

Review Essays

SPYRIDON SFETAS—KYRIAKOS KENTROTIS

SKOPJE IN SEARCH OF AN IDENTITY AND INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

A CRITIQUE OF THE RECENT PUBLICATION BY THE SKOPJE ACADEMY OF
SCIENCES AND ARTS *MACEDONIA AND ITS RELATIONS WITH GREECE*
(SKOPJE 1993)*

Preface

Following the collapse of Yugoslavia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is now seeking international recognition as an independent state. Greece does not accept that the republic has the right to use the term 'Macedonia' in its name; nor does Greece —or Bulgaria— recognise the historical existence of a 'Macedonian nation'. As a result, Skopje has found it necessary to refute Greece's views by presenting the international scientific community with 'historical arguments' which, Skopje's historians claim, prove both the existence of Macedonia as 'a historical entity and unit' and 'the historical continuity of the Macedonian people'. This is the purpose of the recent publication by the Skopje Academy of Sciences and Arts, *Macedonia and its Relations with Greece* (Skopje 1993). The present publication, by the Thessaloniki Institute for Balkan Studies, offers a step-by-step critical analysis of the basic views and claims expressed in the Academy's book. The historical issues touched upon in *Macedonia and its Relations with Greece* (chapters 1-13, 15, and 16) are dealt with by Dr Spyridon Sfetas, while those connected with the independence and diplomatic recognition of the FYROM (chapter 14) are covered by Dr Kyriakos Kentrotis; both writers are research associates of the Institute for Balkan Studies.

* The original critique was published in 1994 in Greek by the Institute for Balkan Studies (No 257).

The whole philosophy of *Macedonia and its Relations with Greece* is based on a perceived distinction between 'Macedonians' and Greeks and a challenge to Greece's exclusive right to use the term 'Macedonia'. It is a work of sheer propaganda, characterised by a distorted presentation of Greek and Bulgarian history that attempts to give the term 'Macedonia' an ethnological dimension and illustrate the supposed historical development of the 'Macedonian people'. The approach to the issues is a superficial one: only those which support Skopje's version of history are touched upon, while proven facts that demolish the views of Skopje's historians are completely ignored. *Macedonia and its Relations with Greece* comprises sixteen chapters and covers the ancient period, the Middle Ages, the Turkish period, and modern and contemporary history up to the independence of the FYROM.

Chapter One ('The Ancient Macedonians and their Language', pp. 11-14) challenges the fact that the ancient Macedonians were Greek and argues that the language they spoke does not correspond to the phonetic system of Greek. The basic argument is that the Indo-European aspirated medias *bh, dh, gh* become *φ, θ, χ* in Greek and *β, δ, γ* in 'Macedonian'. Alexander the Great, apparently, propagated Greek education on his campaign because of his great esteem for Hellenic culture.

The fact that the ancient Macedonians were indeed Greek is attested by historical sources, linguistic evidence, and archaeological finds, all of which link the region of Macedonia with the Greeks from Mycenaean times onwards. Such well respected scholars as Hoffmann, Beloch, and Droysen have substantiated this. Certain political agents' hostile attitude to the ancient Macedonians was due to the differences between the political systems of southern Greece and Macedonia (the latter shared neither the institution of the city-state nor that of democracy) and to the southerners' fear of the imposition of a monarchy. Demosthenes' aggressiveness towards Philip was also due to the fact that Athens was losing not only its colonies to the expanding Macedonian state, but also its access routes to the breadbasket of Thrace. The Macedonians followed Greek ideology (as expressed by Agesilaus and Isocrates) by uniting the politically fragmented Greeks; and one outcome of Alexander's campaign was the diffusion of Hellenic culture throughout the East and the birth of the Hellenistic world. Not only was Macedonia the Greeks' bastion against the barbarians:

of what great honour are the Macedonians worthy, who, for the greater part of their life, never cease to struggle against the bar-

barians for the security of the Greeks; for the situation in Greece would be in grave jeopardy had we not the Macedonians as a bulwark (*Polybius* 9,35);

it was also an integral part of Greece: 'Macedonia too is Greece', as Strabo said (*Geographica*, Book VII, C 229). The Slav inhabitants of the FYROM cannot possibly have any connection with the ancient Macedonians; nor, from an ethnological point of view, can they appropriate the ancient Macedonians' name, for the Slavs did not put in an appearance until the sixth to seventh century AD.

The heart of the kingdom was the Macedonian seaboard (Pieria and Bottiaea). In 471-452 BC, Alexander I extended Macedonia's borders eastwards to the River Strymon, taking territory from neighbouring barbarian tribes; and he also imposed his dominion over Hellenic tribes to the north (Upper Macedonia)¹.

During Philip II's reign (359-336 BC), with the incorporation of Paeonia, the borders of the Macedonian state were pushed back as far as Dardania, the capital of which was Scupi, modern Skopje. Under Roman rule, the administrative centres of the province of Macedonia (established in 148 BC) were Thessalonica, Amphipolis, Pella, and Pelagonia (Bitola). The borders of historical Macedonia included only part of what is now the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (the broader area of Bitola and Strumitsa). That area is scarcely representative of historical Macedonia.

The language the ancient Macedonians spoke was a dialect of Greek, the only phonetic feature distinguishing it from other Greek dialects — β instead of φ , δ instead of θ , and γ instead of χ — being perfectly explicable in the context of Greek dialectology. We may surmise that the Macedonian ethnic branch broke away from the Ionian, Aeolo-Achaean, and Dorian branches before the Protohellenic language developed φ , θ , χ from the corresponding Indo-European phonemes and embarked upon its own evolutionary course; or else that the Macedonian branch, while never ceasing to be Greek, assimilated a considerable proportion of Thracio-Illyrians, who exerted an alien influence on this particular phonemic feature². The dialectal differences between the Greeks were due to the various external influences they received when they settled in the broader geographical area of Greece.

1. *Thucydides*, Book II, 99.

2. N. Andriotis, *The Language and the Greek Origin of the Ancient Macedonians*, Institute for Balkan Studies, No 185, Thessaloniki 1978, p. 27.

Chapter Two ('Macedonia from the Settlement of the Slavs to the Ottoman Empire', pp. 15-20) describes how the arrival of the Slavs altered the ethnological composition of the Macedonian region. The Slavonic tribes intermingled with the Macedonians and assimilated them; but the Slavs took for themselves the local name 'Macedonians', and it now signified a Slavonic ethnic group (p. 16). The Slavs of Macedonia aspired to establish a state of their own and tried to conquer Thessalonica. The *sclaviniae* evolved into independent enclaves with their own rulers, outside the Empire's control. In the ninth century, most of Macedonia was annexed by the mediaeval Bulgarian state; but the 'Macedonians' (i.e. the Slavs living in Macedonia) managed to shake off Bulgarian rule and to establish, under Samuel, the first 'Macedonian state' in 969. The Byzantines demolished Samuel's state in 1018, but the 'Macedonians' preserved their ethnic identity through the Archbishopric of Ohrid. In the fourteenth century, the Serbs occupied most of Macedonia. After the collapse of Stefan Dushan's state a number of minor independent states sprang up, the most important of which was the kingdom of Prilep, established by Vukashin (p. 20). It is particularly emphasised that the language into which Cyril and Methodius translated the Gospels and other ecclesiastical texts was the language of the 'Macedonian Slavs' (p. 17).

It is a well-known fact that in the early Byzantine era the term 'Macedonia' had a purely administrative significance, for Macedonia was part of Illyricum; and from 800 onwards the theme of Macedonia also included Thrace. But there was never a Slavonic tribe, called 'Macedonians'. It is important to note that, even when the Byzantine writers applied ancient ethnonyms, which were of only geographical significance in their own time, to the new tribes that were inundating the Balkan Peninsula (the Serbs, for instance, are described as 'Triballi', the Bulgars as 'Scythians' and 'Mysians'), under no circumstances did they ever apply the term 'Macedonian' to any Slavonic tribe, for it was considered applicable only to Hellenic tribes. What the book under review has to say about the genesis of the 'Macedono-Slavs' is sheer groundless hypothesis on the part of Skopje's historians. The Slavs' arrival in the geographical region of Macedonia certainly changed its ethnological make-up; but they never posed a substantial threat to the Empire. They were vassals of the Avars and were rapidly absorbed by the Empire's administrative

machinery³. The hagiological texts inform us that the Avaro-Slavs made three attempts to take Thessalonica (586, 614-15, and c. 618) — though it must be borne in mind that these were written at a considerably later date and their purpose was to recount the thaumaturgical interventions of the city's patron saint⁴. The Avaro-Slavs, however, were not acting on their own initiative, they were carrying out the orders of the Avar Zhan. Theirs were simply some of many barbarian raids launched against Thessalonica.

In the second half of the ninth century, the present territory of the FYROM became part of the, already Slavicised, Protobulgarian state. Ohrid was the spiritual centre of mediaeval Bulgaria, for it was there that Cyril and Methodius' disciples went after being expelled from Moravia, to continue their task of translating the Greek ecclesiastical texts into Church Slavonic using the Glagolitic alphabet. Nothing of what is said in *Macedonia and its Relations with Greece* to the effect that Samuel founded the 'first Macedonian state' is supported by the Byzantine sources. The Byzantine Emperor John Tsimisces did conduct a campaign in Preslav and Dorystolon and overthrew the Protobulgarian state in 971. But the fact that he did not then move into the western part of the Bulgarian state does not mean that it had not been subjugated by Byzantium. These western regions were part of the Bulgarian state, and in 969 the Cometopouli did *not* establish a 'West Macedonian state' that had splintered off from the East Bulgarian state⁵, after Svjatoslav's Russians had conquered it and been attacked by Tsimisces. It was only after Tsimisces' death in 976 that Samuel began to reconstruct the mediaeval Bulgarian state, starting with the western provinces⁶. After long, fierce wars, his kingdom was overthrown in 1018 by Basil II of Macedon, who, precisely because he had quelled the rebellious Bulgars and overthrown the Bulgarian state, became known as 'the Bulgar-slayer'. The Byzantine sources mention neither a Macedonian state ruled by Samuel nor 'Macedonian' Slavs laying

3. P. Malingoudis, *Σλάβοι στη Μεσαιωνική Ελλάδα* (Slavs in Mediaeval Greece), Thessaloniki 1988, p. 51.

4. *Θαύματα Αγίου Δημητρίου* (Miracles of St Demetrius), I 152.2-5: 'Σκοπὸς γάρ μοι μόνον παραστήσαι τῇ φιλοθέῳ ἀκοῇ ὡς ἐκ Θεοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἄλλοθεν ἡ σωτηρία τότε τῇ πόλει γεγένητο, καὶ διεγείραι τὰς διανοίας ἀπάντων πρὸς θεϊαν κατάνυξιν καὶ θεάρεστον ἐξομολόγησιν καὶ εὐχαριστίαν τοῦ ἀθλοφόρου διηνεκῇ'.

5. See G. Ostrogorsky, *Geschichte des Byzantinischen Staates*, München 1963, p. 250-251, n. 2.

6. For more specific problems relating to Samuel's state, see A.-E. Tachiaos, *Το ἐφήμερο κράτος του Σαμουήλ (976-1018)* (Samuel's ephemeral state, 976-1018), Hellenic Association for Slavic Studies, Thessaloniki 1990.

the foundations of such a state; the sources mention only Bulgars, and refer to the Archbishopric of Ohrid as the 'archbishopric of All Bulgaria', under the title *Prima Justiniana*. The decline of the Bulgarian state permitted the rise of the Serbian state, which flourished briefly under Stefan Dushan. After his death in 1355 it collapsed and was succeeded by a number of small Serbian principalities. Vukashin, for instance, who ruled the region of Prilep, Skopje, and Prizren, styled himself 'King of the Serbs and the Romans', because he held sway over areas with a strong Greek presence, as had the Bulgar Symeon and the Serb Stefan Dushan before him. Cyril and Methodius certainly translated the Gospels and the church texts into South Slavonic, but that language cannot be identified with any one specific Slavonic people. It is quite rightly termed 'Old Church Slavonic'. It is also conventionally called 'Old Bulgarian'⁷, owing to the modification of *tj* and *dj* into *sh* and *zh* respectively (dentopalatalisation) in Old Church Slavonic and Bulgarian.

For instance: <i>svět-ja</i>	(Old Slavonic)
<i>svešta</i>	(Bulgarian and Church Slavonic)
<i>sveča</i>	(Russian)
<i>sveća</i>	(Serbo-Croat)
<i>sveča</i>	(Skopje dialect)
<i>medja</i>	(Old Slavonic)
<i>mežda</i>	(Bulgarian and Church Slavonic)
<i>meža</i>	(Russian)
<i>međa</i>	(Serbo-Croat)
<i>međa</i>	(Skopje dialect)

Old Church Slavonic was not a spoken language, but an inveterate scholarly tongue with a Greek conceptual basis. Slavonic linguistic material was used in its construction, but the formulation of the ecclesiastical terms and the theological concepts, as also the syntax, was based on Greek models.

Chapter Three ('Evidence of Macedonia in the Ottoman Period', pp. 21-4) points out that the terms 'Macedonia' and 'Macedonians' continued to be used, in an ethnological sense, during the period of Ottoman rule.

7. A. Leskien, *Grammatik der altbulgarischen (altkirchenslavischen) Sprache*, Heidelberg 1919, p. 27.

This assertion is based chiefly on travel writings, in which the term 'Macedonia' is used, but without any clear ethnological reference. As we know, under the Turks the historical area of Macedonia was not a single administrative unit, but lay among three *vilayets*, those of Monastir, Thessaloniki, and Kosovo. Nor, under the *millet* system, was it possible to draw a clear distinction between the various ethnic components. The terms 'Macedonia' and 'Macedonians' therefore were of purely geographical significance. After the Congress of Berlin, 'Macedonia' was conventionally used in European diplomacy with reference to the three *vilayets*. This created a certain amount of confusion, because they extended beyond the territory of historical Macedonia and included parts of modern Kosovo (e.g. Prizren) and Northern Epirus (e.g. ~~Korçë~~).

In Chapter Four ('The Archbishopric of Ohrid and the Macedonian Orthodox Church', pp. 25-30), the autocephalous Archbishopric of Ohrid is described as the fundamental factor in the preservation of the 'Macedonian people's national identity'. When it was abolished in 1767, the 'Macedonians' lost their national church, and in the nineteenth century they made unsuccessful efforts to restore it. Only after the birth of the FYROM in 1944 did it become possible to re-establish a 'Macedonian' Orthodox Church.

As has already been pointed out, the Archbishopric of Ohrid originally represented a Bulgarian church, established by Basil II 'the Bulgar-slayer'. Its jurisdiction extended not only to the Bulgars, but also to the Greek, Vlach, and other ethnic groups living in the region. The archbishopric gradually lost its Slavonic aspect, however, and evolved into a Greek spiritual centre⁸.

8. G. Konidaris, *Συμβολαί εις την εκκλησιαστικήν ιστορίαν της Αχρίδος* (Contributions to the ecclesiastical history of Ohrid), Athens 1967, pp. 72-4. As Sir Dimitri Obolensky points out.

The evidence suggests that the authorities in Constantinople and their local agents in the field, while aiming at the total assimilation of Bulgaria into the empire's political structure, did not carry this policy as far as a systematic attempt to subvert the culture of the Bulgarian people by outlawing their language and literature. The role played by Ohrid in transmitting Byzantine civilisation to the Balkan Slavs during the Middle Ages would hardly have been so great had the two literary traditions, the Greek and the Slav, not continued to exist side by side in the country's schools and monasteries and to interact in a bilingual milieu.

The Byzantine Commonwealth: Eastern Europe, 500-1453, London 1971, p. 218.

Samuel's overthrow was followed by the Hellenisation of the western parts of the Protobulgarian state. The restoration of the Bulgarian Patriarchate at Tărnovo in 1235 as part of the second Bulgarian state (1186), coupled with the establishment of the Serbian Archbishopric of Petch in 1219 with St Sabbas, of the house of Nemanja, as its first archbishop, not only further diluted the Slavonic character of the Archbishopric of Ohrid, but also limited its jurisdiction. The archbishops were usually Greek and the archbishopric's documents were written in Greek. The term 'Macedonian' served to differentiate the Greeks from the Slavs; this is the purpose of the expression 'the race of Macedonians' used by the Archbishop of Ohrid, Demetrius Chomatianus (12-13th cc.), and mentioned on p. 25 of *Macedonia and its Relations with Greece*. He was pointing out the different origins of a Greek, 'John surnamed Ierakaris', who was of Macedonian descent (Τοιοῦτός τις πέφηνεν ἄρτι καὶ Ἰωάννης ὁ ἐπιλεγόμενος μὲν Ἰερακάρης, γαμβρὸς δὲ τοῦ Βλαστηνοῦ Βρατωνοῦ τοῦ Ῥάδου, τὸ δὲ γένος ἔλκων ἐκ Μακεδόνων), and his Slav relations by marriage (Rados, Vratonos, etc.)⁹. The abolition of the archbishopric in 1767 and its incorporation within the jurisdiction of the Oecumenical Patriarchate were the result both of the dire financial straits into which it had fallen and of Turkish pressure. Consequently, the Archbishopric of Ohrid cannot be regarded as the 'national Church of the Macedonian Slavs'. The establishment of the autocephalous 'Macedonian' Church in 1967 in the Federal Socialist Republic of Macedonia¹⁰ was a political act by the Communist régime, whose intention was that the Church would assist its policy of altering the population's national consciousness. It is no wonder that this arbitrary action has not been recognised by the various branches of the Orthodox Church.

Chapter Five ('Attempts at Hellenization', pp. 31-6) relates how both the Oecumenical Patriarchate and the Greek state implemented a policy of assimilating the Macedonian Slavs through the Church and education. The 'Macedonians' went over to the Exarchate in an attempt to escape Hellenisation. The Ilinden Uprising demonstrated that efforts to Hellenise the 'Macedonians' had failed. In 1904, Athens began dispatching bands of armed guerrillas to Hellenise the 'Macedonians' by force.

The cultural influence of the Oecumenical Patriarchate and the dynamic

9. I. Tarnanidis, *Στα Βόρεια της Μακεδονίας* (In the North of Macedonia), Thessaloniki 1992, pp. 34-5; J. B. Pitra, *Analecta Sacra et Classica VI*, Paris and Rome 1891, col. 315.

10. See C. K. Papastathis, 'L'Autocéphalie de l'église de la Macédoine yougoslave', *Balkan Studies* 8 (1967), 151-4.

presence of the Greek element, chiefly in Macedonia's urban centres, undeniably meant that major segments of the Slavonic-speaking population had Greek national consciousness and based their hopes of liberation from the Turkish yoke chiefly on Greece¹¹; for Greece was an independent nation state from 1830 onwards, and throughout the Greek War of Independence and the Crimean War the Greeks organised liberation risings on Macedonian soil. This 'Hellenisation' could not be counteracted by the notion of Macedono-Slavonic national consciousness, for there was simply no such thing. So the reaction was manifested in the national awakening of the Bulgarians and the formation of the Exarchate. By exploiting the factor of language and by invoking mediaeval history, the Bulgarians were able to wrest the Slavonic-speakers away from the Greek cultural ambit and inculcate in them a Bulgarian national consciousness. The Bulgarians' aim was to annex the whole of Macedonia and wipe out the Greek element there. In self-defence the Greeks embarked upon the Macedonian Struggle (1904-8), after the Bulgarian uprising at Ilinden.

Chapter Six ('The Development of the Idea of the Macedonian Nation', pp. 37-47) discusses the agents of the national ideology of Macedono-Slavism. Since they were essentially the agents of a Bulgarian national ideology, Skopje's historians attempt to skirt this problem

11. A report from the Russian consul in Monastir to the Russian ambassador to Constantinople, dated 16 January 1864, had this to say about the necessity of educating the Bulgarians:

Macedonia, being separated from the other Slav regions in the South, fell completely under the influence of the Greeks a very long time ago. ... For a long time services have been conducted almost everywhere exclusively in Greek, and in practically none of the schools was the Bulgarian language taught. The few prospering Bulgarians did not dare to call themselves Bulgarians — they were ashamed of their nationality.

The Cyrillic alphabet was preserved only in the Northern parts of Macedonia and in the oldest manuscripts, which could be found only in some monasteries. The local Bulgarians were compelled to devise a new way of writing by using Greek letters to express Slav sounds. ... But in spite of this moral oppression, the rural population everywhere preserved the Slav legends, language and traditions. ...

But, while remaining true to the ancient legends — to the Slav language and customs, the same rural population under the influence of the higher circles of society gradually lost almost completely its consciousness of the other Slav peoples and became accustomed to base all its hopes for the improvement of its situation solely on Greece.

See *Macedonia: Documents and Material*, Sofia 1980, pp. 209-10.

by regarding the 'Macedono-Slavonic renaissance' as Bulgarian only in its outward manifestation, and as 'Macedonian' in essence:

In the resistance to Hellenization, Slav Orthodoxy was emphasized, which, as a result of the medieval inheritance, had surfaced as "Slavo-Bulgarian". However, during the 1840's the Macedonian population came into contact with Bulgarian literacy and the Bulgarian language, and in so doing differentiated themselves from those already known as Bulgarians. They rejected Bulgarian features, but being unable to refer to themselves simply as Slavs (a name which had no ethnic differentiation) they took the name of their country, which possessed a long tradition and a famous past (p. 38).

This is a blatant usurpation of the Bulgarian cultural renaissance. The Bulgarian intellectuals who originated within the bosom of the Bulgarian Exarchate and agitated in Bulgaria for Macedonian autonomy have suddenly become naturalised 'Macedonians'.

Chapter Six also mentions the activities of associations of 'Macedonian' students in St Petersburg, with emphasis on the 'national' contribution of Dimitrija Tchupovski and Krste Misirkov (pp. 42-5). In Skopje, the latter is regarded as the Vuk Karadzhitich of 'Macedonia' and the number one national enlightener.

Misirkov is worth discussing. In his *Za makedonckite raboti* (On Macedonian matters), which was published in Sofia in 1903 and written not in the scholarly Bulgarian language but in the local Bulgaro-Macedonian dialect, Misirkov did indeed expound the theory of 'Slavo-Macedonianism' — i.e. the creation of a new, non-Bulgarian Slavonic ethnicity. It was Stoyan Novakovitch, Serbia's Minister for Education in 1881-3 and *chargé d'affaires* in Constantinople (1886-91) and St Petersburg (1900-2) — where he maintained close relations with Slav students from Macedonia — who originally developed this theory. In order to prevent the Macedonian Slavs from acquiring Bulgarian national consciousness, from 1881 onwards the Serbs expounded the notion of Slavo-Macedonianism and tried to turn the Bulgaro-Macedonian dialect into a literary language by enriching it with Serbian words. The Serbs' aim, needless to say, was not to create a new Slavo-Macedonian ethnicity, but, by cultivating Slavo-Macedonianism as a countervailing force against Bulgarianisation, gradually to Serbianise the Slav population of Macedonia¹².

12. For Macedonianism as a political concept in the late nineteenth and early twentieth

As the recipient of a scholarship from the St Sabbas Association, the Bulgarian-born Misirkov was imbued with the Serbian notions of Slavo-Macedonianism. During his further education in St Petersburg, he met Novakovitch. Realising that Bulgaria could not liberate Macedonia and that Russian policy was not in favour of the revolutionary activities of IMRO (the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation), after the failure of the Ilinden Uprising Misirkov devised the concept of Slavo-Macedonianism as a political means of achieving independence for Macedonia within the framework of the Ottoman Empire. He was fully aware that the new ethnicity was a complete fabrication, that there was in fact no such thing as a Slavo-Macedonian ethnicity.

'Many people will wonder', he wrote, what national fragmentation we are talking about. Can we be thinking of creating a new, Macedonian ethnicity? That would be a factitious thing and would not last a day. What kind of Macedonian ethnicity is this, when our fathers, our grandfathers, and our great-grandfathers were called Bulgarians? ... There have always been two nationalities in Macedonia: the Bulgarians and the Serbs. A Macedono-Slavonic renaissance is an empty dream of star-gazers who have no idea of the Southern Slavs' history¹³.

He waves away these objections with the simple argument: 'but what does not exist can be created, if the historical circumstances call for it'¹⁴.

Naturally enough, Misirkov's views, like the similar views of Tchupovski, met with no substantial response. It was not long before he himself described the theory of Macedono-Slavism as unscientific and conceded that his book *On Macedonian Matters* was a political tract. In his study 'Notes on South Slavonic Literature and History', which was published in the periodical *Balgarska Sbirka* (1910-11) and expressed Bulgarian views, he wrote:

My readers will be astonished by the great contrast between this study and my tract *On Macedonian Matters*. To clarify this contrast I need only remind them that in that work I was playing the part

century, see H. Hristov, 'Makedonizmat kato politicheska kontsepsija v kraja na 19. i natchaloto na 20. v.', *Istoricheski Pregled*, 3 (1979), 23-40, who closely analyses the views of Novakovitch and Misirkov.

13. K. Misirkov, *Za makedonckite raboti*, Sofia 1903, pp. 100-1.

14. *Ibidem*, p. 101.

of a politician extemporising on the Macedonian Question. Nothing in that tract has anything to do with impartial science¹⁵.

At the beginning of the century the notion of Slavo-Macedonianism served ulterior political motives and was restricted to a coterie of intellectuals. It had no foundation amongst the people.

In Chapter Seven ('Macedonian Uprisings in the 19th and the Beginning of the 20th Century', pp. 49-52) the uprisings at Kresna (1878) and Ilinden are described as insurrectionary movements by the 'Macedonian' people, and the IMTRO (Internal Macedono-Thracian Revolutionary Movement; later IMRO) as a mass popular organisation of the 'Macedonians'.

This is basically a distortion of Bulgarian history. The Kresna Uprising was a Bulgarian revolt in protest against the revision of the San Stefano Treaty by the Congress of Berlin. The Ilinden Uprising was also a Bulgarian revolt, a consequence of the Djumaya disturbances (1902) fomented by the Supreme Macedonian Committee in Sofia and of the increased diplomatic activity in Europe in late 1902 and early 1903 (for instance, the Russian foreign Minister Count Lamsdorf visited Sofia after the Djumaya incidents and the European Powers were promoting a programme of reforms for Macedonia). We now know that IMRO decided to launch the Ilinden Uprising basically because Bulgaria had promised to help, even to the extent of declaring war on Turkey¹⁶. Despite the various changes visited upon its name for tactical reasons, IMRO, which had been founded by a group of Bulgarian intellectuals in Thessaloniki in 1893, never lost its Bulgarian identity. It sought autonomy for Macedonia as a means of annexing the region to Bulgaria. Christo Tatarchev, one of IMRO's founder members, was quite clear on this point:

The Organisation's aims were discussed at great length. We decided to pursue the autonomy of Macedonia, with the Bulgarian element particularly in mind. We could not accept that Macedonia should be immediately annexed to Bulgaria, for we realised that such a move would encounter great difficulties, owing to the objections

15. K. Tsarnushanov, *Makedonizmat i saprotivata na Makedonija sreshtu nego*, Sofia 1992, p. 76.

16. See *Zlatna Kniga — 100 Godini VMRO: Glas na VMRO-DPMNE*, Skopje 1993, p. 53.

of the Great Powers and the ambitious plans of the small neighbouring states and Turkey. We thought an autonomous Macedonia could be annexed to Bulgaria more easily at a later stage. If this, in the final analysis, were not achieved, it could serve as a link to unite the Balkan states into a single confederation¹⁷.

Chapter Eight ('Programmatic Premises for a Macedonian State', pp. 53-8) discusses IMRO's post-Ilinden manifesto, which was hammered out at a conference at Rila Monastery. It included propaganda for establishing an independent Macedonia within the framework of a Balkan federation, discrediting Bulgaria's part in the liberation struggle, and implementing a policy that would be independent of Sofia.

This new orientation of many of IMRO's cadres after the Ilinden Uprising resulted from the political crisis in and the ideological fragmentation of this Bulgaro-Macedonian organisation. Many members had been disappointed by the Bulgarian government's inertia during the Ilinden Uprising and were now seeking a new strategy. The fundamental dilemma the organisation was facing was how far support for the Bulgarian government might benefit or prejudice the Bulgaro-Macedonian revolutionary movement¹⁸. One of the chief advocates of an independent line from Sofia was Jane Sandanski, who, without repudiating his Bulgarian origin, joined forces with the Young Turks after 1908¹⁹. The restricting of IMRO's relations with the Bulgarian government was a purely tactical move and was by no means an attempt to emancipate the 'Macedonians' from the Bulgarians.

Chapter Nine ('The Macedonian Question in Foreign Relations', pp. 59-65) conducts a very brief and superficial examination of the Great Powers' policy towards the Macedonian Question from the time of the Eastern Crisis (1875-8) until the end of the First World War, in the context of their general policy towards the Eastern Question. The American stance at the Paris Peace Conference after the War is both overrated and distorted, and it is claimed that the United States favoured the formation of an autonomous Macedonian state (p. 63).

17. Christo Tatartchev, *Spomeni, Documenti, Materiali*, Sofia 1989, p. 27.

18. For a critical analysis of the developments, see F. Adanir, *Die Makedonische Frage: Ihre Entstehung und Entwicklung bis 1908*, Wiesbaden 1979, pp. 226-34.

19. *Ibidem*, p. 248.

There is ample proof that US Balkan policy after World War I was manifestly pro-Bulgarian. The United States was anxious to exert political influence over the defeated Bulgaria, which had lost its traditional allies, tsarist Russia and Germany. This was why President Wilson opposed ceding Western Thrace to Greece and favoured giving Southern Dobrudja to Bulgaria, at the same time urging the formation of an international state in Eastern Thrace under American protection and proposing that Constantinople serve as a bridge-head against the Soviet Russia²⁰. Given the United States' pro-Bulgarian stance, American envoys in Bulgaria were chiefly influenced by Bulgaro-Macedonian circles and expressed in their memoranda to President Wilson the desirability of the formation of an autonomous Macedonia. However, when the Macedonian Question was discussed by the Commission for New States and the Protection of Minorities between July and September 1919, the US Peace Delegation did not table the subject²¹, because its members believed that the preconditions did not exist for the formation of an autonomous or independent Macedonian state. It was chiefly the Bulgaro-Macedonian organisations that were lobbying for the formation of an independent Macedonia in memoranda to the Peace Conference, and they were supported by the Bulgarian delegation in Paris²².

The assertion that Greece acknowledged the existence of a 'Macedonian minority' at the Paris Peace Conference is also totally unfounded. The Greek delegation's every reference to Slavonic-speakers or Slav communities in Macedonia is interpreted as recognition of the existence of a 'Macedonian minority' (p. 64).

The Greek delegation to the Paris Peace Conference sought and achieved an exchange of populations between Greece and Bulgaria. The Slavonic speakers in Greek Macedonia who had a fully developed Bulgarian national consciousness would be allowed to emigrate to Bulgaria, while those who wished to stay were considered to have Greek national consciousness, since they had remained loyal to the Oecumenical Patriarchate and had fought

20. H. Hristov, 'On the Question of the Entente's and USA Policy in Southeastern Europe in 1918-1919', *Études historiques*, VII (1975), 389-404; N. Petsalis-Diomidis, *Greece at the Paris Peace Conference (1919)*, Institute for Balkan Studies (No 175), Thessaloniki 1978, p. 261.

21. H. Hristov, *Balgarija, Balkanite i mirat 1919*, Sofia 1984, p. 109.

22. I. Mihajlov, *Spomeni*, vol. 2, *Osvoboditelnata borba 1919-1924 g.*, Louvain 1965, pp. 345-6.

with the Greeks in the Macedonian Struggle. Likewise, the Greeks in Bulgaria would be allowed to emigrate to Greece. It should be noted that the Treaty of Sèvres (10 August 1920) made no reference whatsoever to a Bulgarian or 'Macedonian' minority in Greece.

Chapter Ten ('The Balkan Wars and the Partition of Macedonia', pp. 67-70) repeats the claim that the Balkan Wars supposedly divided Macedonia amongst Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria. It is stated, however, that 'Macedonians' joined the Bulgarian and Greek armies to fight for their liberation (p. 67).

The Balkan Wars are the Achilles' heel of Skopje's historiography. If the Slav population really did have a well-developed 'Slavo-Macedonian' national consciousness, it would surely have manifested itself in the form of resistance to the 'expansionism' of the three Balkan states. The fact that Slavonic-speakers with Bulgarian national consciousness fought with the Bulgarian army, and Slavonic-speakers with Greek national consciousness fought with the Greek army demonstrates the non-existence of 'Slavo-Macedonian' national consciousness. It was chiefly the Bulgaro-Macedonian organisations that were agitating for an independent Macedonia after Bulgaria's defeat in the Second Balkan War.

Chapter Eleven ('The Aegean Part of Macedonia after the Balkan Wars', pp. 71-86) relates that after the First World War Greece embarked on a campaign of 'ethnic cleansing' against the 'Macedonians' and, by settling the Greek refugees from Asia Minor in Macedonia, changed the region's ethnic composition. Under pressure from the League of Nations Greece did, apparently, acknowledge the existence of a 'Macedonian minority'. Proof of this is taken to be the *ABECEDAR* case (pp. 73-5). The changing of local place-names is proffered as further evidence of Athens' 'anti-Macedonian' policy (pp. 75-80). Greece's 'anti-Macedonian' campaign culminated after the Second World War, when the Greek authorities persecuted the 'Macedonians', who joined forces with the democratic people of Greece during the Occupation and the Civil War and fought for their national reinstatement (pp. 80-6).

As we have seen, on 27 November 1919 Greece signed a special accord with Bulgaria for a reciprocal exchange of populations. After the Bulgarian parliament had ratified the Treaty of Neuilly on 9 August 1920, Bulgaria did not proceed to grant rights to the Greeks living in Bulgaria in accordance

with the Treaty's minority provisions. Greece also conducted an exchange of populations with Turkey, under the terms of the Treaty of Lausanne (24 July 1923). Over 300,000 Moslems left Greek Macedonia for Turkey, and 700,000 Greeks from Asia Minor came and settled in Macedonia. In 1926 the ethnic composition of Greek Macedonia was as follows²³:

Greeks	1,341,000
Moslems	2,000
Slavonic-speakers	77,000
Other	91,000
Total	1,511,000

It is obvious that Greece carried out no 'ethnic cleansing'.

The question of the *ABECEDAR* has to be examined in its historical context. On 6 August 1924 the Greek parliament ratified the provisions of the Treaty of Sèvres concerning the protection of minorities. On 29 September 1924, the Greek representative at the League of Nations, Nikolaos Politis, and the Bulgarian foreign minister, Christo Kalvov, signed a protocol under the aegis of the Secretary General of the League of Nations, Eric Drummond, to meet the demands of the Bulgarian minority in Greece and the Greek minority in Bulgaria. Emigration was still continuing, and IMRO was provoking border incidents (one example being the Terlis case in July 1924) and harassing the Greeks in Bulgaria (notably in the summer of 1924). The protocol chiefly provided for two League of Nations representatives (A. C. Corfe and Marcel De Roover) to act as advisers to the Commission for Greek and Bulgarian Emigration on the measures to be taken by each government. For Bulgaria the significance of the protocol lay chiefly in the fact that it was the first time since the First World War that an official diplomatic document referred to the presence of Bulgarians in the broader region of Macedonia. However, two factors made the protocol impossible to implement. The first was Yugoslavia's attitude. Belgrade objected to the fact that the Slavonic-speakers in Greek Macedonia were referred to as 'Bulgarians' (for this undermined the policy of 'Serbianisation' being carried out in the Serbian part of Macedonia, where no Bulgarian presence was recognised), demanded that the Slavonic-

23. League of Nations, *Greek Refugee Settlement*, Geneva 1926, in E. Kofos, *Nationalism and Communism in Macedonia*, Institute for Balkan Studies, No 70, Thessaloniki 1964, p. 47. The figure 77,000 refers only to the former Exarchists, whom Greece regarded as a separate linguistic group.

speakers in Greek Macedonia be referred to as Serbs, and revoked the Greek-Serbian treaty of 1913. Owing to Belgrade's stance, the Greek government could not ratify the protocol. The second factor was the end of the emigration process. The last day of December 1924 was the deadline for Slavonic-speakers with Bulgarian national consciousness to apply to emigrate to Bulgaria. Greece regarded the remaining Slavonic-speakers as a linguistic minority (*minorité de langue slave*), and not as an ethnic minority in the sense in which the term is used in international law.

In order to avert the diplomatic consequences of non-ratification of the protocol, and also to make it apparent that Greece was meeting its obligations arising out of the minority provisions of the Treaty of Sèvres, on 29 May 1925 the Greek government assured the League of Nations that it would respect the Slavonic-speakers' demands in the spheres of education and religion.

Le Gouvernement hellénique examinera avec bienveillance toute demande qui lui serait soumise par cette minorité pour l'ouverture et le fonctionnement d'une école où l'enseignement serait donné dans sa propre langue, conformément aux lois et règlements du pays sur les écoles privées ou l'instruction primaire. Il lui fera en outre profiter de toute autre mesure qui serait prise ultérieurement en faveur des écoles des minorités, notamment pour le recrutement du personnel enseignant.

Les ressortissants grecs appartenant à la minorité de langue slave étant orthodoxes ne peuvent certes prétendre constituer une minorité de religion dans un pays dont la religion prédominante est leur propre croyance. Néanmoins, et bien que depuis l'apparition du christianisme jusqu'il y a quelques dizaines d'années l'office divin dans leurs églises était célébré en langue grecque, le Gouvernement hellénique serait toujours disposé à examiner avec bienveillance toute demande provenant de ces ressortissants en question, et visant l'emploi, dans une église, de leur propre langue à la place du grec²⁴.

The educational measures Greece was prepared to implement included the compiling of a primer in the local Slavonic dialect printed in the Latin

24. See 'Réponse du Gouvernement hellénique aux trois questions formulées par le Conseil de la Société des Nations, au sujet de la protection des Minorités ethniques, de religion et de langue en Grèce'; appendix to A. Tounda-Fergadi, *Ελληνο-βουλγαρικές μειονότητες: Πρωτόκολλο Πολίτη-Καλφώφ 1924-1925* (Greek and Bulgarian minorities: The Politis-Kalfov protocol, 1924-5), Institute for Balkan Studies, No 201, Thessaloniki 1986, p. 216.

alphabet. Greece also intended to promote the teaching of the Greek language to the Slavonic-speakers, a proposal which the League of Nations accepted. 'Il est bien entendu que l'enseignement créé au profit des populations grecques de langue slave comportera aussi un enseignement de la langue grecque'²⁵.

Nowhere in the relevant diplomatic documents is the term 'Macedonian ethnic minority' or even 'Macedonian minority' to be found.

Bulgaria, however, did not institute similar measures for the Greeks, as the Treaty of Neuilly stipulated that it should for all its minorities; and Greece could hardly implement the declared measures unilaterally. Furthermore, during the Greek-Serbian negotiations held in April and May 1925 (and later) to settle the issue of the free zone in Thessaloniki, Belgrade was pressing Greece to recognise the Slavonic-speakers in Greek Macedonia as a Serbian minority, so that Greece could indirectly help Serbia to implement its policy of 'Serbianising' the Serbian part of Macedonia. The issue of the Slavonic-speakers in Greek Macedonia inevitably became embroiled in the Bulgaro-Yugoslav contention over the Macedonian Question, and the political situation in the Balkans deteriorated. From mid-1925 onwards the League of Nations ceased to concern itself with the Politis-Kalvov Protocol and the Slavonic-speakers in Greek Macedonia. After all, the Slavonic-speakers themselves had never complained of oppression by the Greek authorities either to the Greek government or to the League of Nations' representatives on the Joint Committee for Greek and Bulgarian Emigration.

It has been standard practice in the modern history of the whole of Europe, and elsewhere too, to change place-names when borders shift. In the Balkans and Asia Minor, the countries that acquired nationhood after the collapse of the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires conducted a similar process of toponymical change within their territories — particularly in areas where speakers of the 'other' language had moved away or considerably dwindled in number. In many parts of Macedonia, more especially, it was a question of restoring Slavonic distortions to their proper Greek form (Kastoria instead of Kostur, for instance, Veria instead of Ber) or officially redefining areas by their original Greek names (Naoussa/Negush, for instance, Pella/Postlo, Edessa/Voden). In many cases, Greeks had always called such places by their

25. See 'Réponse du Gouvernement hellénique à certaines questions qui lui ont été adressées par le Conseil en mars 1925: Procès verbal de la sixième séance (publique) tenue à Genève le mercredi 10 juin 1925'; appendix to Tounda-Fergadi, *Ελληνο-Βουλγαρικές μειονότητες*, p. 219.

Greek names. The radical ethnological changes the region had undergone between 1912 and 1925 made it vital to replace Turkish and Slavonic place-names, because Greek Macedonia now had an overwhelmingly homogeneous Greek-speaking population.

During the Second World War and the Greek Civil War (1946-9), some of the Slavonic-speakers experienced a genuine crisis of conscious, chiefly owing to external factors. While the Bulgarians were occupying Greek Macedonia, many Slavonic-speakers, either out of self-interest or in response to pressure, became tools of the the occupiers and organised security corps, known collectively as the *Ohrana*. On the initiative of the Yugoslav Communist Party (which had accepted the International's 1934 decision to recognise the existence of a 'Macedonian nation', was promoting 'Macedonianism' as a counterweight to 'Bulgarianism', and in 1943 began efforts to unite the three parts of Macedonia in the framework of the Yugoslav Federation) the SNOF (Slavo-Macedonian National Liberation Front) was formed in Greek Macedonia in 1943. The Communist Party of Greece (KKE) acquiesced to the setting up of the SNOF, in the belief that the Slavonic-speakers who had been seduced by Bulgarian Fascist propaganda could thus be prevailed upon to resist. Although the Communist Parties of Greece and Yugoslavia had jointly decided that the SNOF would join the Greek resistance movement of the National Popular Liberation Army (ELAS), the former organisation was being secretly primed by Yugoslav partisans, who were spreading propaganda about a 'Macedonian nation' and a 'united Macedonia' within the Yugoslav Federation²⁶. In 1944, when the Nazi grip on Europe was weakening and

26. Tito's envoy to Yugoslav Macedonia, Svetozar Vukmanovitch (nicknamed Tempo), put the question of uniting Greek Macedonia and Yugoslav Macedonia in a future Yugoslav federation directly to the KKE's representative. Andreas Dzimas, when they met in the summer of 1943. Dzimas refused point blank to discuss the proposal with him. See the Archives of the Executive Committee of the Comintern and the Georgi Dimitrov Archive in 1931-1944 *Φάκελλος Ελλάς: Τα Αρχεία των μυστικών σοβιετικών υπηρεσιών* (1931-1944 Greece file: the archives of the Soviet secret services), Athens 1993, pp. 143-5. This was the main reason why the KKE's Central Committee rejected Tempo's proposal to establish a Balkan headquarters. At the seventh plenary session of the KKE's Central Committee (14-18 May 1950), Zachariadis said:

Ever since 1943, Tito's history has been, amongst other things, an endless series of subversion, provocation, informing, and betrayal of the popular revolutionary movement in our country. Since the moment Tito's agents made contact with ELAS, they have been trying to create their own organisation and to recruit agents chiefly from amongst the Slavo-Macedonians. Their aim ever since has been to

Bulgaria was once again destined to be a defeated country, many supporters of the *Ohrana* shed the insignia of the Bulgarian Fascist army and joined the armed battalions of Slavonic-speakers under Ilias Dimakis (Gotche) and Gjorgi Urdov (Dzodzo), presenting themselves as 'Macedonian' Communists fighting for the resistance. The battalions' direct dependence on Yugoslavia and their agitating for a free and united Macedonia aroused considerable alarm within the Greek resistance movement, and in October 1944 ELAS clashed with Gotche's battalion and pushed it back into Yugoslavia.

In April 1945, the Yugoslavs took advantage of the irregular political situation in Greece after the events of December 1944 and formed the SNOF's successor, the NOF; and when the Civil War broke out in Greece, the latter joined the Greek Communist movement. Very soon, however, Gotche (Ilias Dimakis), Keramidzhiev (Mihalis Keramidzis), and Mitrevski (Paskhalis Mitropoulos) began spreading propaganda for the union of Greek Macedonia with Yugoslav Macedonia, causing serious problems for the leadership of the KKE, which was conducting its war operations chiefly with Yugoslav assistance²⁷. After the International had recognised the existence of a 'Mace-

create a rift between the Greeks and the Slavo-Macedonians, because they have set their sights on Thessaloniki and the whole of Macedonia. Basically, they have been continuing the grand Yugoslav policy of conquest, which has always targeted the whole of Macedonia, with Thessaloniki as its centre.

Quoted in *H 7η Ολομέλεια της ΚΕ του ΚΚΕ (14-18 Μάη 1950): Εισηγήσεις — Λόγοι — Αποφάσεις* (The seventh plenary session of the Central Committee of the KKE (14-18 May 1950): Proposals, speeches, and decisions), Published by the Central Committee of the KKE, September 1950, p. 275.

27. No document has yet been found confirming that the KKE officially agreed that Greek Macedonia should be ceded to Tito as a *quid pro quo* for Yugoslav help. Nonetheless, the Yugoslav leadership did seem to expect that the KKE would repay its help by satisfying its designs on parts of Greek Macedonia. The process had already begun with negotiations for the incorporation of Bulgarian Macedonia. The agreement of 14 October 1946 signed by Ioannidis, Rankovitch, and Karaivanov (see E. Kofos, *The Impact of the Macedonian Question on Civil Conflict in Greece (1943-1949)*, Athens 1989, p. 42) simply regulated the relations between the NOF and the KKE. Zachariadis had this to say at the seventh plenary session:

As far as the significance for us of the Yugoslav factor is concerned, it is important to remember that Tito's clique waged an underhand subversive war against us for years amongst the Slavo-Macedonian population. An understanding with the Yugoslavs at that time meant an end to that war and the Slavo-Macedonians fighting at our side. In fact in the agreement we made with Tito, we did touch on this point.

See *H 7η Ολομέλεια της ΚΕ του ΚΚΕ*, p. 173.

donian nation', the KKE also, in theory, recognised the Slavonic-speakers as a 'Slavo-Macedonian minority'. But by 1935 it had abandoned the slogan of a 'united and independent Macedonia within a Balkan federation' that the International had imposed in 1924, and, having provoked a split within the party, was now supporting the full equality of the minorities in the Greek state. After Tito's rupture with the Cominform in 1948, the KKE leaders joined the Soviet Union in attacking Tito, and at the fifth plenary session in January 1949 adopted the slogan of the 'national re-establishment and self-determination of the Macedonian people', so that Yugoslav Macedonia could be freed from Tito's dominion.

In Northern Greece the Macedonian [Slavo-Macedonian] people have given their all to the struggle and are battling on with absolute and admirable heroism and self-sacrifice. There can be no doubt that, as a result of the victory of the Democratic Army of Greece and the People's Revolution, the Macedonian people will gain full reinstatement as a nation, precisely as they themselves wish, spilling their own blood today in order to achieve it. The Macedonian Communists are always ready to lead their people's struggle. At the same time, the Macedonian Communists have to beware of the disruptive tactics employed by foreign-influenced, chauvinistic, and reactionary elements in order to destroy the unity between the [Slavo-] Macedonian and Greek people; a destruction that will benefit only their common enemy, monarcho-Fascism and Anglo-American imperialism²⁸.

At the seventh plenary session of the Central Committee of the KKE (14-18 May 1950), Zachariadis explained that the decision was also aimed

at Tito, who, like monarcho-Fascism, is tyrannising the Macedonian people. The prospect we were giving them was liberation not only from monarcho-Fascism but from Tito also, who is bringing, nay has already brought, Macedonia back under the imperialist yoke and imperialist exploitation²⁹.

28. See *5η Ολομέλεια της ΚΕ του ΚΚΕ (30-31 του Γενάρη 1949): Εισηγήσεις — Λόγοι — Αποφάσεις* (The fifth plenary session of the Central Committee of the KKE (30-31 January 1949): proposals, speeches, and decisions), published by the Central Committee of the KKE, June 1949, p. 16.

29. See *II 7η Ολομέλεια της ΚΕ του ΚΚΕ*, p. 175. After Tito had severed relations with

The fifth plenary session had also harshly criticised the NOF cadres who were tools of Yugoslavia³⁰ and had already been removed from their positions of leadership.

The second plenary session of the Central Committee of the NOF (3 February 1949) adopted the old slogan of a 'united and independent Macedonia in the framework of a Balkan Communist federation'³¹, which was to be ratified by the second NOF conference. The decision was aimed against

Stalin and the KKE had aligned itself with the Cominform, the former leaders of the NOF, Gotche, Keramidzhiev, and Ajanovski-Otche (Vangelis Ayannis), helped Slavonic-speakers to desert from the Democratic Army to Yugoslavia and cultivated a spirit of defeatism, arguing that the KKE had betrayed the struggle of the 'Macedonian' people, and that their blood was being shed in vain. This was the basic reason why Zachariadis — or so he claimed — brought up the Macedonian Question at the fifth plenary session and put Slavonic-speakers in ministerial posts in the interim government. He was trying to create a diversion among the NOF's pro-Tito clique and secure the support of the Slavonic-speakers for the forthcoming battle for Florina, where the rebel government was to install itself. He said:

The second point is that, though we could have postponed announcing this thing, which was basically the right thing to do, we brought it up at the fifth plenary session because we were under pressure. In my article I say that, although it was not in the general interest, we gave the signal. Why did we do so? I see it this way, and I shall explain it to you — from my own point of view, of course. Broadly speaking, it was not in our immediate interests. But the first thing we had in mind was that we had to win the battle of Vitsi. Everything else took second place. This was the thought, my thought at least, when I proposed it, when I wrote it down, and when I explained it. We had to mobilise all the forces of the Slavo-Macedonian people, and stop the desertions and the subversive and disruptive work being done by Tito's agents by putting a political obstacle in their way. And we did put a political obstacle in their way and averted the immediate danger posed by this work. We put a stop to that immediate danger.

See *H 7η Ολομέλεια της ΚΕ του ΚΚΕ*, p. 175. After Zachariadis had been removed from the leadership of the KKE (in 1956), the seventh general plenary session of the Central Committee of the KKE (18-24 February 1957) described his policy as erroneous and brought back the old slogan of the 'the Slavo-Macedonians' right to equality ... in indissoluble unity with the Greek people'. See *H 7η Πλατιά Ολομέλεια της ΚΕ του ΚΚΕ (18-24 Φεβρουαρίου 1957): Εισηγήσεις — Αποφάσεις — Ομιλίες — Πραχτικά* (The 7th general plenary session of the Central Committee of the KKE (18-24 February 1957): Proposals, decisions, speeches, proceedings), published by the Central Committee of the KKE, February 1957, p. 21.

30. See *5η Ολομέλεια της ΚΕ του ΚΚΕ*, p. 38.

31. See *Egejska Makedonija vo NOB 1949*, vol. VI, Arhiv na Makedonija, Skopje 1983, pp. 52-4. Owing to the reaction of both the Greek government and Yugoslavia, for tactical reasons the second NOF conference (25-26 March 1949) did not proclaim this slogan, but replaced it with the 'Macedonian people's right to self-determination'.

Yugoslavia, which was seeking to establish a united Macedonia within the Yugoslav federation. The *volte-face* also had serious repercussions in the sphere of military operations. In an attempt to protect their rear, the Yugoslavs closed the border which had hitherto served as the Greek Communists' main supply route. Some of the NOF's Slavonic-speaking supporters fled to Yugoslav Macedonia. After the defeat of the Greek Communists in 1949, the NOF's remaining supporters followed the leaders of the KKE and settled in East European countries. As a result, the Slavonic-speakers who had joined the Greek Communist movement during the Civil War suffered the same fate as the Greek Communists. The Greek state had every reason to be extremely wary of those who settled in the Federal Socialist Republic of 'Macedonia', became naturalised 'Macedonians', and applied themselves to an anti-Greek campaign. But what Skopje's historians neglect to mention is that, during the Occupation and the Civil War, many Slavonic-speakers remained firmly committed to Hellenism, and many of them, indeed, took up arms against the members of the NOF.

Chapter Twelve ('The Idea of Macedonian Liberation between the Two World Wars', pp. 87-90) discusses the 'Macedonian national forces' which struggled to achieve an independent Macedonian state in the inter-war period: IMRO, the Executive Committee of the Macedonian Brotherhoods, the Federalists, and IMRO (United). The attempt to unite the 'Macedonian' forces in May 1924 and the publication of the revolutionary manifesto on 6 May 1924 are extolled, and the Comintern's 1934 decision to recognise the existence of a 'Macedonian nation' is considered to be the first international recognition of the 'Macedonian national entity' (p. 89).

However, the actual historical facts are somewhat different. Chiefly after the First World War, the Bulgarian organisation IMRO, led by Todor Alexandrov and Alexander Protogerov, sought autonomy for Serbian and Greek Macedonia, with the ulterior motive of annexing the region to Bulgaria. As far as Greek Macedonia was concerned, IMRO tried (unsuccessfully) to frustrate the implementation of the Greek-Bulgarian agreement on the exchange of populations; and in the Serbian part of Macedonia, where a considerable proportion of the population nursed pro-Bulgarian sentiments, its tactics were guerrilla warfare (1920-4) and the assassination of Yugoslav state officials (1926-33) in protest against Belgrade's policy of Serbianising

the region³². In 1933, under the leadership of Ivan Mihajlov, IMRO began agitating for a 'unified and independent Macedonia', which would include the Bulgarian part of Macedonia. IMRO regarded the political label of 'Macedonian' as perfectly compatible with the national identity of 'Bulgarian'. The 'unified and independent Macedonia' was in fact intended to be a second Bulgarian state. The Federalists (Todor Panitcha and Filip Atanasov), who had broken away from IMRO in 1920/1, were pushing for the establishment of a Federation of Southern Slavs as a way of resolving the Macedonian Question. They used the term 'Macedonian' in its geographical sense. Their disagreement with IMRO was partly ideological, partly personal, and partly strategical. Soviet diplomats made efforts to the unify the two organisations in 1924, so that the unified Bulgaro-Macedonian organisations, the Communist Party of Bulgaria, and the Bulgarian Agrarians could together overthrow Tchankov and install a workers' and agrarian government in Bulgaria. Soviet diplomacy and the Communist International did their best to alienate the Bulgaro-Macedonian organisations from Bulgarian nationalism, talked about a 'Macedonian people' divided among Greece, Serbia, and Bulgaria, and pressed for a 'unified and independent Macedonia in the framework of a Balkan federation', in order to undermine the Balkan nations. The Manifesto of 6 May 1924³³ — which was signed by IMRO and the Federalists and was a veiled declaration of the collaboration between the Bulgaro-Macedonian organisations and Soviet Russia and the start of a struggle against the 'imperialist' Balkan states in the name of 'Macedonianism' and an independent Macedonia — was the brainchild of Soviet diplomacy³⁴.

The same spirit governed the decision of the International's Fifth Congress (17 June-8 July 1924) on the Macedonian Question.

The partitioning of Macedonia among Yugoslavia, Greece, and

32. See S. Sfetas, *Makedonien und interbalkanische Beziehungen (1920-1924)*, Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Geschichte Osteuropas und Südosteuropas der Universität München, vol. 12, Munich 1992, pp. 51-61, 89-127, 145-50, 187-97, 209-24, 240-1; S. Troebst, *Mussolini, Makedonien und die Mächte 1922-1930*, Cologne and Vienna 1987.

33. The Manifesto was published in the first issue of the periodical *La Fédération balkanique* (15 July 1924).

34. The negotiations between IMRO, the Federalists, and the Bulgarian Communist Party, which were held in Vienna with the aim of creating 'a unified popular front' against the Tchankov government, were led by the International's Soviet agent in Vienna Dr Efraim Goldenstein. For information about him, see F. Litten, 'Die Goldstajn/Goldestein-Verwechslung: Eine biographische Notiz zur Komintern-Aktivität auf dem Balkan', *Südost-Forschungen* L (1991), 245-50.

Bulgaria has even further strengthened the desire of the Macedonian people throughout their dismembered land for unification and the creation of a unified and independent Macedonia ... The Congress considers the slogans of the 6th Conference of the Balkan Communist Federation [held in Moscow in December 1923] — 'a unified and independent Macedonia' and 'a unified and independent Thrace' — to be absolutely correct and genuinely revolutionary. The slogans concerning the autonomy of those parts of Macedonia and Thrace that lie within the borders of the bourgeois states artificially created by the Treaties of Sèvres etc. must be dismissed as opportunistic. They are tantamount to an agreement between the wealthy strata of the Macedonian and Thracian population and the ruling classes of the respective states. They are tantamount to further social and ethnic oppression of the poorer Macedonian and Thracian population. The Congress also points out that the revolutionary struggle of the Macedonian and Thracian people for their national and social liberation will be successful only if it is waged in common with the revolutionary workers and farmers of all the Balkan states³⁵.

The International's plans to turn Bulgaria Communist and destabilize the Balkans in 1924 were ultimately unsuccessful³⁶. However, Soviet intervention in the Macedonian Question had the effect of politically and ideologically polarising the Bulgaro-Macedonian movement. The Tchankov government proceeded to purge IMRO of all those cadres who had been in favour of collaboration with the Communists. Chiefly with the help of the International, the survivors formed IMRO (United) in October 1925, as the ideological and political counterweight to Mihajlov's IMRO, and adopted as their main slogan 'a unified and independent Macedonia in the framework of a Balkan federation'. IMRO (United)'s political influence in the Balkans was negligible, for its headquarters were in Vienna and the Balkan states regarded it as a Communist organisation. Its propaganda activities were chiefly conducted through its organs *La Fédération balkanique* and *Makedonsko Delo* and it was completely under the thumb of the Bulgarian Communists. It now acquired a broader inter-Balkan aspect. IMRO (United) supported the national libera-

35. 'Resolution zu den nationalen Fragen in Mitteleuropa und auf dem Balkan-Mazedonische und Thrakische Frage' *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz* (Berlin 1921—November 1923 and Vienna 1923—March 1926), No 134, 15 October 1924, pp. 1272-3.

36. For a critical approach to these issues, see Sfetas, *op. cit.*, pp. 302-37, 362-72.

tion of all the oppressed minorities in Macedonia. By 'Macedonian people' they meant all the nationalities living in Macedonia, but particularly the Bulgarians. As far as Greek Macedonia and Serbian Macedonia were concerned, IMRO (United) severely censured the ethnic oppression of the Bulgarians; as far as Bulgarian Macedonia was concerned, it condemned the political oppression and economic exploitation of the Bulgarian population.

If we examine the Bulgarian part of Macedonia, we observe that here too the situation is similar to that in the Serbian and Greek parts. The Macedonian Greeks and the Turks who lived here previously have been driven out. The population that lives in this part of Macedonia, being of Bulgarian ethnicity, enjoys cultural rights. They have schools and churches and so forth. And this is the only difference between the situation of the Macedonians in Bulgaria and that of the Macedonians in Greece and Serbia³⁷.

Georgi Dimitrov, who wielded considerable influence with IMRO (United), expressed a similar opinion:

The Bulgarian bourgeoisie keeps the region of Petritsch [Bulgarian Macedonia] under a harsh and implacable régime in comparison to the rest of Bulgaria, even though this bourgeoisie regards the Macedonians in this region as a purely Bulgarian population, and treats it both economically and politically as a conquered area. Since the language and the culture are the same here, ethnic oppression chiefly takes the form of economic extortion and the political oppression of the Macedonian population³⁸.

Until 1934, IMRO (United) denied the existence of a 'Macedonian ethnicity'.

There has never been any such thing as a Macedonian ethnicity, just as there has never been any such thing as, for instance, a Swiss ethnicity. There have always been discrete ethnic groups living in

37. See Memorandum from IMRO (United) of 10 September 1927 to the chairman of the Conference on Ethnic Minorities in Geneva concerning the situation of the oppressed peoples in the Balkans, *VMRO (Obedineta), Dokumenti i Materiali*, vol. I, National History Institute, Skopje 1991, pp. 129-35 (this quotation is from p. 134).

38. G. Dimitrov, *Ausgewählte Schriften*, vol. 2, 1921-1935, Berlin (East) 1958, pp. 398-9.

Macedonia in varying proportions, just as there are French, German, Italian, and Romansch ethnic groups living in Switzerland. And just as these four ethnic groups together form a single geographical, political, and economic unit under the common name of the 'Swiss people', so too the Bulgarians, Greeks, Turks, Vlachs, Albanians, and Serbs who were born and live in Macedonia comprise a multiethnic mosaic that bears the common name of the 'Macedonian people'³⁹.

In February 1934, for political reasons the International passed a resolution recognising the existence of a '[Slavo-] Macedonian nation'. After Hitler rose to power, and in view of the close contacts between Michajlov's Bulgarian-nationalist IMRO and the Nazis, the USSR was anxious to prevent Nazi Germany from exploiting the Macedonian Question to the advantage of the Bulgarian Fascists, IMRO (United) and the Balkan Communist parties were summoned to embark upon a struggle on the Macedonians' behalf that was not only ideological and political, but clearly by now a national struggle. It is worth noting that the International's resolution to recognise the existence of a Macedonian nation described Macedonia as a theatre of armed conflict in the coming imperialist war and challenged both Bulgaria's right to occupy the Petritsch area and its claim to the broader region of Macedonia. In his memoirs, Dimitar Vlahov clearly implied that the decision of the International's Executive Committee to promote the concept of a Macedonian nation was directly connected with the rise of Nazism in Germany. The Committee ordered the leading cadres of the International's Balkan Secretariat — Valetski, a Pole, and Shmeral, a Czech — to draw up the resolution in question. But since they were not familiar with the details of the Macedonian Question, the text of the resolution was chiefly written by Vlachov himself, who was a leading light of IMRO (United). Vlachov also mentions the negative reactions to the Committee's decision to promote the notion of a Macedonian nation both in the Bulgarian Communist party (whose most influential members were Vasil Koërov, Stanke Dimitrov, and Vulko Tchervenkov) and among those cadres of IMRO (United) who had qualms that the notion might boomerang back on the organisation. The preliminary discussions were also attended by representatives of the Balkan Communist parties who were

39. *Balkanska Federacija*, No 131, 20 March 1930, pp. 2869-70, in K. Paleshutki, *Makedonskijut vapros v burzhoazna Jugoslavija 1918-1941*, Sofia 1983, p. 197.

studying at the Communist University of Ethnic Minorities in Moscow⁴⁰. IMRO (United) was obliged to toe this new political line until 1936, when it broke up. The International's resolution to recognise the existence of a 'Macedonian nation' chiefly benefited the Yugoslav Communist party, which saw in 'Macedonianism' a chance to make a stand against Bulgarian claims on Serbian Macedonia.

It is obvious why, until 1990, Skopjan historiography took a dim view of both IMRO under Alexandrov and Protogerov and IMRO (United). The former was regarded as a Bulgarian-chauvinist organisation whose aim was to annex Macedonia to Bulgaria; and the latter was considered to be pro-Bulgarian, with weaknesses in its organisation, ideology, and national policy. It is no coincidence that leading cadres of IMRO (United), like Vlahov, who accepted 'Macedonianism' after 1944 and were awarded high positions in the Federal Socialist Republic of 'Macedonia', were soon accused of being pro-Bulgarian and removed from office. In his speech to the First Congress of the Communist Party of 'Macedonia' (19 December 1948), Lazar Kolishevski observed that 'IMRO (United)'s attitude to the national question did not accord with the correct attitude of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia'⁴¹.

The International's resolution about the existence of a 'Macedonian nation' remained a theoretical declaration by the Balkan Communist parties that met with no response at the grass roots level.

Chapter Thirteen ('The Establishment of the Macedonian State in the Second World War', pp. 91-4) recounts how, in the early days of the Occupation, the Communist Party of Macedonia started to organise the resistance, which in 1943-4 assumed enormous proportions. In accordance with the resolutions of the Anti-Fascist Assembly of the National Liberation of Yugoslavia (on 29 November 1943 in the Bosnian town of Jajce) that Yugoslavia should be federalised, the first session of

40. See D. Vlahov, *Memoari*, Skopje 1970, pp. 356-8. The resolution was published in the Greek newspaper *Kathimerini* on 13 December 1992.

41. L. Kolishevski, *Aspekti na makedonskoto prashanje*, 3rd edition, Skopje 1980, p. 39. In two letters to Kolishevski, written on 5 December 1938 and in 1951, Vlahov expressed his objections to the consolidation of Macedonian ethnicity on an anti-Bulgarian basis. He also refuted Kolishevski's accusation that IMRO (United) was pro-Bulgarian with the argument that during the inter-war years the literary language of the 'Macedonians' had been Bulgarian. See S. Troebst, *Die bulgarisch-jugoslawische Kontroverse um Makedonien 1967-1982*, Munich 1983, p. 49 (n. 12); and idem, 'Mit Ivan Katardziev: Auf den Gipfelpfaden der makedonischen Geschichte', *Südost-Forschungen*, 47 (1988), 255.

the Anti-Fascist Council of the National Liberation of Macedonia (ASNOM) announced on 2 August 1944 the establishment of the 'People's Republic of Macedonia'.

However, the facts were rather different. The Bulgarian army of occupation was hailed in the Serbian part of Macedonia as an army of liberation, and during the first stage of the Occupation pro-Bulgarian feeling ran high. Neither the Communist thesis of a separate 'Macedonian nation' nor the notion of a Yugoslav federation met with any particular response from the Slav population. There was no Communist Party of 'Macedonia', because it had not been possible to carry out the Yugoslav Communist Party's 1934 decision to form one. The local Communists, under Metodij Shatorov, broke away from the Yugoslav Communist Party and joined the (Communist) Bulgarian Workers' Party, whose slogan was 'one state, one party'. The subsequent dissatisfaction with the Occupation authorities was due not to national factors so much as social ones (high-handedness, heavy taxation, disregard for local sensitivities). This was why there was little support for Tito's resistance movement in Yugoslav Macedonia. Tito's letter of 16 January 1943 to the Yugoslav Communist Party's Local District Committee of 'Macedonia' is eloquent in this respect.

Dear Comrades, from the material you have sent us it is apparent that you have not correctly understood the nature and the purpose of the present national liberation struggle, and you have thus made terrible mistakes. It is clear that the party organisation is unable to act and, under the influence of the clique and the anti-party activity of the previous leader [Shatorov], has not yet managed to consolidate itself organically, nor to strengthen itself and become independent politically.

The main features of the Communist organisation in Macedonia are: inadequate and inconsistent promotion of our party's political line; hesitancy in implementing it; organisational mistakes and weaknesses; a lax attitude to the irresolute, foreign, opportunist, and non-party elements within the party; a narrow view of the question of the liberation and independence of the Macedonian people; a lack of affiliation with the masses during action; tolerance of autonomist tendencies of a party organisational nature and also of a national nature...⁴².

42. See S. Vukmanovitch (Tempo), *Revolucija koja tetche*, vol. 2, Zagreb 1982, pp. 271-2.

The Communist Party of 'Macedonia' was formed, with great difficulty, by Tito's envoy to Yugoslav Macedonia, Svetozar Vukmanovitch (known as Tempo), in February 1943, though it did nothing to change the situation. Only after Italy surrendered (in September 1943) and it became obvious that Germany would be defeated was any armed resistance initiated. The Yugoslav Communist Party agitated for the International's earlier notion of a separate 'Macedonian nation' and the formation of a 'united Macedonia' (comprising the Greek, Serbian, and Bulgarian parts) within the Yugoslav federation. Both in ASNOM's proclamation and in other texts and public statements by members of the Council, expansionist intentions were blatantly apparent. The unification of all sections of Macedonia was presented as the 'just and constant' desire of this brand new member of the Yugoslavian federation. In order to achieve this, Skopje was called upon to play the part of the 'Macedonian Piedmont'. After Tito's rupture with the Cominform in June 1948, the Yugoslav leadership temporarily abandoned its plans for a 'conclusive resolution' of the Macedonian Question and concentrated on cultivating and consolidating the new national identity of the Slav population of Yugoslav Macedonia and stamping out rival influences. This 'Macedonianisation' did not happen all at once; it was a lengthy process, during which the Yugoslav leaders initially broke up all the Bulgarian organisations that were opposed to the notion of Macedonianism on an anti-Bulgarian basis, seeing it as a new form of Serbian dominance over the region⁴³. At the same time, many IMRO veterans were accused of being pro-Bulgarian supporters of Ivan Mihajlov and condemned to death or sent to prison for allegedly having pursued the secession of Yugoslav Macedonia from the Yugoslav federation in order to make it an independent state under the protection of the Great Powers, in the belief that they would thus more easily achieve the union of all parts of Macedonia as a single independent state. The victims included the president of ASNOM and first president of the Federal Socialist Republic of Macedonia, Metodij Tchento⁴⁴. At the same time, the Yugoslav leaders were raising the issue of respect for the rights of the putative 'Macedonian' minorities in the

43. See Tsarnushanov, *op. cit.*, pp. 283-329.

44. For these trials in the latter half of the 1940s and the subsequent developments, a revelatory recent publication is S. Risteski's *Sudeni za Makedonija (1945-1985)*, Vreme, Skopje 1993. In 1943, the present President Kiro Gligorov himself supported the non-inclusion of Yugoslav Macedonia in the future Yugoslav federation; see K. Paleshutski, 'National Problem in the Yugoslav Federation', in *National Problems in the Balkans*, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences/Sofia Institute for Balkan Studies, Sofia 1992, p. 96.

neighbouring countries. Their constant references to the subject clearly show that the régime established by Tito never abandoned its interest in the whole of Macedonia. Official historiographers and social scientists in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia were conscripted to bring about the birth of a nation, but the operation inevitably conflicted with the historical tradition and cultural identity of most of the neighbouring peoples. Skopje's newly minted national ideology rested on the hypothesis of the existence of a 'Macedonian people' and on all three sections of the geographical region of the same name, of which the Greek and Bulgarian parts were 'unredeemed' areas.

Chapter Fifteen ('The Macedonian Language in the Balkan Language Environment', pp. 105-11) and Chapter Sixteen ('Macedonian Culture', pp. 113-19) discuss the morphological characteristics of the 'Macedonian language', its recognition by international science, and its literary output since 1944.

There is some confusion surrounding the term 'Macedonian language' used in relation to a Slavonic linguistic idiom. Properly speaking, the 'Macedonian language' is the language spoken by the ancient Macedonians, a Greek Doric dialect. What Skopje calls the 'Macedonian language' shares many morphological and structural features with Bulgarian: the absence of an infinitive, for instance, the absence of cases, the use of the aorist, the post-position of the article, and the periphrastic formation of comparatives. On this basis, the so-called 'Macedonian language' may more accurately be described as a Bulgarian dialect⁴⁵. After 1944 a systematic effort was launched to 'de-Bulgarianise' it. The Serbian alphabet was adopted, the typically Bulgarian phoneme *a* was dropped, many Serbian words (*vlada*, *uloga*, *stvarnost*, *struka*, *sprat*) were introduced, even though the Bulgarian equivalents already existed, the instrumental case in Serbian was rendered by the preposition *so* plus the relevant word, which is quite an unnatural formation in this dialect (e.g. *upravljavam drzhavom* — *upravuvam so drzhavata*), the proper noun endings *-ov* and *-ev* were changed to *-ovski* and *-evski*⁴⁶. It should also be noted that

45. H. Bräuer, *Slavische Sprachwissenschaft*, Berlin 1961, p. 46; Bulgarian Academy of Sciences/Institute for Bulgarian Studies, *Edinstvoto na balgarski ezik v minaloto i dnes* (offprint from the periodical *Balgarski Ezik*, 1 (1978)), Sofia 1978.

46. For the influence of Serbian, see N. Reiter, 'Die serbisch-makedonische Symbiose', in *Jugoslawien: Integrationsprobleme in Geschichte und Gegenwart, Beiträge zum V. internationalen Südosteuropa-Kongreß*, Göttingen 1984, pp. 178-95.

the so-called 'Macedonian language' is not uniform, but varies considerably from area to area. The region's central dialects were the basis on which the scholarly 'Macedonian language' was created in the FYROM, because they were thought to have been less influenced by the scholarly Bulgarian language. Despite the cultivation of the 'Macedonian language' on a literary level after 1944 and the introduction of many Serbian words, it is by no means a rich language.

Chapter Fourteen ('The Republic of Macedonia — From a Member State of the Yugoslav Federation to a Sovereign and Independent State', pp. 95-104) concerns the modern aspect of the Macedonian Question, from 1944, when the 'Macedonians' supposedly acquired a state of their own, to the present developments, with the FYROM's secession from the Yugoslav federation and its course towards independence and international recognition.

The main points emphasised in this version of the post-war period are:

In the framework of a unified Yugoslavia, the 'Socialist Republic of Macedonia' was to become known all over the world and the 'Macedonian' people would be recognised by the international community.

Because it was no longer possible for the individual republics to stay in the federal system, their people decided to break free of it. By a peaceful and democratic process, the 'Socialist Republic of Macedonia' initiated the *démarches* that would eventually bring it independence, in contrast to the other Yugoslav republics that are still struggling to impose the new *status quo* by fighting and force.

Important events in the republic's breakaway from the Yugoslav federation and its journey along the road to parliamentary democratic status were the independence referendum held on 8 September 1991 and the adoption of the constitution on 17 November 1991.

The constitution is the result of the 'Macedonian' people's centuries-long struggle for national liberation and fully accords with the general principles both of international law and of the UN and CSCE resolutions concerning the democratic organisation of society, acceptance of the parliamentary system of government, peaceful co-existence with neighbouring countries, respect for the individual and collective rights of all citizens, including minorities, and protection of the distinctive cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and religious features of the republic's citizens.

According to the Badinter Arbitration Committee's opinion on the

Yugoslav crisis⁴⁷, the FYROM fulfils all the conditions laid down by the European Union on 16 December 1991 for the recognition of the former Yugoslav republics⁴⁸.

Special mention is made at the end of the chapter to two resolutions adopted by the parliament of the FYROM. The first (3 July 1992) concerned the EU's decision at Lisbon on 27 June 1992 that, if it is to be recognised by the EU, the new republic must select a name that does not contain the term 'Macedonia'. The second (29 July 1992) was connected with Skopje's decision to apply for membership of the United Nations.

The information given and the events described in this chapter invite the following comments.

The report of the first post-war multi-party elections in November 1990 is somewhat economical with the facts. There is no mention of the results of the elections⁴⁹, which were a walkover for the extreme nationalist party IMRO-DRMNU (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation-Democratic Party of Macedonian National Unity). The party's name and manifesto alike hark back to the late nineteenth-century organisation of the same name. Nor is it fortuitous that a US State Department report of 1991 describes it as a terrorist organisation that patterns its activities on those of the old IMRO⁵⁰. Furthermore, its election poster consisted of a map of the whole of the geographical region of Macedonia accompanied by the slogan: 'Take its fate in your hands'. In its election proclamation, the party explicitly declared:

IMRO-DPMNU considers that those segments of the Macedonian nation living under a government of occupation in Greece, Bulgaria, and Albania are not an ethnic minority, but constitute the enslaved sections of the Macedonian nation; because a nation that has been

47. K. Ioannou, *Το ζήτημα της αναγνώρισης των Σκοπίων* (The question of the recognition of Skopje), Athens and Komotini 1992.

48. The last paragraph of the Foreign Ministers' joint statement specifically states: The Community and its member states also ask that the Yugoslav republic undertake, before it is recognised, to issue constitutional and civil guarantees that it has no territorial claim against any neighbouring member state of the Community and that it will not engage in hostile propaganda activities against any neighbouring member state of the Community, including the use of a name which implies territorial demands.

49. B. Timovski and S. Stefanovski, *Izbori '90: Politichkite Partii vo Makedonija*, Skopje 1991.

50. *Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1990*, Washington D.C., April 1991, p. 18.

living in its own homeland for ten centuries cannot be described as an ethnic minority. IMRO-DPMNU believes there is an urgent need for the spiritual, political, and economic unification of the Macedonian people ... and it has a keen concern for those segments of the Macedonian people who are living in slavery in Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Albania'⁵¹.

How telling that during the party's First National Conference at Prilep (6-7 April 1991) it was resolved that the next conference would be convened in Thessaloniki and the one after that in Blagoevgrad⁵²!

As far as the referendum is concerned, a certain amount of behind-the-scenes activity is not mentioned in Chapter Fourteen. A total of 68.32% of those registered to vote and 95.09% of those who actually voted came out 'in favour of a sovereign and autonomous state of Macedonia, empowered to participate in a union of sovereign states of Yugoslavia'. But, both within the FYROM and abroad, it was the first part of the question that was emphasised in the referendum — i.e. the autonomy of the 'Republic of Macedonia' (which was rendered as 'independence') — and the second part was completely ignored. The Albanian inhabitants of the new mini-state refused to take part in the referendum, and in fact held one of their own, on 11 and 12 January 1992: 99.86% voted for territorial and political autonomy⁵³.

Despite additions and modifications, the FYROM's constitution is still strongly irredentist in tone. *Macedonia and its Relations with Greece* places particular emphasis on the contentious articles in the 1991 constitution (Nos 3 and 49, with the relevant amendments and additions, 68 and 74) in order to underline the fact that the FYROM is not spreading hostile propaganda or making territorial claims.

The main resultant of the FYROM's expansionist claims is the preamble to the constitution, which explicitly refers to 'the legal and state traditions of the Republic of Krushevo [1903] and the historic decisions of the Antifascist Assembly of the People for the Liberation of Macedonia [1944]'. The decisions gave the green light for the establishment of the 'People's Republic of Macedonia' in the framework of the Yugoslav federation. They also explicitly proclaimed the freedom and unification of all 'brother Macedonians' beyond the artificial borders erected in the Balkans in the twentieth century.

51. Timovski and Stefanovski, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

52. *Makedonski Glas* (Rockdale, Australia), No 29, 23 April 1991.

53. *Le Monde*, 18 January 1992.

This excerpt from the 'Report of the Organising Committee of the Anti-fascist Assembly of the National Liberation of Macedonia' concerning ASNOM's activity from its foundation until its first conference (2 August 1944), is eloquent:

At this instan[ce], when all fighting forces in Macedonia are engaged in combat against the Fascist occupiers, appealing to the other two segments of the Macedonian people to join the grand anti-Fascist front, since it is the only way to win the right to self-determination and the only path leading to the unification of the entire Macedonian nation in a free community of emancipated peoples of Yugoslavia. *The fighting Piedmont of Macedonia has fiercely proclaimed that it will not stint on support or sacrifice for the liberation of the other two segments of our nation and for the general unification of the entire Macedonian people.* When we know that the fighting Piedmont of Macedonia is a part of Tito's Yugoslavia, then it is obvious how great our support could be and how firm is our desire for the unification of our entire nation⁵⁴.

The manifesto to the people of Macedonia of the first ASNOM Conference (2 August 1944) had this to say:

In view of the centuries-old ideals of the people of Macedonia, the first Macedonian National Council proclaims to the entire world the just and resolute aspiration *for the unification of the whole Macedonian people* on the principle based on the right to self-determination. This would put an end to the oppression of the people of Macedonia in all its parts and would provide conditions for genuine solidarity and peace among the Balkan peoples⁵⁵.

The additions and amendments made to articles 3 and 49 do nothing to soften this expansionist tone. The addition to article 3 to the effect that the 'Republic of Macedonia' has no territorial claims against neighbouring states is a step in the right direction, certainly; but in essence it is no more than a gesture. because all nations are forbidden by International Law (*jus cogens*) to pursue territorial claims by unlawful means (i.e. using violence or in con-

54. The University of Cyril and Methodius, Faculty of Philosophy and History, *Documents on the Struggle of the Macedonian People for Independence and a Nation-State* (hereafter: *Documents*), vol. 2, Skopje 1985, p. 607.

55. *Documents*, vol. 2, p. 635.

travention of international treaties). The rationale behind articles 3, 68, and 74 (which also concern the changing of national borders) concerns the annexing, not the loss, of territory belonging to the FYROM; for, according to the constitution, its territory is 'indivisible' and 'inviolable'. Furthermore, the FYROM has not yet officially recognised its existing border with Greece.

Both the reference to minorities in article 49 ('the Republic cares for the status and rights of those persons belonging to the Macedonian people who live in neighbouring countries') and the amendment of 6 January 1992 to the effect that 'the Republic will not interfere in the sovereign rights of other states or in their internal affairs' provide the FYROM with a lever for territorial claims against neighbouring countries. The constitution's unilateral, arbitrary reference to the existence of 'Macedonians' in neighbouring countries, when international treaties have never acknowledged any such thing, is in itself a fundamental form of interference in the internal affairs of Skopje's neighbours, on the pretext of protecting the rights of the so-called 'Macedonian minority'. Consequently, the amendment has neither substance nor value.

Special reference is made to the protection of the individual and collective rights of the various ethnic minorities living in the FYROM, chiefly in certain articles in the 1991 constitution. Typically, *Macedonia and its Relations with Greece* refers repeatedly to the role played by various international organisations (the UN, the CSCE, the Council of Europe, etc.), in an obvious attempt to present the FYROM as acting in accordance with international law and punctiliously implementing the provisions arising out of its international obligations, and above all as being in absolute agreement with the latest thinking on the protection of minorities and respect for human rights.

All the same, the minority groups living in the republic are constantly — daily — levelling accusations against Skopje's state officials with regard to the treatment meted out to them. Eloquent in this respect is a letter written by the President of the Albanian Democratic Prosperity Party in the FYROM, Nevzat Halili, to President Kiro Gligorov on 18 June 1993:

In the Macedonian Parliament decisions are taken undemocratically by majority vote on an ethnic basis, without securing a national consensus on vital national issues. The electoral law creates problems for us. It is very unfavourable to the Albanians, in view of the electoral districts and the ratio of voters to MPs. One Albanian MP represents some 8,000 voters, while one Macedonian represents only 3,500 voters. [...] In all the town and cities of Macedonia the various districts have only Macedonian names, not the names used

by the inhabitants of those districts, even in towns where Albanians represent 50% or even 80% of the population, such as Tetovo, for instance, or Gostivar, Debar, Kichevo, Struga, and Krushevo, and most parts of the city of Skopje. Not a single town has an Albanian cultural centre with an Albanian name. There is only one Turco-Albanian theatre, in contrast to the eight Macedonian professional theatres. The Albanian presence in middle-level education is at best nominal. No court of law at any level has an Albanian judge, and the same applies to the medical centres⁵⁶.

The Badinter Committee was set up on 28 August 1991, under the terms of the Declaration on Yugoslavia made by the European Union, and its brief was defined on 3 September. It was agreed that the Committee would have five members and be chaired by the President of France's Constitutional Council, Robert Badinter, and that two of the five members would be nominated by the Federal Presidium of Yugoslavia. It eventually comprised the Presiding Judges of the Constitutional Courts of Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, and Spain. Some aspects of the Committee's working methods are worth noting.

- a) It did not clearly specify the issues covered by its verdict.
- b) The parties concerned were not bound to comply with its decisions.
- c) The Committee did not follow the standard procedure of conducting on-the-spot investigations and interviewing witnesses.
- d) It relied exclusively on the two aforementioned political reports produced by the EU and asked the interested parties only one question about each precondition the reports laid down for recognition of the various Yugoslav republics.
- e) Essentially, the Committee did not resolve a single disagreement, but remained strictly within the reports' political context, thus complicating the situation even further.

Specifically, in opinion No 6 of 11 January 1992 relating to the FYROM, the arbitration committee:

- i. Considered that constitutional stipulations are internationally binding for a state applying for recognition.
- ii. Found unilateral statements made by officials of an unrecognised state entity to be valid in international law (e.g. the letter of 20 December 1991

56. *Nova Makedonija*, 19 June 1993.

- written by the Foreign Minister of the FYROM, which was followed by a second letter containing supplementary information on 11 January 1992).
- iii. Offered no definition of 'hostile propaganda'.
 - iv. Deemed it sufficient to say that, since the FYROM had abandoned its territorial claims against neighbouring states by means of the relevant amendments to the 1991 constitution, the use of the name 'Macedonia' could not therefore imply any territorial claim against another state.
 - v. Did not pay the slightest heed to the misgivings and objections of Greece, nor to the views of the various minority groups within the FYROM.

In Lisbon, on 27 June 1992, the EU representatives came out against the FYROM's demands; at which point the republic stepped up its expansionist policy by appropriating the ancient Greek Macedonian emblem, the sixteen-rayed Sun of Vergina, for its new national flag. The parliament in Skopje ratified the flag in August 1992, but *Macedonia and its Relations with Greece* makes no mention of this. When viewed in conjunction with subsequent developments, the move might well be regarded as a tactical manoeuvre by the FYROM's leaders. In the course of future negotiations, Skopje might consent to remove the Vergina sun from the flag, and world opinion would regard it as a tremendous concession to Greek demands. But in fact Skopje would be 'giving back' something which no-one in the FYROM has ever identified with the republic's history⁵⁷.

A general review of the course of the Macedonian Question since 1950 produces the following picture. In the early fifties, Tito's 'Macedonian' policy revolved around two axes: i) cultivating and consolidating the 'Macedonian' identity of the population of Yugoslav Macedonia in order to counteract the rival influence of Bulgaria; ii) making efforts to defend the rights of supposed 'Macedonian minorities' in neighbouring countries. In fact, laying claim to those minorities was a fundamental aspect of Tito's governance of federal Yugoslavia.

The close interest shown by both Belgrade and Skopje in the 'Macedonian minorities' in neighbouring countries created more friction and tension with Bulgaria than with Greece. In fact relations became much less strained between Belgrade and Athens after the signing (with Turkey) of the tripartite Balkan Pact (1953-4) that aimed to strengthen Yugoslavia's anti-Soviet policy.

In contrast to the central government in Belgrade, the local leaders in the 'People's [later 'Socialist'] Republic of Macedonia' continued to maintain

57. See *Nova Makedonija*, 1, 2, 3 May 1993 and 19 January 1994.

tense relations with Greece. The Macedonian part of Greece had inevitably become the main focus of their expansionist aims. Their tactics consisted in placing inordinate emphasis on the component features of a solid, unified national ideology: historical roots, language, and Church. At the same time, they also had to replenish the arsenal of the 'Macedonian' national ideology with the necessary 'irredentist' ideas. The local historians sought the latter chiefly in the historical tradition and cultural identity of their Balkan neighbours, in an attempt to shore up the notion of the birth of the 'Macedonian nation' within the FYROM. This was achieved both by appropriating any and every suitable foreign element and also by casting doubt on the provenance of these elements. The historical myth of the unification of all the sundered parts of Macedonia was also essential to reinforce 'Macedonianism' abroad, and specifically in the New World, where natives of the whole geographical area of Macedonia maintain a strong presence.

Not only did the Slavonic-speaking émigrés from Macedonia swallow the notion of 'Macedonian irredentism', but they became its basic prop and mouthpiece all over the world. It was thanks chiefly to the Slavonic-speaking communities abroad that the international community became familiar with Skopje's irredentist visions throughout the period of post-war bipolarity. In the late sixties, these communities began to display strong nationalist tendencies, which usually took a very different line from the official ideology of metropolitan Skopje⁵⁸.

A glance at the education the post-war generations have received both in the FYROM and abroad reveals two clear axes along which the doctrine of 'Macedonian' national ideology proceeds. The first consists in the appropriation of the cultural heritage of the whole geographical area of Macedonia and the ancient Macedonians. By a process of constantly casting doubt on the fact that the ancient Macedonians were a Hellenic race and spoke Greek⁵⁹, and producing maps which clearly dissociate Macedonia from the rest of the Hellenic world in the course of history⁶⁰, the inhabitants of the

58. Illustrative of this is the fact that 'Macedonian' nationalist circles in Australia started to exploit the sixteen-rayed Sun of Vergina as early as 1983. See *Macedonia Weekly Herald* (Kilmore, Victoria), 15 September 1983.

59. See the school textbooks about the ancient period by B. Drashkovitch and I. Makek, *Istorija za V Oddelenie*, Skopje 1987, pp. 71, 74; and S. Mladenovski, *Istorija za I Klac*, Skopje 1992, pp. 129-34, 148, 158.

60. Drashkovitch and Makek, *op. cit.*, pp. 55, 67, 73, 77, 86, 94, 109, 112, 114; Mladenovski, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

FYROM are insidiously identified with the ancient Macedonians, with the geographical region over which they held sway, and with their achievements. The second consists in imbuing post-war generations with the notion that only part of Macedonia (i.e. the quondam 'Socialist Republic' now 'Republic of Macedonia') has been liberated. The rest, in Greece, Bulgaria, and Albania, is still unredeemed and must be 'rescued' at some future date⁶¹.

Throughout the post-war period, official and unofficial circles in the Republic of Skopje have kept up relentless propaganda activity both at home and abroad. The irredentist policy is conducted either overtly, by means of official statements by political leaders and proclamations by local parties, or indirectly, in the form of maps of a unified Macedonia, propaganda sheets, calendars, and publications generally expressive of a hostile attitude towards Greece, casting doubt on the Greek cultural heritage and Greek symbols.

Throughout this period, the FYROM has utterly abused the name of 'Macedonia'. It has seized every opportunity to turn it from a purely geographical term into a national one applied to a country whose post striking feature is the overwhelming presence of ethnic, linguistic, and religious minorities who absolutely do not identify themselves with Slavonic culture and 'Macedonian' irredentist ideology. According to the last population census, which was conducted on 31 March 1991, the Albanians are the largest minority in the FYROM, accounting for 21.1% of the total population (427,313 individuals out of a total of 2,033,964)⁶². However, the Albanians' political and spiritual leaders strongly dispute these official figures and cite numbers closer to 35% or 40% (c. 800,000)⁶³. Furthermore, a large number of Albanians refused to take part in the census, in protest against the way it was conducted. The official figures include other minority groups⁶⁴: Turks (4.79% — 97,416), Rom (Gypsies) (2.73% — 55,577), and Serbs (2.17% — 44,159)⁶⁵.

61. See the school textbook about the Second World War and the Greek Civil War by C. Belichanski, B. Cvetkoski, and A. Kjorveziroski, *Istorija za IV Klac*, Skopje 1986, pp. 134-48, 172-4.

62. For details of the 1991 census, see *Stanovništvo*, 3-4/1990, 1-2/1991, Belgrade, pp. 300-1; Statistical Office of Macedonia, *Basic Statistical Data for the Population*, Skopje, December 1991, pp. 14-16.

63. M. Andrejevitch, 'Resurgent Nationalism in Macedonia', *Report on Eastern Europe*, vol. 2, No 20, 17 May 1991, p. 27.

64. Though no mention is made of Greeks or Bulgarians.

65. Although, according to the 1991 census, the Serbs make up the fourth largest minority, the preamble to the 1991 constitution does not mention them by name among the nationalities enjoying the same rights as the 'Macedonians'.

To summarise the main points of this book:

1. Only what is now the Greek part of Macedonia may be considered to be representative of ancient, historical Macedonia.
2. No 'Macedono-Slavonic nation' came into being, either in the Middle Ages, as a result of the mingling of the ancient Macedonians and Slavs and the founding of a 'Macedono-Slavonic state'; or in the nineteenth or twentieth century, as a result of efforts to differentiate the Slavonic-speakers in Macedonia from the Bulgarians, the Greeks, and the Serbs.
3. The so-called 'Macedonian nation' is the brainchild of the Communist International and Tito's Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia used this artificial ethnicity to rebut Bulgarian claims to the Yugoslav section of Macedonia and to foster its own expansionist plans for the rest of Macedonia.
4. Although the afterword to *Macedonia and its Relations with Greece* points out the necessity for Greece to play a leading role in the new European policy for the Balkans and calls for the relations between Athens and Skopje not to be affected by historical stereotypes of the past, the purpose of the book is nonetheless to persuade world opinion, on the basis of the 'Macedonian people's glorious past', of their historical rights, their specific national identity, and their right to national status. In view of this 'historical psychosis' on Skopje's part, it is not unreasonable to suppose that, even if some political solution is found for the discord between Athens and Skopje (a solution the EU and the UN have been seeking for some years now), it will be very difficult for Balkan historians to reach any sort of agreement about the historical aspects of the Macedonian Question.