώριση των γλωσσών αυτών ως έκφραση πολιτιστικού πλούτου, τον σεβασμό της γεωγραφικής περιοχής όπου μια τέτοια γλώσσα μιλιέται και –κυρίως- την διευκόλυνση και ενθάρρυνση της χρήσης της σε γραπτή και προφορική μορφή τόσο στην ιδιωτική όσο και στην δημόσια ζωή.

Έχοντας υπόψη όλα τα παραπάνω, πιστεύω πως ήρθε ο καιρός να αποδείξουμε όλοι μας ότι η Ελλάδα στις απαρχές του 21^{ου} αιώνα δικαίως βρίσκεται στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και θεωρείται μια σύγχρονη χώρα που σέβεται τα δικαιώματα των πολιτών της, ανεξαρτήτως εθνικής και γλωσσικής καταγωγής. Ως Πρόεδρος του Τοπικού Συμβουλίου της κοινότητας Μελίτης έχω γίνει αποδέκτης εκατοντάδων αιτημάτων από δημότες της Μελίτης και όχι μόνο, οι οποίοι μου ζητούν να απενοχοποιηθεί η χρήση της μητρικής μας Μακεδονικής γλώσσας και να μην παρεμποδίζεται η απεικονίζεται σε όλες τις εκφάνσεις της δημόσιας ζωής.

Συνεπώς ζητώ από μέρους σας την βοήθεια ώστε: 1) η Μακεδονική γλώσσα να διδάσκεται στα εκπαιδευτικά ιδρύματα – σχολεία της Μελίτης, Γυμνάσιο και Λύκειο και να αναγνωρίζεται επίσημα και 2) Να αντικατασταθούν όλες οι σημερινές τοπογραφικές πινακίδες καθώς και οι επγραφικές σημάνσεις (ταμπέλες) όλων των δημοσίων κτηρίων εντός της Μελίτης με διγλωσσές πινακίδες, οι οποίες θα φέρουν την αναγραφή και στα Ελληνικά και στα Μακεδονικά (Μελίτη – Οβισσάραν).

Θεωρώ, πιστεύω ακράδαντα αλλά και αισθάνομαι πως μια τέτοια κίνηση μόνο όφελι θα έχει για τους συμπολίτες μου αλλά και για την περιοχή και την χώρα γενικότερα. Αφενός μεν θα καταδείξει με τον πιο ξεκάθαρο τρόπο ότι ακόμα και σε περιόδους γενικευμένης κρίσης όπου οι δημοκρατικοί θεσμοί και αίσθηση του δικαίου δοκιμάζονται, η Ελλάδα δεν υποκύπτει σε πιέσεις νοσταλγών του φασισμού-ναζισμού, αφετέρου δε θα αποκαταστήσει την αδικία και θα επιτρέψει σε όλους όσους μιλούν την Μακεδονική γλώσσα να νιώσουν, επιτέλους, στη πράξη ότι είναι ισότιμοι πολίτες ενός ευνοσόμενου κράτους. Και με δεδομένη τέλος την πολύ δύσκολη οικονομική συγκυρία, η ανάδειξη της κοινότητας μας και κατ' επέκταση του Δήμου Φλώρινας ως του πρώτου δήμου στην Ελλάδα που ενθαρρύνει επίσημα και κυρίως εμπρακτα την γλωσσική πολυμορφία και ιδιαιτερότητα, θα μπορούσε με την κατάλληλη προβολή να αποτελέσει ένα πρώτης τάξεως εργαλείο οικονομικής και τουριστικής ανάπτυξης, αποφέροντας μόνο όφελι για την περιοχή, όπως ακριβώς συμβαίνει σε πολλές χώρες της Ευρώπης – Νότιο Τίρολο, Ιστρία και Τρανσυλβανία.

Ευελπιστώ σε θετική σας ανταπόκριση ώστε να αποκατασταθεί με αυτόν τον τρόπο μια ιστορική, γλωσσική, πολιτισμική κοινωνική και οικονομική αδικία εναντίον Ελλήνων πολιτών, που δυστυχώς διαρκεί πολλές δεκαετίες.

Με τιμή,

Παναγιώτης Αναστασιάδης
Πρόεδρος Τοπικού Συμβουλίου Μελίτης

ΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΙΟΣ ΠΑΝΑΓΙΩΤΗΣ
ΠΡΟΕΔΡΟΣ Τ.Σ. ΜΕΛΙΤΗΣ

MHRMI and AMHRC Call on Nimetz to Resign Post and to Denounce Name Negotiations



Toronto, Canada and Melbourne, Australia (April 16, 2013)

As the first UN mediator for the name dispute, Robin O'Neil, has said, *"Macedonia must not and will not change its name in order to appease Greece. If Macedonia succumbs to pressures and changes its name, such events will only give more firepower to Greece until it reaches its final goal - Macedonia to vanish from the map."*

Macedonian Human Rights Movement International (MHRMI) and the Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC) call on the

current UN mediator, Matthew Nimetz, to publicly come to the same conclusion as his predecessor, resign his post and denounce the nonsensical name negotiations.

As MHRMI and AMHRC have stated in the [Our Name is Macedonia](#) campaign, which calls on Macedonia to immediately stop the name negotiations, *"Would any other country negotiate its own name?"*

Instead of entertaining ridiculous suggestions such as the recent "Upper Republic of Macedonia," apparently for the "privilege" of entering the

European Union and NATO, Macedonia, and the international community, must put an end to the name negotiations. **Despite claims to the contrary, any change to the bilateral name used between Macedonia and Greece would change Macedonia's name internationally.**

Macedonians worldwide are vehemently against the name negotiations and rightly so, as it is common sense to see that there is no "solution" when one country is being asked to change its name to appease another country's racist notion that it has no right to exist.



Др. Сузана Котевска
СПЕЦИЈАЛИСТ ГИНЕКОЛОГ - АКУШЕР

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Irreparable, Pathetic, Ridiculous...

by George N. Papadakis



George N. Papadakis

Seven years have passed since the historical demonstration organized jointly by the European Free Alliance (EFA) and its Macedonian branch member, Vinozhito, in the main hall of the European Parliament in Brussels, demanding the immediate and unconditional right of return to Greece of Macedonian political refugees from the "Greek Civil War".

The event can be considered significant for a variety of reasons. It was the first time that the Macedonian language, with simultaneous translation, was officially utilized in the centre of European democracy. Secondly and of equal importance, via the wide television coverage of the event, the European public gained first hand information about the work of Macedonian human rights advocates. These activists presented two major issues to a plenary sitting; firstly they demanded an immediate end to the racist neo-Greek politicking against Macedonian political refugees/exiles (and also the Macedonians still in Greece). Secondly, they sought to remind everyone that the well known Copenhagen Criteria (a raft of stringent preconditions that need to be fulfilled by all EU candidate members) apply to those countries that are already members of the EU.

I sincerely believed that after this impressive display, Greece was going to be compelled, by the accurate and severe condemnation which followed, to revisit the matters posed and read-

just its' position. I was thoroughly mistaken. Not only did Greece not change any aspect of its policy, if anything, it became more hard-line. The 'black list' prohibiting Macedonians from entering Greece is still maintained and there has been no improvement in the treatment of minorities and the demagoguery against the Macedonians in Greece and the Republic of Macedonia, of the various politicians who then held and still now hold high public positions, has become even coarser. The worst part of all this is that a now bankrupt Greece continues to uncontrollably waste large amounts of money and energy to maintain a fiction about the "Skopians" [a pejorative term, commonly used by ethnic Greeks in reference to ethnic Macedonians] that is untenable and that nobody in their right mind believes.

I recently read the comments of Greece's Foreign Minister, Mr. Avramopoulos (whom, the usually dubious Mr. Pangalos, in a rare demonstration of insight, referred to as "Mr. Nothing") in the recent European Commission progress report on the Republic of Macedonia and I just didn't know whether to react with anger or horse laughter. Avramopoulos shamelessly asserted that omissions in regard to the Copenhagen Criteria are the reason for the negative report:

"...via our intervention, we demonstrated the serious shortcomings of Skopje in relation to questions of

freedom of the press ... and political pluralism. Shortcomings and information, in other words, which are tied to the Copenhagen political criteria and with essential conditions for the process of moving forward," he proudly declared.

Let us now survey what is contained in the famous Copenhagen Criteria and see how well they are fulfilled by Avramopoulos' Greece. According to the official EU website, the criteria focus on the stable maintenance of norms which sustain democratic functioning, the rule of law, rights of the individual and respect

less hypocrisy. His face did not turn red as this is standard behavior in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, which knows very well that it can act in this manner with impunity and exploit the normative inability of the EU to punish member states which transgress the Copenhagen Criteria. The theatrical throwing of stones from glass houses is an apt way to describe the actions of the 'glorious' leaders of the neo-Greeks.

Ultimately, Avramopoulos, Samaras, Venizelos, Kouvelis, Tsipras and the rest of the theatrical troupe, require an expression of grief and

Terrorise the Terrorists

All those who respect and regularly read my column know my opinion about the current and earlier neo-Greek political reality. Truly, it is difficult for me to find even one sphere where I can assert agreement with the "ideas" or words of these worthless people, apart from a few exceptions which merely serve to confirm the rule. I have taught myself to expect nothing positive when they open their mouths and I feel lucky on those rare occasions when they choose to remain silent.



Evangelos Venizelos

for minorities. And I asked myself: is there any reasonable person who actually believes that Greece is a modern European democracy? Only if democracy could be deemed to have been acceptably replaced by activity in the traditional media and on sites like Tweeter and Facebook; and how can a country claim to be governed by the rule of law, when it is standard for individuals who take legal action, to wait a minimum of 4 to 5 years for a ruling!? We can leave aside a detailed discussion on the issues of the rights of individuals and respect for minorities, because Greece's horrendous record is well known. It is enough to mention that the current laws in relation to citizenship are hopelessly out of date; the appalling conditions in which immigrants are held in detention; the refusal to recognize the existence of Macedonians and Turks and the complete absence of minority programs on all government media, to understand the Minister's shame-

anger, as their worthlessness, belongs also to us, for we are citizens of Greece. Notably, they recently even succeeded in disgracing the pitiful Matthew Nimitz, who has become old before his time as a result of trying to pander to this irrational troupe. For the first time, after almost two decades of uninterrupted mediation, Mr. Nimitz came up with a suggested 'solution' to the artificial name dispute, which is not even worthy of discussion. The laughable "Upper Republic of Macedonia" is simply a result of trying to please Avramopoulos and his paranoid forbears in the troupe; a Catalanian colleague of mine, upon reading the proposal, was unable to hide his laughter and stated that he had never in his whole life, seen anything as ridiculous. I am sincerely surprised that Nimitz has yet to hand in his resignation to the UN, in order to save himself from any further disgrace at the hands of the wretched Athenians.

However, this worthless herd is absolutely correct on one issue. We often hear them use the phrase that "*whenever Greeks are united, they can do much*". Of course they don't mean all Greek *citizens* and not even all the ethnic Greeks, rather, they are thinking of themselves. Whenever the whole miserable political establishment, post the end of the dictatorship in 1981, has been united, they have succeeded in much. Indeed, on some issues, the whole spectrum, from the extreme left to the extreme right, is united and does much – unfortunately, it is all negative.

Taking as our prime and most obvious example, the Republic of Macedonia, in the style of a child having a tantrum over something it can't have, these "united Greeks", utilizing dubious feints and every unfair means, have succeeded in halting the country's European integration [whether Macedonia should even

be bothering to pursue EU membership, is a different question]. They have also succeeded in turning this country, which merely wants nothing more than to be recognized and to simply exercise its right to exist, toward embracing populist governance. Equally, these “united Greeks” have, to an extent, succeeded in deceiving their international partners into believing that their aims are constructive and friendly, in spite of the filthy form of nationalism which motivates them.

Above, I wrote about Avramopoulos, but we also need to give some of our attention to Mr. Venizelos [former Deputy Prime Minister in the last PASOK government]. I listened to him answering questions about the ‘name dispute’ in Washington and at first I thought it was Avramopoulos speaking. Apart from some deceitful sniveling of the type positing that Greece is the Republic of Macedonia’s best friend, Venizelos was just as firm in declaring the latest Greek veto against our northern neighbor at the upcoming EU foreign affairs summit. And this is despite the fact that yet another proposal for ‘resolving the name dispute’ had been put on the table by the UN mediator, Nimitz; though as we indicated earlier, it was the most comical yet. In other words, the President of PASOK was telling everyone involved (Macedonians, the international community and the mediator himself) that all attempts at mediation are useless, because whatever the case turns out to be, Athens will again block Macedonia’s integration. It’s worth noting the manner in which this dubious political acrobat, expressed, what of all of us already know:

“Greece is the best road to be taken by somebody from Skopje to Brussels. However, without our mediation, the neighboring country will not succeed in its European ambitions ... let us avoid announcements and we won’t focus on the attempts of the United Na-

tions and the mediator ... we know our red lines very well and we need to declare them. We should prepare for a constructive and mutually acceptable solution.”

Threats, lies, acting and fascism, all in just two sentences. Only a few days prior he was pushing both sides to show discretion in order for Nimitz, he said, to be able to complete his work in an orderly fashion. Never-the-less he forgot to mention that it was the Greek government that began to do the leaking and complaining *immediately* after Nimitz had put his proposal on the table. The “cultured” neo-Greeks are simply not capable of having a single clear position and they made a powerful attempt to encourage the Macedonians into publically rejecting the new proposal, so that Avramopoulos and Venizelos could appear as the “good guys” before the international community. When they succeeded in this, Nimitz was easily sidelined and they felt free to return to the logic of an outright veto.

Some might think this is overly harsh, but the “red lines” Greece is trying to impose on the Republic of Macedonia, remind me of the methods utilized by NAZI Germany against its neighbors on the eve of WWII. The international community watched Hitler usurp authority in Germany’s smaller neighbors, but pretended not to see it and in this manner hoped to avoid war. Noting these signs of weakness and by inventing some ‘reasons’ – red lines (defence of ethnic Germans, a fairer distribution of resources and other bits of nonsense), the NAZI’s seized the opportunity to occupy Austria and Czechoslovakia and thereby broke a raft of international laws and implemented a ‘might is right’ policy. If the NAZI’s had been a little more patient and discrete, they might have also succeeded in doing the same to Poland.

Like a NAZI, utilizing its superiority in size and privileges stemming from

EU membership, Greece is fully exploiting the errors of Brussels and is essentially terrorizing Macedonia: ‘either you will agree to accept a solution that we want or you will waste away’ is basically the message all the ‘Avramo-zeloses’ are sending to the Macedonians. Forward into a ditch or backwards into an abyss. If the Republic of Macedonia accepts a compromise, it would be the same as signing its own death warrant. On the other hand, if they decide to tell the coercive neo-Greeks to go to the devil, then the overwhelming Macedonian desire to join the EU will be very difficult to achieve.

Numerous Macedonians have asked me: “*what do you suggest?*” My answer has usually been short: “*it’s time to terrorize the terrorists.*” By which is meant that it is time for Macedonian diplomacy to launch some counter-attacks and more actively seek to demonstrate the ‘nakedness of the emperor’, the Greek Foreign Ministry – that is, a more systematic striving to highlight that Greece is **not actually interested in a solution**. Rather, it is about isolating and blockading Macedonia, with the hope that it will lead to the collapse of the country and this way, be in a more favorable position to continue depriving the Macedonians in Greece, the human rights it has been depriving them of, for decades. The rights associated with being who they feel to be and not what is fascistically imposed upon them.

George Papadakis is a member of Vinozhito – a Macedonian political party struggling for the human rights of Macedonians in Greece – and a journalist who writes for Nova Zora, a newspaper voicing the concerns of Macedonians in Greece.

Translated from Macedonian by George Vlahov of the AMHRC.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Greece is holding the EU and NATO hostage

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

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

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

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

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

THE MOST BASIC HUMAN RIGHT IS SELF-IDENTIFICATION.

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

DEMAND AN END TO 'FYROM' REFERENCE.

DEMAND IMMEDIATE INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION.

MHRMI
MACEDONIAN HUMAN RIGHTS MOVEMENT INTERNATIONAL
www.mhrmi.org

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

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

OUR NAME IS MACEDONIA



For Sale?

Jelko Kacin: Euro MP or Anti- Macedonian Lobbyist?

by Dr. Chris Popov

On 4 June 2013 Jelko Kacin, Deputy President of the European Parliament's Delegation to South Eastern Europe, stated the following during a parliamentary debate in Brussels on Macedonia's accession to the EU: *"Macedonia's leaders must do everything possible in order to bring about the removal of the blockages preventing the process of the country's integration, and if that means acceptance of a compromise on the name involving a geographic qualifier, then so be it."*¹

Further on in the debate, the Slovenian Kacin stated that Macedonia's citizens will not be able to progress if they keep focussing on the ancient past. Concretely, he stated: *"The claim that the modern Macedonians are descendants of the ancient Macedonians brings up the question of Bulgarian identity, in view of the fact that Macedonians and Bulgarians have many common characteristics in the areas of culture, language and religious symbols."* He added that this constitutes a *political and bilateral problem which no one, especially Macedonia, needs.*

In the interests of fairness it must be said that Kacin also, rightly I would say, pointed to problems in the country with freedom of expression as evidenced by the jailing of the journalist, Tomislav Kezarovski, for not revealing sources that provided him with information for a story he wrote 5 years ago regarding a protected witness. More controversially, he also argued that Prime Minister Nikola Gruevski and the Prime Minister of

Greece, Samaras, must learn from the agreement reached in Brussels between Kosovo and Serbia on the normalising of relations and that Macedonia's leadership must invest more in improving relations between different ethnicities in the country.

It is evident from Kacin's latest remarks, who in 2011 stated that he was proud to be declared *"persona non grata"* by both Serbia and Macedonia (presumably for meddling in both countries' internal affairs), that Macedonia is not only involved in a bilateral dispute with Greece, but with the whole of the EU which has consistently called in the past few years for a name change in order to advance pre-accession talks.

However, what is qualitatively different this time is that Kacin has explicitly linked the question of *"antiquisation"* to the matter of Macedonian ethnic and national identity. In so doing he has intentionally undermined the important and basic principle of self-determination (including self-identification) by openly postulating that Macedonian ethnicity and identity is tied to or a sub set of Bulgarian national identity which must be acknowledged to the exclusion of any exploration of Macedonia's ancient past. In other words, Kacin is not only this time telling Macedonia to adopt a name with a geographic qualifier, but also embracing the Bulgarian nationalist stance which posits that Macedonians were *"historically Bulgarians"* who developed a Macedonian identity as a result of

“Comintern propaganda” and “Titoist indoctrination”.

This is precisely the stance which has been adopted more aggressively by Bulgarian Euro MPs in the past few years who via various amendments to the EU Rapporteur's reports on Macedonia have attempted to force Macedonia to accept that Macedonians are “essentially Bulgarians” as a condition for voting in favour of a date for accession talks to begin. Such amendments, modified versions of which were included in EU Rapporteur on Macedonia Richard Howitt's latest report on Macedonia in May 2013, have attempted to force Macedonia to celebrate important dates in the history of the Macedonian people such as Ilinden, the birth and death of Goce Delchev etc together with Bulgaria in the interests of “good neighbourly relations”; the goal being to advance the nationalist thesis that Macedonians are Bulgarians and ultimately to justify the annexation of Prin Macedonian in 1912-13.²

Such sentiments were repeated by new Bulgarian Foreign Minister Kristijan Vigenin - who immediately prior to his appointment as foreign minister was a Bulgarian Euro MP - who on 6 June 2013 stated on Bulgarian TV that Macedonia's road to the EU is via the signing of an agreement on good neighbourly relations with Bulgaria.³

It is evident that Kacin has now become a major representative in the European Parliament for Greece and Bulgaria, which in a pincer movement is seeking the emasculation and ultimate destruction of Macedonian identity, language and culture before considering the question of whether Macedonia deserves to open accession talks with the EU.

The European Union?

Even if Macedonia was not required

to meet the nationalist demands of Greece and Bulgaria as a precondition for obtaining a date for opening accession talks, given the parlous state of the EU and the fact that many of its member states are either bankrupt and burdened by bailout deals based on continuing austerity or teetering on the edge of bankruptcy, one has to seriously question why it is so eager to join what is fast becoming a dysfunctional organization which does not even enjoy the support of the majority of the citizens in its member states. I suspect that this has more to do with the Macedonian political and economic elite's perception -



erroneous as that may be - that membership will provide it with access to a larger internal EU market and export opportunities which it believes will lead to the country becoming more prosperous and influential. This perception, however, conveniently overlooks the fact that Macedonia's internal market and few export industries will be “ripe for the picking” as capital flows in uninhibited from advanced Western European nations which will rearrange Macedonia's economy to suit their economic, financial and industrial needs.

On 14 May 2013 the UK Newspaper the *Guardian* published an article in which it analysed the results of a survey conducted in March 2013 on the level of support for the EU in 8 member countries: Germany, Brit-

ain, France, Greece, Italy, France, Spain, Poland and the Czech Republic. The survey indicated that support for the EU had shrunk from 60 to 45% in a year on average across the eight countries.

According to the pollsters who polled nearly 8000 people: “Positive views of the EU are at or near their low point in most of the countries surveyed, even among the young.”

The findings dovetail with Eurobarometer poll results revealed in April in the *Guardian* that showed a collapse in public support for the EU in the union's six biggest countries, making up two-thirds of the half-billion population.

The report states explicitly:

“The prolonged economic crisis is separating the French from the Germans – threatening the Franco-German axis that has long driven European integration. And it has separated the Germans from everyone else.

“No European country is becoming more dispirited and disillusioned faster than France. French public opinion has soured on a number of measures in the last year ... Even more dramatically, French public opinion on a range of issues is now looking less like that in Germany and more like that in Spain, Italy and Greece ... The French are also beginning to doubt their commitment to the European project, with 77% believing European economic integration has made things worse for France, an increase of 14 points.

“Overall, the 2013 survey highlights more starkly than ever the differences between the views of Germans and other Europeans on a range of issues.”⁴

Given the above, any expectation of increased prosperity for Macedonia after it enters the EU are, at best,

misplaced and, at worst, delusional. Irrespective of whether or not EU membership is being actively sought, an enormous contribution to the economic development of Macedonia would be to deepen the fight against corruption, create a professional, depoliticized civil service, increase the productivity of the workforce through the inculcation of a strong work ethic, while simultaneously defending workers' rights and work security, and making sure the power of the oligarchs who came to own Macedonia's state enterprises in the 90s is broken.

However, before ending let us get back to the matter of Jelko Kacin and remind him of the findings of the Arbitration Commission of the Conference on Yugoslavia (commonly known as Badinter Arbitration Committee) which was set up by the Council of Ministers of the European Economic Community on 27 August 1991 to provide the Conference on Yugoslavia with legal advice. Between November 1991 and the middle of 1993, the Arbitration Commission handed down a series of opinions on "major legal questions" raised by the conflict between several republics of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) and pertaining to the fragmentation of Yugoslavia. The Badinter Commission on two occasions recommended that only Macedonia and Slovenia satisfied all the conditions set out by the EEC for recognition as independent, sovereign states. Moreover, it recommended that the EEC recognise the Republic of Macedonia and did not mention anywhere in its report that Macedonia would be required to change its name to satisfy Greece. Mr Kacin would be well advised to follow the sage advice of Monsieur Badinter rather than act as an apologist in the European Parliament for Greek and Bulgarian nationalism.

Dr. Chris Popov, Executive Member of the AMHRC.

Endnotes:

¹ Deutsche Welle, "Kacin preporacuva prifakjanje ime so geografska odrednica" *Deutsche Welle Online*, 4 June 2013 <http://www.dw.de/кацин-препорачува-прифаќање-име-со-географска-одредница/a-16858361>

² The relevant parts of the 2012 progress report on Macedonia which was adopted by the European Parliament in Strasbourg on 23 May 2013 clearly shows that the results of Greek and Bulgarian lobbying are the following: **14. Strongly encourages the authorities and civil society to take appropriate measures for historical reconciliation in order to overcome the divide between and within different ethnic and national groups, including citizens of Bulgarian identity; restates its call for positive progress to be made in joint celebrations of common events and figures with neighbouring EU Member States; encourages the attempts to establish joint expert committees on history and education, with the aim of contributing to an objective, fact-based interpretation of history, strengthening academic cooperation and promoting positive attitudes of young people towards their neighbours; urges the authorities to introduce educational materials free of ideological interpretations of history and aimed at improving mutual understanding; notes with concern the phenomenon of 'antiquisation'; is convinced that culture and art should be used to bring people closer together rather than divide them; urges the government to send clear signals to the public and media that discrimination on the basis of national identity is not tolerated in the country, including in relation to the justice system, media, employment and social opportunities; underlines the importance of these actions for the integration of the various ethnic communities and the stability and European integration of the country;**

Good neighbourly relations and the name issue

16. Continues to regret that the inability to solve the name dispute has blocked the country's road to EU membership; agrees with the European Council that the name issue needs to be brought to a definitive conclusion with no delay on either side and that the Hague Decision, which is part of international law, needs to come

into force; strongly supports the efforts of the UN special envoy to reach a commonly acceptable solution; welcomes the proposal made by the Enlargement Commissioner regarding a trilateral meeting between Skopje, Athens and Brussels; takes the view that this initiative could help boost the UN-led negotiations; welcomes the momentum generated for a Memorandum of Understanding and the recent contacts with the UN mediator; calls on all parties to seize every opportunity in order to make this action successful, to enter into constructive dialogue towards finding a solution and to unblock the situation; takes the view that the country's leadership and the European Union should explain to the public the benefits of a solution if one is agreed ahead of the referendum on the issue; (European Parliament, 2012 Progress report on the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, adopted 23 May 2013, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P7-TA-2013-0226&language=EN&ring=B7-2013-0186>

³ V.S., "Patot na Makedonija kon EU minuva niz dogovorot za dobrososedstvo", *Vecer Online*, 6 June 2013, <http://www.vecer.com.mk/default.asp?ItemID=3424CA80B6FC8D408B2E93606B93B101>

⁴ Ian Traynor, "Poll results underline the sense of estrangement between Paris and Berlin as the two countries' economic prospects diverge", *Guardian Online*, 14 May 2013, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2013/may/14/eurozone-crisis-germany-france>



NLA War Crimes

by Tom Vangelovski

During the 2001 conflict in Macedonia, numerous war crimes, crimes against humanity and terrorist acts were committed. It is alleged that the extremist Albanian National Liberation Army (NLA) was responsible for many of these. In particular, four cases for which the NLA is suspected of being responsible caught the attention of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). These included the NLA Leadership case, the Lipkovo Water Reserve case, the Mavrovo Road Workers case and the Neprosteni case. At least 56 suspects were under investigation by Macedonian authorities in relation to these four cases. These suspects include a number of Albanian political leaders, including current members of the government and parliament.

In the **NLA leadership** case it is alleged that 10 senior leaders of the NLA, including Ali Ahmeti, were responsible for abduction, inhuman and degrading treatment of civilians in Matejce and Lipkovo, destruction of religious and historic monuments and murder as a war crime. The **Lipkovo Water Reserve** case concerns an individual who is suspected to have twice ordered the blocking of the water supply from Lake Lipkovo resulting in 100,000 Kumanovo residents being left without fresh water for several weeks. The **Mavrovo Road Workers** case involves 23 suspects who allegedly abducted five road workers near the village of Grupcin and then detained them in the surrounding forest,

beating and torturing them for several hours. The torture involved the use of knives to carve letters into the victim's backs. The **Neprosteni** case involves a mass grave of 12 Macedonian civilians located near the village of Neprosteni. This is by far the most serious case of the four.¹

While Macedonian authorities undertook the initial investigations into these cases, in 2002 the ICTY requested that these four cases be deferred to its jurisdiction. Macedonian authorities agreed to this request, and the Ljuboten case that involved Ljube Boskovski and Johan Tarculovski, and forwarded the cases to the Tribunal. However, by 2008 little progress had been made and due to time constraints the ICTY referred the four cases back to Macedonia for prosecution.

In 2009, the Macedonian authorities reported that an indictment was issued in one of the four returned cases, one case was in the investigative stage and the other two were at the preliminary stage of criminal investigation.² Since then however, these cases progressed little and in July 2011 the Macedonian Parliament adopted its decision, *Authentic Interpretation of the 2002 Amnesty Law*, stipulating that the *Amnesty Law (2002)* applies to all cases relating to the 2001 conflict, including the four returned to Macedonia by the ICTY.³ In October 2012, the Constitutional Court rejected a challenge to the constitutionality of the parliamentary deci-

sion.⁴

Since the Parliament's decision to amnesty these four cases, the Government has come under strong pressure from the families of the victims, non-government organisations and most recently, the Council of Europe. In September 2011, Amnesty International criticised the parliamentary decision as inconsistent with international law and accused it of leaving the victims and their families without access to justice and creating a climate of impunity for persons suspected of violations of international humanitarian law.⁵ The Council of Europe also criticised Macedonian authorities for the continued lack of accountability in relation to these serious human rights violations.⁶ The Council of Europe notes that amnestying the four cases is a serious impediment to the process of achieving justice and lasting reconciliation between the two communities.⁷ The Council of Europe further urged Macedonian authorities to implement the Committee of Ministers Guidelines on eradicating impunity for serious human rights violations which state that amnesties should not be applied to gross human rights violations.⁸

Due to the Council of Europe's recent statements, families of the victims have renewed their calls on the Macedonian Government to reopen investigations into the four cases and, in particular, the Neprostenko case. Others have argued that Macedonia does not have the capacity to prosecute these cases and that they should be transferred to the International Criminal Court, which is also based in The Hague.

Considering that numerous high profile Albanian leaders have been implicated in these four cases, it is unlikely that the Macedonian Government will reverse its decision to amnesty them. Publicly available cables from the US Embassy in Skopje suggest that Prime Minister

Gruevski was under considerable pressure from his coalition partners in the Democratic Union for Integration (DUI) and the Democratic Party of Albanians to end all legal proceedings.⁹ Albanian opposition to prosecuting these cases is so strong that both Menduh Thaci and Ali Ahmeti were quoted as willing to ignore the cases of six Albanians still missing from the 2001 conflict so as to not "increase problems and open Pandora's Box" in exchange for amnesty for the four cases returned from the ICTY.¹⁰

In these cables, US Ambassador Philip Reeker also details that the Macedonian Chief Prosecutor was of the view that the *Amnesty Law (2002)* was not applicable to these four cases and that he intended to prosecute them.¹¹ However, Reeker notes that the Chief Prosecutor admitted that he was obligated to report to the Prime Minister before taking any action "in order to avoid ethnic destabilisation".¹² According to Reeker, the Chief Prosecutor also admitted that his office was intentionally stalling its investigation of the Neprostenko case in order to avoid ethnic tensions but does not indicate whether this was due to instructions from Gruevski.¹³ Interestingly, these cables report the Chief Prosecutor as claiming that in many instances there is insufficient evidence to prosecute,¹⁴ though this is very likely due to the fact that little investigation has actually been undertaken.

The current situation with these four war crimes cases is symptomatic of the corruption and incompetence that plagues both the Macedonian political system and the judiciary. More fundamentally, it is an indication of the political immaturity of Macedonian society and a consequence of Macedonian citizens' apathy towards demanding justice and transparency from its state institutions. Without considerable and consistent political pressure from the Macedonian public it is unlikely

that the perpetrators of these crimes will be brought to justice and the families of the victims may never know the final fate of their loved ones.

Tom Vangelovski

Endnotes:

¹ In total, the Council of Europe notes that there were 23 reported cases of enforced disappearances during the 2001 conflict, of which the remains of nine have been identified and 14 remain unaccounted for, see Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Report on Macedonia, April 2013, p. 13.

² Ibid.

³ *Authentic Interpretation of Article 1 of the Law on Amnesty*, Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 99/2011.

⁴ Decision of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Macedonia, No. 158/2011-0-0, 31 October 2012.

⁵ Amnesty International, *Macedonia: Time to deliver justice to the victims of war crimes*, Press Release, 1 September 2011.

⁶ Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Report on Macedonia, April 2013, p. 14.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ See US Embassy Cables 07SKOP-JE120 (9 February 2007), 08SKOP-JE59 (24 January 2008), 08SKOP-JE158 (27 February 2008), 08SKOP-JE607 (6 October 2008), 08SKOP-JE619 (9 October 2008), and 09SKOPJE35 (23 January 2009).

¹⁰ 09SKOPJE35 (23 January 2009).

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid and 08SKOPJE607 (6 October 2008).

The Annual Melnik Gathering in Memory of Yane Sandanski

On the 21st of April 2013 at the central park of the town of Melnik, in Pirin Macedonia, the traditional all Macedonian gathering in memory of the great Macedonian revolutionary, Yane Sandanski, was held. His murder took place 98 years ago in 1915. Sandanski's murder was carried out by people under the leadership of Todor Aleksandrov and Alexander Protogerov and in cooperation with the Bulgarian government. It opened a path toward a tragic killing spree of the pro-independence Macedonian Ilinden generation revolutionaries, most of who had been killed by the mid 1930's. Todor Aleksandrov himself was killed by the 'train he set in motion,' only 9 years after he had organized Sandanski's murder; ironically, this took place in the vicinity of Sandanski's grave.

When the gatherings in memory of Sandanski first began, two decades ago, the Bulgarian authorities frequently enforced bans and tried to manipulate Sandanski's biography. We are still struggling against these tendencies in Bulgarian society, which have failed to destroy our Macedonian consciousness.

The gathering was organized by OMO "Ilinden" PIRIN; the Association of Repressed Macedonians in Bulgaria, TMO (Independent) "Ilinden", "People's Will" and "Macedonian Voice", the latter two are newspapers which voice the concerns of Macedonians in Bulgaria. Special thanks must also go to the AMHRC and MHRMI for aiding in the organization of the gathering.

More than a thousand people from Pirin Macedonia and Bulgaria in general, attended the event – all in spite of the financial crisis and the anti-Macedonian campaigns frequently led by the Bulgarian authorities.

Proceedings began with the singing of OMO "Ilinden" PIRIN's anthem, "Macedonian People"; this was followed by the laying of wreaths next to Sandanski's statue and then a minute's silence in memory of those who died in the service of Macedonia's liberation. Speeches about Sandanski and the Macedoni-





an human rights struggle in Bulgaria, were made by Boyan Bibishkov, Ivan Singarteyrski and Dimitar Ivanov. Congratulatory messages from Vinozhito, the AMHRC, MHRMI, MAEI (a political party representing Macedonians in Bulgaria) and the Association of Macedonians from Aegean Macedonia (based in Bitola), were read out. Also a message from Dimitar Moskov, a member of PIRIN's Central Council, was read out, as he was unable attend, due to illness.

Folkloric groups from various parts of Pirin Macedonia, including Bansko, Blagoevgrad, Gorno Draglishte and Razlog, performed Macedonian songs. Musical accompaniment was provided by the "Makedonia" orchestra, conducted by Georgi Zhbanov. Impressive individual vocal performances were given by Lyuben Radoykov, Zorka Andonova, Angel Topareev and by Stefche Stoykovski – the latter travelling to the event from the Republic of Macedonia.

Unlike the past, the police carried out their duties sensibly. A group of four or five people, youthful in appearance and carrying Bulgarian flags, were 'sent' to the event by the so-called "VMRO" organization based in Sofia and they attempted to provoke some of our members. Our members ignored them and the police removed them. One of the provocateurs later admitted that they were paid for their 'work'.

The annual Sandanski gathering is very important to the Macedonians of Bulgaria for a variety of reasons. We were inspired by the life of Sandanski to develop and maintain this traditional event as a major symbol of our resistance against the Bulgarian state's attempts to de-Macedonianise us. It gives us a space to meet and energise our struggle by breathing as Macedonians in an atmosphere that is generally very inhospitable to our Macedonian selves. At a time when Bulgarian society is reaching new heights of anti-Macedonianism, our peaceful gathering exposes the lie that we do not exist and it says 'no' to hatred and 'yes' to liberty.

By Stojko Stojkov, Co-President of OMO "Ilinden" PIRIN, a Macedonian political party struggling for the human rights of Macedonians in Bulgaria: <http://www.omoilindenpirin.org/>

Translated from Macedonian by George Vlahov of the AMHRC.

MHRMI and AMHRC Congratulate Nova Zora on its Third Anniversary

Toronto, Canada and Melbourne, Australia (April 10, 2013) - Macedonian Human Rights Movement International (MHRMI) and the Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee (AMHRC) congratulate Nova Zora, the largest pro-Macedonian newspaper in Aegean Macedonia, on its third anniversary. To see a video of the celebration, please visit:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c8o3GHm3HD0>

Nova Zora is funded by MHRMI and the AMHRC, has distributed hundreds of thousands of newspapers throughout Aegean Macedonia, and has been published every month since its inception, despite constant threats and attempts to wipe it out.

"The editorial board of Nova Zora expresses its gratitude to MHRMI and AMHRC. Without their tremendous help, Nova Zora would not be able to carry on its struggle for equal rights for all Macedonians. MHRMI and AMHRC are truly the only organizations in the Macedonian diaspora that fund human rights projects for Macedonians in the Balkans", said Dimitri Ioannou (Jovanov), editor of Nova Zora.

Help Macedonians overcome the human rights abuses that they face on a daily basis by joining the [MHRMI Human Rights Fund](#) or the [AMHRC's Macedonian Minorities](#)

[Support Fund](#). MHRMI and the AMHRC are the only organizations in the Macedonian diaspora that finance and organize Macedonian human rights activities in the Balkans. Your donation will go directly to funding vital Macedonian human rights activities.

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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, www.twitter.com/mhrmi, www.facebook.com/mhrmi, info@mhrmi.org, +1 416-850-7125.

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, email info@macedonianhr.org.au or via +61 3 9329 8960.

ΜΑΪΟΣ - MAJ 2013 www.novazora.gr No. 37

НОВА ЗОРА

ГОРЕ ГЛАВАТА!

ΕΙΔΗΣΕΙΣ • ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΗ • ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΜΟΣ • ΔΙΑΦΟΡΑ  group: Nova Zora ΔΙΑΝΕΜΕΤΑΙ ΔΩΡΕΑΝ

ΑΚΤΙΒНОСТИ НА ВИНΟЖИТО ВО ПОСЛЕДНИТЕ ГОДИНИ
ΔΡΑΣΤΗΡΙΟΤΗΤΕΣ ΤΟΥ ΟΥΡΑΝΙΟΥ ΤΟΞΟΥ ΤΑ ΤΕΛΕΥΤΑΙΑ ΧΡΟΝΙΑ
(σελ.12-13)

ΒΡΕΜΕ Ε ΒΕΚΕ ЗА ЕВРОΠΕИЗАЦИЈА И ДЕМОКРАТИЗАЦИЈА ΕΙΝΑΙ ΠΛΕΟΝ ΚΑΙΡΟΣ ΓΙΑ ΕΞΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΣΜΟ ΚΑΙ ΕΚΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΣΜΟ



ΑΦΕΡΑΤΑ НА МИС СТОЈИ
Η ΥΠΟΘΕΣΗ ΤΗΣ ΜΙΣ ΣΤΟΟΥΝ
(σελ.10-11)



ГОЛЕМ УСПЕХ НА ТРЕТОТО ОРО НА
НОВА ЗОРА
ΜΕΓΑΛΗ ΕΠΙΤΥΧΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΤΡΙΤΟΥ ΧΟΡΟΥ
ΤΗΣ ΝΟΒΑ ΖΟΡΑ
(σελ.5)



НИКОЛА ЈОНКОВ БАЛЦАРОВ
НИКОЛА ПОНКОВ БАЛЦΑΡОВ
(σελ.18)

Η ευρωπαϊκή κοινή γνώμη έγινε μέσω τηλεόρασης δέκτης της κίνησης Μακεδόνων ακτιβιστών του Ουρανού Τόξου-Βινοζιτο να ξεδιπλώσουν δύο μεγάλα πανό μέσα στην Ολομέλεια, ζητώντας άμεση άρση της ρατσιστικής νεοελληνικής πολιτικής απέναντι στους Μακεδόνες πολιτικούς πρόσφυγες (και όχι μόνο). Το ένα πανό ζητούσε να σταματήσει αυτό το ελληνικό απαρχαίντ ενώ το άλλο υπενθύμιζε ότι τα περίφημα κριτήρια της Κοπεγχάγης (μια σειρά αυστηρών προϋποθέσεων που πρέπει να εκπληρώνουν όλες οι υποψήφιες προς ένταξη στην Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση χώρες) ισχύουν και για τα ήδη υπάρχοντα μέλη.

Αδιόρθωτοι, αξιολύπητοι, ΑΣΤΕΙΟΙ - του Γιώργου Ν. Παπαδάκη (σελ.9)

The Third Annual Nova Zora Celebration of the Struggle for Rights



Dimitri Ioannou (Jovanov)

In a climate of various pressures and difficulties, and of hope and dynamic activity, with strong support from Macedonians in Greece and some democratically minded Greeks, the newspaper Nova Zora, has completed 36 months of publishing. It is the newspaper that reveals what the Greek state has been attempting to hide for decades. Nova Zora would not have been so successful in this had it not been for the moral and financial support of Macedonian immigrants, mainly in Australia and Canada, especially those connected to the AMHRC in Australia and MHRMI in Canada. Many of the members of these organizations originally came from the regions of Lerin, Kostur and Voden, in Aegean Macedonia. We also need to mention the contribution of many Macedonian volunteers in relation to writing for the newspaper and its distribution.

And with all that, Nova Zora completed 3 years of life and this success was celebrated via the organization of a dinner dance on the 6th of April 2013 at the Nihteri hall in the town of Sorovichevo with the charming

musical accompaniment of the group, Tukashen Glas (local voice).

It was a Saturday night and the hall was full to the brim with Macedonians from all corners of Aegean Macedonia and from places like Athens and Larisa. An integral part of the euphoric atmosphere was the presence of a large number of youthful supporters – a positive sign for the future. I will also highlight here the presence of Trifo Tochev. He originally came from the village of Soter in the vicinity of Sorovichevo, but now resides in Germany and as was the case last year, he took time out from his busy schedule to fly in on the night of the celebration and then flew back again the next morning. To your health, Trifo!

The evening was used to further our educational programs via the distribution of Macedonian – Greek and Greek – Macedonian dictionaries. Special invited guests from the Republic of Macedonia, included the singer Maria Dimkova, with a family background connected to the

(Continued on page 38)



village of Pozhar in the region of Meglen (Aegean Macedonia) and the university professor, Risto Solunchev, a virtuoso of the bagpipes and Kaval, whose origins lie in Gumendzhe, near Kukush (Aegean Macedonia). A strong impression was made by the renowned dance troupe belonging to the village of Ovchareni, in the Lerin region, which performed songs and dances peculiar to various parts of Macedonia.



Great excitement was created by a 90 year old Macedonian who remained at the celebration right to the end; in spite of difficulties with his old legs, he found the strength to stand at length in the centre of the dance circle and at times even jigged and sang along to the Macedonian songs from the depths of his soul.



The economic crisis, threats, the destruction of posters advertising the event, a large contingent of police located at all the entry/exit points in Sorovichevo and messages that "Golden Dawn" would come to disrupt the event etc, failed to prevent a wonderful celebration, which carried on until 5 am!

The message is clear, the work of the advocates in Vinozhito and Nova Zora is of value and the struggle for the human rights of Macedonians in Greece must continue. Macedonians forever!

Some of the celebration's highlights can be viewed here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ywKbSQqHng>



Dimitri Jovanov, editor of Nova Zora <http://novazora.gr/> a monthly newspaper distributed throughout Aegean Macedonia and Greece in general and a member of Vinozhito, a political party struggling for the human rights of Macedonians in Greece. Translated from Macedonian by George Vlahov of the AMHRC.

'A Once in a Lifetime Event' **HURRY!!** Tickets Selling Fast!!



JOHNNY TSIGLEV'S
DE TSA BE GAL TSI
MACEDONIAN CHILD REFUGEES
MULTIMEDIA ART SHOWCASE

featuring: A Short Film Premiere by Award Winning
Filmmaker Anton Blajer

Music by the irrepressible DJ Mangal

AMHRC's Official 100 years Conference Party



All Tickets \$25 includes drinks and fingerfood for 2hrs

For bookings and info email sales@tsig.com.au or phone 0431 995 165



7PM SEPTEMBER 6 2013

Thousand Pound Bend, 361 Lt Lonsdale St, Melbourne





'Detsa Begaltsi'

Johnny Tsiglev
acrylic on canvas 2007

A stylised depiction of the saddened Macedonian Sun at the loss of its children. **'DE TSA BEGALTSI'** (Child Refugees), illustrates the story of the tens of thousands of Macedonian children that were displaced and ushered into strange foreign lands during the Greek Civil War (1946-1949) - symbolised by the rows of figures and three barbed wire swirls on the right. Inspired by the true account of Tase 'Andy' Filipov (a child refugee now in his late 60's). The communication blips in the sun rays and above the children reinforce the message that no matter how far the Macedonian children go, they are always inherently connected with their homeland and retain their Macedonian consciousness.



'Welcome to the Game of Life'

Johnny Tsiglev
acrylic on canvas 2010

The rows of single file people on the conveyor belt of life. **'Welcome to the Game of Life'** shows the numbing non-vocal or 'safe' ride some people choose to take in life. Yet along the path they are watched by the 'All Seeing Eye' as they work through their everyday routine existences. Some take a 'PC' route and avoid the figurative 'Monsters' ready to snap at their side, thinking they've slipped past or avoided the obvious truth of life, only to be eventually caught in the web once again! Originally titled **'The Path to the Trapped Dream may not be all that it seems'**, it also depicts that sometimes a certain dream you might hold onto about 'How your life should be', might not actually be all that its cracked up to be?

Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee

presents



International Scholarly Conference on the Partition of Macedonia and the Balkan Wars of 1912-13

Dates: 4th September – 7th September 2013

Venue: Monash University Law Chambers, 555 Lonsdale St, Melbourne

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the end of the second Balkan War. As a result of this war, Macedonia, which was then part of the Ottoman Empire, was divided and annexed by Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria. This was sanctioned by the signing of the Treaty of Bucharest on the 10th of August 1913. In the context of Macedonia's highly contested modern history and the current topicality of the Republic of Macedonia's international recognition, this multidisciplinary conference will aim to make a substantial contribution to an understanding of this important aspect of modern Macedonian history. The conference will attempt a historical survey of the context and the effects, both short and long term, of the partition of Macedonia on the inhabitants of Macedonia, from a variety of perspectives, especially linguistic, sociological, anthropological and political.

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS & PAPERS TO BE PRESENTED

Professor Andrew Rossos, University of Toronto:

The Balkan Wars (1912-13) and the Partition of Macedonia: A Historical Perspective

Professor Victor Friedman, University of Chicago: *The effects of Partition on the languages spoken in Macedonia*

Professor Katerina Kolozova, American University College Skopje:

History as Contingency and as the Real of a National Identity

Professor Keith Brown, Watson Institute, Brown University: *How Trauma Travels*

Professor Peter Hill, University of Hamburg: *The Partition in relation to the later Codification of the Macedonian Language*

Professor Loring Danforth, Bates College: *From the Partition of Macedonia to the Creation of the Transborder Prespa Park*

Dr Akis Gavrilidis, University of Macedonia, Greece: *Who was liberated in 1912?*

Professor Christina Kramer, University of Toronto: *Partitioning Language Policy and Status Planning in Macedonia*

Dr Jim Hlavac, Monash University: *Partition without fragmentation: a cross-perspective analysis of Macedonian language maintenance in Australia*

Professor Grace E. Fielder, University of Arizona: *Partition, Linguistic Identity and Language Standardization*

George Vlahov, Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee: *A Survey of the 'Macedonian Question' in Dialogue with Greek Nationalism*

Dr Vasko Nasteovski, Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee: *The partition of Macedonia and International Law: From Clausewitz to McDougall*

Pandora Petrovska, La Trobe University: *Attempting to Recalibrate the Past: using narrative and the language classroom*

Associate Professor Dalibor Jovanovski, University "Sts. Cyril and Methodius": *Greek Historiography and the Balkan Wars – In Interest of the Nation*

Dr. Michael Seraphinoff: *Two significant works of Macedonian Literature that deal with the Balkan Wars and World War One*

OTHER EVENTS

Event: Johnny Tsiglev's 'Detsa Begaltsi' Multimedia Art Exhibition plus AMHRC's Official Conference Party
Featuring a Short Film Premiere by Award Winning Filmmaker Anton Blajer and music by the irrepressible DJ Mangal

Date: Friday 6th September 2013

Time: 7:00pm – 1:00am

Venue: Thousand Pound Bend, 361 Lt Lonsdale St, Melbourne

Event: AMHRC Dinner Dance

Date: Saturday 7th September 2013

Time: 7:00pm – 1:00am

Venue: Golden Star Receptions, 15 Yale Drive, Epping



REGISTRATION FORM

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Full Name:					
Address:					
Suburb:		State:		Postcode:	
Telephone:		Email:			

OPTION A: Register for Individual Sessions

Event	Price Per Person	Qty	Subtotal
Conference Welcome Cocktail (Tuesday 3 September 2013, 6:00pm – 7:30pm) <i>Venue: Hotel Grand Chancellor, 131 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne</i> <i>(ticket includes drinks and canapés)</i>	\$30		\$
Conference Day 1 (Wednesday 4 September 2013, 9:15am – 4:45pm) <i>Venue: Monash University Law Chambers, 555 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne</i>	\$30		\$
Conference Day 2 (Thursday 5 September 2013, 9:30am – 4:45pm) <i>Venue: Monash University Law Chambers, 555 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne</i>	\$30		\$
Conference Day 3 (Friday 6 September 2013, 9:30am – 4:30pm) <i>Venue: Monash University Law Chambers, 555 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne</i>	\$30		\$
Conference Day 4 (Saturday 7 September 2013, 9:30am – 4:30pm) <i>Venue: Monash University Law Chambers, 555 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne</i>	\$30		\$
AMHRC presents: Johnny Tsiglev's 'Detsa Begaltsi' Multimedia Art Exhibition plus AMHRC's Official Conference Party (Friday 6 September 2013, 7:00pm – 1:00am) <i>Venue: Thousand Pound Bend, 361 Little Lonsdale Street, Melbourne</i> <i>(ticket includes drinks and finger food until 9:00pm; music until 1:00am)</i>	\$25		\$
AMHRC Dinner Dance (Saturday 7 September 2013, 7:00pm – 1:00am) <i>Venue: Golden Star Receptions, 15 Yale Drive, Epping</i> <i>(ticket includes a three course meal, drinks and entertainment)</i>	\$70		\$
TOTAL			\$

OPTION B: All-Inclusive Package *(includes all events listed above)*

\$195 per person x _____ (number of All-Inclusive Packages you wish to order) = **TOTAL \$** _____
(saving of \$50 per person)

PAYMENT DETAILS

Payment Method (please tick)	<input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> Credit Card (list card details below)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Cheque / Money Order (payable to the 'Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee') <input type="checkbox"/> Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) – I have deposited the above payment into the following Commonwealth Bank account on this date ____/____/2013 Account Name: Australian Macedonian Human Rights Committee BSB: 063010 Account No: 10736264	
Credit Card details	<input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard	
Credit Card number:	<div> <div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div> </div>	Expiry Date <div> <div></div><div></div> / <div></div><div></div> </div>
3-digit security code: (on back of your card)		
Cardholder Name:		Signature:

NEED A HOTEL IN MELBOURNE DURING THE CONFERENCE?

The AMHRC has made a special arrangement with the *Hotel Grand Chancellor*, located on the same street as the conference venue. Accommodation can be booked at the special conference only rate of AUD \$140.00 per night (economy room, max. 2 persons). Please contact the hotel directly to make a booking (mention "AMHRC conference" for the special rate).
Hotel Grand Chancellor Melbourne, 131 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, Telephone: +61 3 9656 4000; www.grandchancellorhotels.com/au/melbourne

Please send this completed registration form with payment details to:

AMHRC, Suite 106, Level 1, 55 Flemington Road, North Melbourne VIC 3051 | Email: info@macedonianhr.org.au

ABOUT MHRMI & AMHRC

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

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

RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

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



AUSTRALIAN MACEDONIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

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

MACEDONIAN HUMAN RIGHTS MOVEMENT INTERNATIONAL

Address 157 Adelaide St. West, Suite 434
Toronto, Canada M5H 4E7
Telephone 1 416 850 7125
Email info@mhrmi.org
Website www.mhrmi.org

MACEDONIAN ALLIANCE FOR EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

The political party of the Macedonians in Albania

Website www.macedoniansinalbania.org

EUROPEAN FREE ALLIANCE—RAINBOW

Address Stephanou Dragoumi 11
PO Box 51, 53100 Florina/Lerin,
Greece
Telephone +30 23850 46548
Email vinozito@otenet.gr or
rainbow@vinozito.gr
Website www.vinozito.gr

OMO ILINDEN PIRIN

Address Bulgaria, Blagoevgrad 2700
Zk 'Elenovo' bl 6 v. Bar. 6
p.k. Mechkaroovi
Email omo_ilinden_pirin@yahoo.com
Website www.omoilindenpirin.org

MACEDONIAN SOCIETY "ILINDEN" TIRANA

A Macedonian cultural association in Tirana, Albania

Website www.ilinden-tirana.com

NOVA ZORA

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

Website novazora.gr

NARODNA VOLJA

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

Website www.narodnavolja.com

TEAM MEMBERS

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Velibor Jakovleski
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