

Britanski Dokumenti za istorijata na Makedonskiot narod. — *British Documents on the history of the Macedonian People.* Edited by Hristo Andonov-Polianski. Volume I. 1797-1839. Skopje 1968. Pp. 318.

This selection of British Documents from the Archives of the Public Record Office in London (Funds: The Levant Company, State Papers, The Board of Trade and Foreign Office, pp. IX-XIII) is a quite interesting contribution to the study of the history of Greece, Turkey, Serbia, Bulgaria and Albania — and a real catastrophe for the history of the “Macedonian nation.” The purpose of the publication although not clearly stated in the Foreword (pp. VII, IX, XI, XIII), supposedly is to present some evidence on the existence of the “Macedonian nation” in the years 1797-1839. There is not a single word about it in all the documents. Their authors, British consuls, agents and visitors, refer always to Greeks, Turks, Serbians, Bulgarians, Albanians and they seem quite unaware of the “Macedonians” — *Makedonskiot narod* — “the Macedonian People” as it is in the title of the publication. Even the author of the publication recognizes this fact, by writing (pp. IX, XIII) that the material “has a wider scope of interest” (Turkey, The Balkan Peninsula, etc.). Macedonia in all the documents is a vague geographical territory, roughly the one known from the Greek classical antiquity. Leake, i.e., defines Northern Greece as extending “from the vicinity of Ochrid to Larissa” (doc. 23, p. 191), refers to Thessaly and Macedonia as one of the provinces of Greece (doc. 25, p. 193) and speaks of the Greek district of Chimara (doc. 31, p. 216), identifying “the Northern parts of Greece” with Macedonia (doc. 27, p. 202); “Thessaly and upper Macedonia occupy the interior part of the Grecian peninsula” (doc. 27, p. 199). This is made very clear most of all from the reports of John Morier (doc. 20, 26) and William M. Leake (doc. 23, 25, 27), which are a devastating argument against the recent misuse of the word Macedonia. Both say nothing about a “nation” which was to be made up in 1945 in the imagination of the scholars in Skopje. In their detailed descriptions of the Macedonian territory they use the classical Greek place-names (doc. 20, 23, 25, 26, 27). Apparently the people in Skopje every time they find in any text the word Macedonia get very excited and gratuitously appropriate it for themselves. This is certainly an awkward sort of scholarship and sometimes very funny indeed, as when the editor of the British documents gives explanations of this kind: —

Christian Bulgarian = The *Macedonian population is meant* (p. 197). Many of the Greeks have emigrated within the last years : — *Under this name* (the Greeks) *the other people inhabiting the Balkan peninsula are understood* (p. 203). Map of Greece = *A map of Turkey in Europe* (p. 193).

Disregarding the naive footnotes and the irrelevant purpose of the publication, we should like to stress the importance of the documents for the history of Greece, Turkey, Serbia, Bulgaria, Albania and even Rumania. Although the selection is arbitrary and the texts are full of mistakes, (apparently due to the copyist or to the proofreader — or to both) one could find some interesting information on f.e. Pasvan-Oglou (doc. 3, 4, 5, 7, 8), Ali Pasha (doc. 17, 20, 23, 26, 29, 30), Ismail Bey in Seres (doc. 26, 29, 31), Karatasso, Diamandi, the Greek insurrection of 1821 in Chalkidice and Naoussa (doc. 37, 39, 42, 43), the plague in Thessaloniki (doc. 8, 9, 11, 13, 36, 45, 80, 81, 83), Napoleon's march (doc. 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 25, 30), British policy in the European Turkish Dominations (doc. 17, 19, 29, 30, 37, 38, 40, 41, 48, 65), the uprising in Serbia, in Walachia and Moldavia (doc. 28, 31, 37) etc. The information about commerce is also interesting (doc. 2, 4, 6, 8, 18, 21, 66, 71, 72, 73, 76, 79, 82, 84, 86, 90, 92, 93, 97), however of less importance than the documents used by Svoronos in his book which apparently is not known to the editor (*Le commerce de Salonique au XVII^e siècle*, Paris 1956, pp. XVI-430).

There are also some moving passages on the attitude of the Greeks in comparison with that of the Turks : Charles Blunt in his report to Viscount Ponsoby from Thessaloniki, September 12, 1839, gives the following details of the fire of September 8, in the city:

The conduct of Izzet Pasha the Kaimakam has been most disgraceful; his alarm and brutal apathy is the cause of all the ruin and he deserves to be punished... Ussus Bey, the worst of this class, was at his country seat, two hours from Salonica; an express was sent to him; he inquired if his own property was in danger and when informed that there was no fear of his house, he said that the rest might burn... The Greek Archbishop Meletius was at a village an hour distant, and immediately on seeing the fire came to town with 200 men to assist; but he was refused admittance and some Frank merchants who were with him put (*sic*) under arrest because they passed too near the barracks. At daylight when the gates were opened, the

Bishop went immediately to the spot where the fire was raging in the Jew Quarter and seeing that the Pasha made no kind of effort to check the flames he ordered his men to destroy three houses, by which means the rest of Salonika was saved. On Monday night, fearing that the fire might again break out, the Archbishop kept guard with his people and Mussago Bey; the Pasha and Beys retired to their harems (p. 298).

John Morier, also, in his report to Lord Hawkesbury from Iannina, June 30, 1804, gives the following details about Suliotes :

They were only 1500 fighting men, inhabiting a mountainous tract 30 miles to the S.W. of Yanina, and the only tribe of Greeks in Epirus who had maintained their religion and their liberties entire, since the conquest of that country by the Turks. The history of this people and of their fallen liberty would furnish an interesting tale. Their last struggle was really worthy of the blessings for which they were contending. Women fell fighting by the sides of their husbands, others rather than be led captives, destroyed their children, and the (*sic*) hurled themselves headlong down the precipices. One of these heroines named Kaidow is now at Corfu, where those who escaped death or slavery have fled (pp. 186-187).

All in all, *The Komisija za Publikovanje na Arhivski Materijali* (a nice title with three Latin and one Greek word!) is to be congratulated for the publication of this selection of British documents; even if it did not mean to do it, it has offered excellent details of Greek life in Macedonia and Epirus as the ones quoted above.

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Krste Bitoski, *Dejnosta na Pelagoniskata Mitropolija 1878-1912* (The Activity of the Bishopric in Pelagonia 1878-1912), Skopje. 1968. Pp. 322.

This study, reflecting the views of Skopje, examines the Greek religious and educational activity of the Greek Bishopric of Pelagonia between the years 1878-1912 and it is divided into two parts: The first, entitled "The Bishopric of Pelagonia from the Berlin Congress (1878)