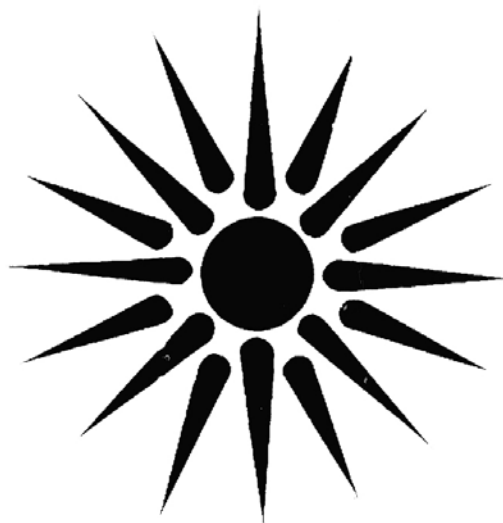


*Historic Macedonian
Personalities
&
Organizations*



By
Risto Stefov

Historic Macedonian Personalities & Organizations

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rstefov@hotmail.com

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Historic Macedonian Personalities

Alexander III The Great (356-323)

Alexander, son of Philip II and Polyxena (Olympias) was born in Pella on July 22nd, 356 BC. Alexander's father Philip was the son of the Macedonian king Amyntas III and of Eurydice, an Illyrian princess. His mother Polyxena, or Olympias as she became known in Macedonia, was the daughter of the Molossian king Neoptolemus.

Alexander was born into a dynamic world where violence was a way of life. He enjoyed war stories told around the palace and no doubt relished in his father's victories. Philip was very fond of his son and spent a great deal of time giving him affection and telling him stories. Alexander's earliest education was entrusted to Leonidas, a relative of Olympias. But as Leonidas found out, Alexander was no ordinary student and his defiance could not be influenced by the usual methods. So in 343 BC when Alexander was thirteen, Philip summoned Aristotle to tutor him. Aristotle, at the time, was not the famous man we know today but simply a teacher with a good reputation. Philip chose him on the recommendation of others.

Aristotle was born in Stagira (a city in Chalcidice, conquered by Philip), the son of Nicomachus (once physician to Amyntas III). At age 40 (or more) Aristotle left his newly opened school in Mytiline, Lesbos and went to Pella where he was given residence in the quiet little village of Mieza. There, near the sanctuary of the Nymphs, away from the hustle and bustle and constant disruptions of Pella, Aristotle spent the next three years educating Alexander, along with a few other children. One of those children was Hephaestion whom Alexander befriended for life.

Aristotle, in addition to teaching Alexander of life's wonders, inspired in him a passionate love for culture and intellect that profoundly affected his life and the way he viewed the world. But it was Homer's books that inspired Alexander the most. The Iliad, the best book ever written, and his two heroes Heracles and Achilles where the driving forces that championed Alexander's desires for conquest and seeking the unknown. In addition to teaching him how

to be king, Aristotle also inspired in Alexander a keen interest in the natural sciences.

In 340 BC at age sixteen, while his father Philip campaigned against Byzantium, Alexander was made regent of Pella. It was then that Alexander got a taste of what it was like to be in command, especially to command a battle and put down a rebellion. It was an insignificant rebellion instigated by the Thracian Maidoi but nonetheless it was a joy for the young prince to command. After defeating the enemy, Alexander took the town, resettled it with Macedonians and renamed it Alexandropolis, after himself. This would be the first in a line of many cities to be named after the young conqueror.

Two years later in 338 BC, at age eighteen, Alexander had gained his father's confidence to be given command of the Macedonian cavalry during the most important battle of Philip's career. This was a pivotal battle that not only thrashed the allied City States but also ushered in a new age of warfare. At eighteen years old Alexander was part of it in every respect.

Unfortunately, on that dreaded day in 337 BC when Philip decided to marry Cleopatra, the niece of general Attalus, Alexander's pleasant relation with his father came to an abrupt end. Some say that at the marriage feast Alexander exchanged bitter words with Attalus and then caused a scene with his own father. Be it as it may, Alexander's feelings were badly hurt. Feeling let down by his own father, Alexander, along with his mother, left Macedonia for Epirus. After taking his mother home Alexander left and went to live with the Illyrians, with a Macedonian client king. There, through the work of a mediator, he reconciled his differences with his father and soon after returned home to Pella.

In mid-summer 336 BC, Alexander's life was changed forever as tragedy struck and his father was assassinated. The incident took place in the theater of Aegae at the worst possible time for Alexander's sister Cleopatra. Expecting to be soon going away on the Asian campaign, Philip took the opportunity to marry off his daughter Cleopatra to his protégé Alexander, king of Molossia. No one expected that during the procession, the crazed bodyguard

Pausanias would lunge at Philip and stab him to death right in the middle of Cleopatra's wedding. Fortunately for Alexander, Philip and Olympias had resolved their differences and Olympias was back in the Macedonian court at Philip's side when it happened so Alexander had his mother's support when he needed it the most.

Philip was forty-six years old, at the height of his power and fortune, when his life was taken. There were many rumours as to why he was assassinated but none were proven since his killer was also slain before he was interrogated. It was now up to Alexander to set things right.

When a king or head of state is assassinated, the state and its foreign relations are shaken to the very foundation. Macedonia, after Philip's death, was no exception. The question on everyone's mind, especially his enemies, was who would succeed him?

In Philip's case a group of Macedonian soldiers and ex-soldiers loyal to the king, mostly from the near vicinity, were quickly assembled in Aegae. Without hesitation they chose Alexander as Philip's successor, the new king to lead them. The following day, one by one, his soldiers took an oath of loyalty as was required by Macedonian custom. Alexander chose his own bodyguards and was given his personal Royal Infantry Guard. His first task as king was to investigate his father's murder.

The fact that there were horses involved for Pausanias's getaway suggests that Philip's murder was premeditated and accomplices were involved. But who would have had the audacity to murder a powerful king and at his daughter's wedding at that? That, we will never know for sure! What is important, however, is to examine how Alexander used this tragedy to secure his own position in the Macedonian kingdom and rid himself of some undesirable elements.

The news of Philip's murder attracted the attention of the whole world; especially the City States who rejoiced in knowing that he was gone. Alexander was quick to let them know that he expected from them the same loyalty as they had for his father. He reminded the City States that the treaty of the League of Corinth was perpetual and gave him a legal claim to be Hegemon, the same as his father.

But Alexander's words did not phase the City States in the least, for in Athens they were dancing in the streets with joy. Demosthenes, intoxicated with the prospect of liberty, appeared in council dressed in white with a wreath on his head making offerings to the gods for the joyful news. The call to freedom from Athens spread like wildfire to the rest of the City States. The Aetolians recalled all those exiled by Philip, the Ambraciots expelled the Macedonian garrison, the Thebans took up arms to liberate Cadmeia and there were signs of rebellions in Peloponnesus, Argos, Elis and Arcadia.

When news was received that Alexander was to take Philip's place, Demosthenes became enraged, immediately sending a secret communication begging Parmenio and Attalus to intervene. Fortunately, Attalus and Parmenio were loyal to their new king and allowed Alexander to be seated on the throne without interruption. So in the end, like his father before him, Alexander became Demosthenes's mortal foe and worst nightmare. Failing to enlist help from Macedonians inside Alexander's circle, Demosthenes entered into strange relations with the Persian King and continued to work against Macedonia.

The revolts after Philip's death were not exclusive to the City States. Reports were also coming in from the north with claims that there were disturbances and rebellions there also. On hearing this Alexander moved quickly, put a strong force together and with lightning speed descended upon his enemies. The City States were first on his agenda to subdue as he force-marched his army in a surprise visit to Thessaly. Upon seeing Alexander, the Thessalians not only submitted but they showed an eager willingness to recognize him as their Hegemon. They even offered to help him punish Athens and the other City States for their misdeeds.

After subduing Thessaly, Alexander pushed southward, overrunning all who stood in his way, including Thermopylae. After quelling Thermopylae, he summoned a meeting with the Amphictyonic Council who, without hesitation, also gave him recognition as Hegemon. He then quietly slipped out, marched to Boeotia and set up camp near Cadmeia. His sudden appearance in Thebes frightened the wits out of the Thebans and sent shock waves of chilling terror to Athens, especially after delivering an ultimatum demanding to be

recognized as Hegemon or prepare for war. The Athenians, expecting the worst, were prepared for war but were relieved by the alternative. Through their ambassadors they asked for pardon for not having his hegemony recognized sooner.

At the conclusion of his campaign, Alexander summoned all members of the League of Corinth for a meeting. Here he asked the City States to give him recognition as Hegemon of the League in accordance with the agreement made with Philip. The Spartans, whose response was, "It was their custom to follow themselves and not others who wish to lead them." did not attend.

When his business with the City States was finished, Alexander turned his attention to the troublemakers in the north. First on his list were the Thracian Triballian tribe, living between the Balkans and the Danube, who Philip fought but did not subjugate. This was Alexander's first campaign carried out without the tactical brilliance of general Parmenio or the trusted help of friend and advisor general Antipater. The success of this particular campaign has to be attributed singularly to Alexander's own genius. Before setting off to meet the Triballians, Alexander sent his war ships from Byzantium via the Black Sea into the Danube and ordered them to sail upriver and hold their position at a pre-designated location.

In the spring of 335 BC, Alexander marched his army northward until he found the Thracians. The Thracians had occupied the Shipka Pass and had secured their position atop a hill behind a fort made of wagons. Perched on top of this hill they waited until Alexander's army attempted the climb. Before the Macedonians reached the top the Thracians released a barrage of wagons hoping to run them down. Alexander, however, anticipated their plan and ordered his men at the top to form columns with alleys for the wagons to hurtle down and the men further down the hill to lie down flat in close formation with their shields over their heads.

As the wagons hurtled downhill, they were guided into the alleys by the formation and as they gained momentum, the wagons rode over a roof of shields without doing any damage to the men. With superb discipline exercised, not a single man was lost.

Alexander stormed the Shipka Pass and descended upon the northern plains in pursuit of the Triballian king who sought refuge on an island in the Danube. The Triballian army, which withdrew southwards, suffered an annihilating defeat. Three days later, when Alexander reached the Danube, he found his fleet waiting. He ordered his ships to pursue the Triballian king but the banks of the island were so steep that they couldn't land. Although frustrated, Alexander was not about to give up and came up with a new plan, which at the time may have seemed irrational to his officers but they gave him their support anyway. Alexander's plan was to "frighten the king into submission". He figured that by a surprising demonstration of force he would break the enemy's inclination to resist him. The idea was to cross the Danube undetected and force the Getae, who lived on the opposite bank, into flight and, by this demonstration, startle the king to surrender. An irrational plan indeed! Having earned the loyalty and trust of his Macedonians, they did as he ordered and made silent preparations to cross the river. They collected as many local fishing boats as they could find, filled their canvas tents with hay and under the cloak of darkness put as many troops as possible across the river. Before dawn 1,500 cavalry and 4,000 infantry were on the opposite side of the bank. Before they could be seen the troops hid in the tall reeds, which masked their approach. Then, like wild animals, the cavalry burst out and charged the Getae who were encamped in front of their town. Completely surprised, the Getae, far superior in numbers, rushed back into town, grabbed their wives and children and ran north to safety in the steppes. The town was taken and not a single man was lost.

Alexander's bluff not only worked with the Triballian king who made his submission to Alexander but, when word spread, neighbouring tribes send their envoys to pay Alexander homage. Even the Celts, who had ventured eastward from the Adriatic, asked Alexander for his friendship.

When his northern campaign was over, Alexander was preparing to return home when he received news of an Illyrian revolt. Alexander marched his army at great speed to western Macedonia and, just beyond his frontier, found a very large Dardanian army assembled and waiting. A battle ensued and the Illyrians were driven back into

a fortified town. Alexander set camp for the night intending to besiege the town the next day. Unfortunately, by morning another enemy army had arrived. A large Taulantian army had joined the Dardanians and cut off Alexander's retreat and supply line. The Macedonian army of some 25,000 men and 5,000 horses were quickly running out of supplies. Alexander had to do something and soon, but what? He was completely surrounded. Leave it to Alexander to come up with another uncanny plan. He ordered his men to put on a show. Ignoring the enemy, he ordered his phalanx into formation to quietly march back and forth as he motioned their maneuvers with his arm. The show attracted onlookers around his camp who were not only surprised but also mesmerized by this action.

When the time was right, Alexander motioned and the soldiers, in unison, slapped their shields hard with their javelins. The sudden thundering roar, after the mesmerizing silence, startled the enemy causing some of the horses to bolt in fright. At lightning speed Alexander's best cavalry, supported by his archers, bolted through the pass, making an opening for the army to escape through. The army, with catapult, archers and cavalry support, then punched a hole right through the middle of the enemy forces and landed on home territory in the meadows around little Lake Prespa. Not a single man was lost.

Three days later, in a surprise attack at night, Alexander led an assault force through the pass and inflicted a decisive defeat on his enemy. As the enemy bolted the Macedonian cavalry pursued, chasing them for over one hundred kilometers, instilling fear and causing them severe damage. Both kings submitted to Alexander's will and instead of being punished for their misdeeds they were made client-kings with thrones of their own.

No sooner were the Illyrian revolts put down than Alexander received news of a dangerous uprising in the south requiring his immediate intervention. It appears that the Thebans were in revolt and had killed Macedonian officers stationed in a local garrison. Alexander quickly assembled his army and set out on a fast paced march, living off the land as he traversed south through the mountainous terrain. After crossing the Pass of Thermopylae he

headed for Thebes. Alexander arrived just in time to prevent his garrison from being attacked so no serious damage was done. But to his surprise, it was not just Thebes that was causing trouble. Athens too had become involved when it entered into an alliance with Thebes and sent arms and its citizen army to support the Theban rebellion. Encouraged by Demosthenes and supported by Persian gold, other City States also joined the rebellion. The whole thing was started by rumours, no doubt spread by Demosthenes himself, claiming that Alexander had been killed and his army defeated in Illyria. But when Alexander arrived alive and well with an intact Macedonian army a chill must have run down their spines. Being the rightful Hegemon of the City State League, Alexander asserted his rights and demanded that the rebels disband. In the presence of Alexander, some of the City State armies obeyed and turned away. Some, like Athens, remained stationary and made no attempt to engage him. The Thebans decided to break away and fight, hoping that an engagement would draw others into the war. They relied mostly on their own forces and the strong fortifications of their city to defend them.

After hearing rumours of his supposed death, Alexander endeavoured to give the rebels a chance to end the impasse peacefully and gave them three days to surrender. Unfortunately, instead of submitting peacefully their cavalry charged his outposts.

The next day Alexander marched his army all around the city and stopped in front of the south gate. Angered by the reply of the previous day, Alexander ordered an attack. In no time the Theban defenses were breached and the Macedonian and League armies penetrated the city. The Thebans fought fiercely but were no match for the well trained, battle experienced Macedonian army. The battle turned tragically when League soldiers turned on the general population massacring everyone in sight.

After sacking it, Alexander left the final fate of Thebes to the League to decide. Those in the League who for many generations suffered under the supremacy of Thebes finally found an outlet to vent their anger. Without hesitation they found Thebes guilty of treason for its current misdeeds as well as those in the past. In a resolution backed by the entire League, Alexander ordered the city

to be leveled to the ground. Women and children were sold into slavery. Alexander allowed the resolution to pass so that an example could be made to remind the rest that this kind of behavior would no longer be tolerated. As for the Athenians, the real instigators of the rebellions, Alexander left them unpunished. Alexander was careful not to drive them further into the Persian King's arms. But, as fate would have it, those who were unhappy with the League's resolution left for Persia anyway.

After restoring peace in the City States, Alexander and his army returned to Macedonia. By the time he arrived it was already October (335 BC) and still much preparation was needed before he could depart for the Asian spring offensive. Alexander also needed time to secure the route to Asia and strengthen Macedonia's defenses. Being mistrustful of the City States, Alexander, in his absence, left Antipater, a competent soldier, a man of strong character and a trustworthy friend, in charge as regent of Macedonia. He gave Antipater special powers to represent him as deputy-Hegemon of the League of Corinth. To keep the peace, Antipater was given 12,000 infantry and 1,500 cavalry from Alexander's best Macedonian troops.

Alexander selected and took with him the best and most battle hardened troops in his army consisting of 12,000 infantrymen and 2,700 cavalrymen. Philip himself had trained and campaigned with most of these men in all hazards of war.

While Alexander was preparing his Asian force, Parmenio's vanguard in Asia was struggling to regain control of the Hellespont. In 336 BC Parmenio had won control of the Dardanelles bridgehead but lost it again in 335 BC when he was driven back by City State mercenaries, commanded by general Memnon. The City State mercenaries had taken control of an area near the crossing, killed off and expelled the Persian juntas and had taken over the local cities. It didn't take long, however, before the pro-Persian factions rebelled. Parmenio sought his chance and again took control of the crossing. The Macedonians now controlled the waters of the Hellespont and held them until Alexander arrived.

In early spring of 334 BC, with the help of some 160 ships, the main body of the Macedonian expedition force was ferried across the strait. While the army was helped across, Alexander took a diversion to explore the various sacred sites of the Iliad. While visiting the Ilium he dedicated his armour to Athena and in exchange took back an old, sacred shield supposedly dating back to the Trojan War.

Soon after rejoining his army, Alexander set out to find the enemy. As mentioned earlier, Alexander separated his forces and took with him only Macedonians and some Thessalians, leaving the league soldiers behind with Parmenio. In all 13,000 infantry and 5,100 cavalry set off in search of the Persian army. Another reason for not taking the League army was that Alexander had no money for provisions. When he crossed the Hellespont he was almost broke. Some say he only had 70 talents in cash and that was hardly enough to feed his army for more than a couple of weeks. But that did not stop Alexander because he had confidence in his Macedonians to give him victories and then his enemies would be obliged to feed his army.

Besides his military, Alexander also enlisted the services of historians, philosophers, poets, engineers, surveyors, doctors, botanists and natural scientists to accompany him on his Asian expedition. His official historian was Callisthenes of Olynthus, nephew and pupil of Aristotle. The surveyors were there to measure distances traveled by the army as well as make notes of peculiarities in the terrain traversed. The engineers were engaged in building bridges, rafts, ladders, siege engines and equipment to scale steep slopes and cliffs. The botanists and natural scientists were there to investigate the flora, fauna and mineral wealth of the newly discovered lands. Right from the start the Asian expedition was not just a military campaign but a great scientific research and discovery mission.

As luck would have it, on the third day of his search, Alexander's scouts spotted the Persian army holding its position on the far bank of the river Granicus. As Alexander made his advance, he noticed a much superior cavalry force holding its position on the level ground. Beyond the steep riverbank he could see a large City State mercenary infantry force holding the ridge behind the level ground.

He estimated the enemy to be about 20,000 cavalry and 20,000 infantry. Alexander immediately formulated his battle plans and took the offensive. The Macedonian infantry phalanx took the center while the cavalry formed the wings with the archers posted on the extreme right. Alexander's battle line now matched the three-kilometer wide enemy line. According to Peter Green, Alexander badly needed a victory in order to secure booty to pay off his loans and to finance future campaigns. At the moment, Alexander was badly in debt.

Among the Persian commanders was general Memnon. Memnon was well aware of Alexander's financial predicament and wanted to starve him out. During an earlier meeting with the Persians, Memnon opposed a direct confrontation and proposed to deprive Alexander of all provisions. This would have required burning all the crops in the vicinity and withdrawing the Persian army. Having no provisions to sustain him, Alexander would have had to turn back and return to Macedonia. When he did, Memnon proposed to go after him by means of the huge Persian fleet. The Persians, however, due to their army's numerical superiority felt confident that a battle with Alexander would give them victory.

After surveying the situation, Alexander noticed that the best Persian cavalry stood atop the steep, eight-foot riverbank. From that position a cavalry charge would have been difficult to execute. In spite of Parmenio's advice to retire for the evening and attack the next morning, Alexander exploited the situation and ordered a surprise attack.

The battle of Granicus started with a blare of trumpets and the terrifying battle cry of Alexander and his Macedonians. His men quickly took their positions as Alexander's horsemen rushed across the swollen river and swooped up the steep bank, violently engaging the Persian cavalry. His infantry phalanx, which by now was used to forming a battle line on the fly, maneuvered into an oblique battle-array and positioned itself to follow suit. As the army frontlines clashed, Alexander and his companions rode back and forth behind the lines looking for weaknesses and to confuse the enemy. Moments after the engagement started, most of the Persian cavalry was pinned down by the Macedonian phalanx as both armies

desperately tried to push forward. The Persians were expecting Alexander to attack at the extreme left where the terrain was easiest to navigate. Memnon's most experienced mercenaries were placed there in thick columns in close proximity and ordered to lay in wait. But instead of doing what was expected Alexander took a defensive stand and attacked the position with a light force of infantry and some cavalry, with just enough men to hold the mercenaries back.

As the battle raged on Alexander himself became engaged and fought several Persian nobles, among them the son-in-law of Darius the Great King. While Alexander was dealing a deathblow to the King's son-in-law he nearly became a casualty himself. The world would not have been the same had it not been for Cleitus who came to his rescue.

As the phalanx succeeded in pushing back the Persian cavalry, Alexander's horsemen charged the center and punched a whole right through the enemy formation. The enemy took flight and the Macedonian cavalry went in pursuit leaving many dead in their wake. No sooner had the Macedonians moved in for the kill than they were confronted from the rear by the City State mercenaries who had laid in wait throughout the entire battle. Alexander turned his phalanx around and ordered a frontal attack while his cavalry took on the flanks. In a matter of minutes the elite City State mercenary force was annihilated leaving only 2,000 survivors out of a force of 20,000. By sacrificing themselves, the City State mercenaries saved the Persian cavalry. Before the evening was over, in a few short hours on a bright day in May 334 BC, the Macedonians won a great victory.

The day after the battle all the dead, including the Persians, were buried with honour. Special attention and care was given to the wounded, each receiving a visit from Alexander himself. Compared to the enemy, Macedonian losses were insignificant, totaling about a couple hundred.

Soon after the battle of Granicus, Alexander organized an administration to manage his lands "won by his spear". Instead of incorporating these lands as part of a Greater Macedonian kingdom, Alexander did the unexpected and appointed a Macedonian "satrap".

By that I mean Alexander left the old Persian government and way of governing intact. He only replaced the top Persian official (satrap) with a Macedonian. His only demands were that the Persians now pay him what was owed to the Great King. In addition to taking taxes, Alexander also took possession of the Great King's crown lands.

Alexander's idea of replacing the Great King with himself instead of incorporating the conquered lands into a "Greater Macedonia" had its merits. After seeing that no harm had come to their neighbours, other parts of Asia Minor began to surrender peacefully. When Alexander reached Sardis, the Lydian city, the people surrendered without a fight entrusting Alexander with the city's treasures, satrapy and citadel. In return, Alexander freed the Lydians from Persian rule and gave them back their old culture, laws and way of life. He also replaced the Persian satrap with a Macedonian. Here again Alexander demonstrated his respect for other cultures, choosing to liberate instead of enslave.

After looking at the vastness of Asia, Alexander quickly realized that he could never hold a world that size with a spear. This foresight, along with the Macedonian values instilled in him (to respect people of all classes and cultures), Alexander became a liberator and a champion of the oppressed nations. His conquests became a mission of liberation not enslavement.

If Alexander is to be judged for his deeds let it be for all his deeds and not just for his conquests and military genius. Alexander was a seasoned politician with a vision of uniting all the world's nations together as equals in a democratic system (in the modern sense). Besides his political qualities, Alexander also had a great interest in culture and the natural sciences. Wherever he went he built cities, libraries, cultural centers, museums and many other wonders. He listened to poetry and comedy and took part in debates. He met many people with varying interests and the people whose accomplishments he admired most, he sent to Macedonia for the Macedonians to enjoy. He had his natural scientists study and document the flora, fauna and mineral wealth of this new world. Techniques and knowledge learned then still apply today. He adorned all the gardens of Macedonia, including those in Pella, with

plants bearing the best fruits and flowers that Asia had to offer. Wherever he went, he taught the local people culture, artistic skills and natural medicine. As Michael Wood found out, “In the footsteps of Alexander the Great”, these gifts that Alexander gave the Asian people are still remembered to this day. As he proceeded to free the Asian people from Persian dominion, Alexander was greeted with enthusiasm and celebrated as a liberator.

With the victory of Granicus under his belt, Alexander turned southward encountering little or no resistance until he reached Miletus and Halicarnassus where City State mercenaries were found in large numbers. The Persian commander in Miletus was ready to surrender his city but convinced that the Persian fleet was on its way he resisted. Before the Persian fleet has a chance to enter the bay, Alexander’s navy intervened and closed off the mouth of the harbour. Without the help of the Persian fleet, the city defenses were no match for Alexander’s siege engines. Alexander stormed the city but did not harm its population.

In an unexpected turn of events, after the battle of Miletus, Alexander disbanded his fleet. Even though his ships were of help to him during the battle, Alexander decided to disband them anyway, retaining only twenty Athenian ships as hostages. At that time there was no obvious reason given but, as we later learned, he did it to save them. He did not have the naval strength to take on the powerful Persian fleet and win, so why waste his ships? Also, he did not trust the City State navies behind him, for they too in a moment of weakness could have turned on him and cut off his retreat and supply lines. As for destroying the powerful Persian fleet, Alexander had a different plan.

At the city of Halicarnassus, the capital of Caria, Alexander met with his old adversary Memnon, who at the time was supreme commander of the Asian coast and the Persian fleet. With a division of Persian ships guarding the waters, the fortified city gave Alexander much resistance. But it could not hold out indefinitely and fell to his superior siege-craft. When it was over Alexander appointed an old woman, a princess named Ada of the Carian dynastic house, to the satrapy. Ada met Alexander earlier when he entered Caria. She offered him her city of Alinda and a proposal to adopt him as her son. Alexander was so impressed that he accepted

her adoption proposal and gave her back her city. After that Alexander was known in Caria as the son of the ruler. Caria was liberated and free of foreign dominion and its satrapy granted to a native woman. Here for the first time Alexander separated civil from military responsibilities. Ada was given charge of civic functions while a Macedonian officer was responsible for the military.

During the winter of 334 BC, before heading south, Alexander sent his newly wed soldiers home on leave to visit their families and wives. Parmenio, who earlier was given command of the League troops, was dispatched to occupy Phrygia. Alexander, with the Macedonian army, spent late fall securing the western coast of Asia Minor before heading for Gordius. Alexander's plan was to paralyze the enemy fleet by occupying all the ports of the western Asia Minor seaboard. Alexander's coastal trek was mostly trouble free except when he passed through Pisidia. There he encountered stiff resistance and severe fighting from the mountain men whom he subdued. After his victory, Alexander went to Gordium, the Phrygian capital, to spend the winter.

While Alexander was making his way to Gordium, Memnon, his old adversary, was convincing his Persian lords to allow him to resurrect the old idea of bringing the war to Europe. Using the Persian fleet he began to invade the Aegean islands one by one, starting with Chios then Lesbos, hoping to get Alexander turned around. News of this brought excitement to the City States who had hoped that Memnon's intervention would turn the tide of the war in their favour. Unfortunately, their enthusiasm was cut short when Memnon suddenly fell ill and died. I can't say that Alexander was not relieved. The next spring, the soldiers on leave and reinforcements arrived from Macedonia, joining Alexander at Gordium as he prepared for departure.

In April 333 BC Alexander came across the famous Gordian Knot, which many tried but failed to untie. Legend has it that he who would untie the knot would become King of Asia. Alexander tried his luck but found the tangle too complicated and impossible to untie. But Alexander was not about to give up so he did the next best thing; he drew his sword and hacked it to pieces. The end result was the same, the knot was removed and the yoke-pole of King

Gordius's chariot was now bare. That night thunder and lightning followed which was interpreted as a good sign that the gods were pleased.

With his army ready to march, Alexander passed by Ancyra before turning south to continue to occupy more Persian ports. His intention was to quickly march south through Cappadocia and occupy the passes of the Taurus mountain range on the southern coast of Cilicia. Having no time to conquer all of Cappadocia, he appointed a native satrap instead of a Macedonian.

When Alexander arrived in Cilicia he took the Persian garrison by surprise when his men climbed up the strongholds in the night. Surprised by the sudden appearance of Macedonians in their midst, the guards ran off and left the pass unguarded. The pass was taken without a fight. Alexander then marched down the mountain to seize the city of Tarsus but at the mere sight of the approaching Macedonian cavalry, its defenders also ran off. His victory at Tarsus was bittersweet as Alexander contracted an illness from swimming in icy cold waters. He would have died had he not been so physically fit. His recovery unfortunately was long and arduous.

As soon as he was well enough, Alexander and his troops were on the move. To recover lost time, he divided his army and sent Parmenio east to secure the Cilicia to Syria pass. Alexander, meanwhile, went west to secure the western coastline as well as reinforce his supply line. On his way back he took time off near Tarsus to rest and celebrate his eventual victory at Halicarnassus. As mentioned earlier Alexander conquered the city of Halicarnassus but not all the citadels. After he left, a couple of citadels were still intact so he left that job to his officers to finish.

Soon after departing Tarsus, Alexander got word from Parmenio that the Great King Darius, with a large army, was encamped on the plains of Northern Syria, about two days journey from the pass that Parmenio was now holding. After finding out what Alexander did to his army at Granicus, the Great King was furious with him and wanted to squash him like a bug. Who was this insolent man who dared challenge the Great King and prance in his backyard?

After finding out that Alexander was in Cilicia in the fall of 333 BC with plans to head south, the Great King amassed a great army and prepared a trap. Expecting Alexander to come after him, Darius picked a suitable place with battle advantage and lay in wait. Because of his numerical superiority, Darius was convinced he could crush Alexander's little army in battle. When Alexander didn't show up as expected, the Great King became anxious. Thinking Alexander was afraid to face him, Darius decided it was time to pursue him instead. Alexander did not show up because he had fallen ill. But now that he learned Darius was out there, he mustered his forces and went after him. Unfortunately, as Alexander moved south quickly through the Cilician Gates along the Syrian coast, Darius moved north towards Cilicia on the opposite side of the same mountain range.

Unbeknownst to Alexander, Darius had broken camp. Alexander left his sick and wounded at Issus and continued to travel south, hugging the coastline. Camped overnight and weathering a storm, Alexander expected to do battle the next day, but to his surprise he learned that Darius had already broken camp and was now after him. Without any knowledge of each other's positions the two armies passed one another over the mountain range of Amanus. Darius was first to learn of this from Alexander's wounded at Issus. It has been said that Darius was so frustrated that he took his anger out on Alexander's sick and wounded by ordering his soldiers to cut off their hands so that they could never fight again.

By cutting off his retreat and supply lines, Darius was now resolved to follow Alexander into the plains of Syria and trample him and his little army to death with his cavalry. Unfortunately for Darius, Alexander had different ideas. On finding out that Darius was behind him and pursuing him, Alexander expediently turned his army around. Determined to meet Darius on his (Alexander's) terms, Alexander ordered a battle plan for the next day. After allowing his troops to have a quick meal, he mobilized the entire army and marched through the night until he arrived at the battlefield of his choice. The battle was going to take place not in the broad open plain of Syria, but in the narrow plain of Pinarus, encircled by the mountains and sea. Hidden from view, Alexander's army spent the rest of the night laying in wait. At the crack of dawn,

Alexander ordered their descent to the plain, infantry first in long narrow columns followed by the cavalry. In the face of a large enemy, Alexander formed the battle lines with ease as if performing a routine exercise. The Macedonian troops displayed great discipline and courage as they took their positions, knowing that they were about to face the largest army they have ever seen. With only about 16,000 Macedonian infantry and 5,600 cavalry troops, Alexander was facing a huge Persian cavalry force of 450,000, a City State mercenary infantry force of 30,000, a light infantry force of 20,000 and 60,000 Persians armed as hoplites.

The Persian battle line (this time) had the City State mercenaries placed front and center, while right and left of them stood the hoplites with the bulk of the cavalry stationed to the right of the City State mercenaries. The remaining troops stood behind the lines in column formations. Darius, sitting on his magnificent chariot, stood in the center behind the City State mercenaries.

Before the battle started, Alexander secretly rearranged his cavalry formation moving some of it behind and to the left of the frontline. Alexander was in command of the right wing while Parmenio was in command of the left wing with strict orders not to break contact with the sea. Alexander charged first in an oblique formation, the right wing cavalry followed closely by the phalanx. As (bad) luck would have it, soon after the charge, Alexander received a leg wound. At the same time the phalanx had become dislocated and had broken line while attempting to climb the steep bank of the river. While Alexander seemed to have regained his composure, the City State mercenaries sought the opportunity and entered the gap in the open phalanx formation. The City State mercenaries fought like demons displaying their hatred for the Macedonians. But soon after overwhelming the enemy's left wing Alexander turned inward and attacked the center. The moment Darius saw Alexander coming for him, he turned his chariot around and fled. Choosing not to pursue him, Alexander first turned on the City State mercenaries and then on the numerically superior cavalry which had engaged Parmenio in a fierce battle across the Pinarus River.

Darius's flight left his army in disarray and confusion, running in all directions. As soon as the Persians began fleeing the Macedonians

gave chase. Alexander, hoping to catch up to Darius, went after him. Anticipating a chase, Darius gave up his chariot for a horse and was nowhere to be found. The pursuit inflicted catastrophic losses on the Persian army especially since it had to exit through a narrow pass. The pursuit finally ended when darkness fell.

When it was over, only 8,000 of the City State mercenary force was left intact. It is unclear how many Persians died but, according to Ptolemy who was there at the time, the pursuit at the narrow pass alone yielded a ravine full of enemy corpses.

So before the year 333 BC was over the Great King's army was beaten and the Great King himself became a fugitive, leaving his royal family and great wealth to Alexander.

After the long pursuit, Alexander returned to the Pinarus and took a stroll through Darius's camp to find Darius's mother, wife and three children weeping for him. They presumed he was dead and were worried about their own fate. Here too Alexander showed compassion by not harming the royal family and treating them with utmost respect. He informed them that Darius was still alive.

Alexander's victory at Issus was welcome news in Macedonia and a crushing disappointment for Persia and its City State allies. I can just imagine the thoughts that went through the minds of the various City State members of the Corinthian League at the 332 BC Isthmian Games, when it was suggested that a golden wreath be sent to Alexander to congratulate him on his victory.

The worst disappointment, however, goes to the Persian admirals in the Aegean who by now were fed up with the poor performance of the so called "superior City State fighting skills" and opted out of their strange partnerships.

Alexander was tempted to go after Darius immediately but it was too risky, especially with the Persian fleet still intact at his rear and in control of the Aegean waters.

Alexander possessed almost no ships or navy to speak of, let alone a powerful one to subdue the Persian fleet. He wanted to win his

battles so he always chose the terms of engagement. His thinking was that if he couldn't engage his enemy and win in the water then he would have to bring the fight to shore where he had the advantage. The only way to do that was by cutting off the Persian navy from its ports. His plan, therefore, was to eventually occupy all cities around the eastern Mediterranean coastline and starve the Persian fleet of its supplies.

Soon after the battle of Issus, Alexander marched his Macedonians south in an effort to secure the coastline by occupying the various port cities. In the meantime Parmenio was dispatched to Damascus to seize the city and recover Darius's treasure, which had been sent there along with the Persian baggage train before the battle of Issus. Parmenio seized the city with ease (some say by treachery) and took possession of the treasury. He also captured many City State traitors including City State ambassadors to Persia who had previously conspired against Macedonia.

With Darius's treasury in his possession, Alexander secured the finances he needed to pay his debts and continue with his campaign. In comparison to Alexander, Darius was a very rich man, rich enough to carry 2,600 talents of coins, 500 pounds of silver, 4,500 pounds of gold and 3,400 pounds of precious stones. This however was not all of Darius's money. Compared to his total wealth this was only pocket change, which he carried with him during his travels.

Alexander journeyed through Syria taking port after port, until he reached the Phoenician port city of Tyre. Tyre was an independent city, the most powerful naval and commercial port in the region. Most of the sailors in the Persian fleet were either from Cyprus or Tyre. Being independent (not under Persian rule) the citizens of Tyre wished to remain neutral (neither under Persian nor Macedonian rule). This however was not an option for Alexander. He needed to control all ports, especially Tyre, if he were to close off the Persian fleet. Being unable to negotiate a peaceful surrender Alexander declared war on Tyre and began a siege around January 332 BC.

Tyre stood on an island about a kilometer offshore. The city was fortified on all sides by high stone walls and defended by the

powerful Tyrian fleet. At the time, both Alexander and the Tyrians felt confident that they could outlast one other and neither was willing to relent. The Tyrians, trusting their city to be impregnable, found the very idea of Alexander thinking of attempting a siege absurd. How could he seize an island when he didn't even have a fleet? Alexander, on the other hand, could not afford to allow the powerful Phoenician city to exist free behind his lines, especially since he was planning to venture deeper into Asia. He had no choice but to seize it by force. When the siege began, no one had any idea of the enormity of the task.

While Alexander's military strength lay on land, the city he wanted to besiege lay in water. The only way he could turn the situation to his advantage was by building a bridge and linking the island to the shore. His army could then rush in with its siege engines, knock down the walls and seize the city. While the army drafted labour from the local vicinity and neighbouring towns to build the bridge, Alexander's craftsmen and engineers began the construction of the colossal siege towers. Building the bridge proved a lot more difficult than expected. Even though the water was shallow, the bottom was all mud and stakes had to be driven deep down, supported by stone before the sixty-meter wide road could be constructed. As the building of the causeway progressed, every stone found in the vicinity was carried and deposited into the water.

The Tyrians taunted and mocked the workers telling them that Alexander was crazy and wasting his time. But as the road began to materialize and approach the island the Tyrians began to panic. Physical attacks and countermeasures began to replace mocking and taunting. At the outset, Tyrian commandos attacked Alexander's supply lines on land hoping to slow down the building effort. Later, the Tyrian fleet began raiding by sea, sending ships with archers, slingers and catapults to attack the workers. Alexander, in the meantime, took every precaution possible to protect his men as well as maintain his schedule. When it became obvious that Alexander was not going to give up and his chances of actually besieging Tyre improved, many of the local cities, including Sidon a former enemy of Tyre, offered him assistance, including ships. Alexander quickly assembled a strong sea force to bottle the Tyrian fleet in its own harbour and to repel Tyrian raids at the causeway.

There was one major incident that could have turned the tide on Alexander but his confidence in his army's abilities and his unwavering persistence paid off. The Tyrians put together a large floating craft, set it on fire and by using the wind managed to burn most of the causeway. Alexander was away at the time on an expedition to find more lumber. When he returned he was shocked to find that his road had been destroyed. Instead of giving up, Alexander built a new causeway north of the old one. As the artificial harbour approached the island shore the Tyrians became desperate. They tried everything to stop the progress including pouring boiling sand on the soldiers. But, in spite of their gallant effort, nothing worked and the Macedonians eventually besieged the city.

Tyre fell in August 332 BC. It was a grueling seven-month effort on both sides but in the end the most determined won. The Tyrians, on several occasions, were given a chance to surrender. Unfortunately wisdom gave way to stubbornness and they fought bravely to the end. When it was over, about six to eight thousand were killed and about thirty thousand were taken prisoner and sold into slavery. The Tyrian leaders along with about two thousand of their fighting men were executed. The city itself was spared and resettled, continuing to function as an important naval and commercial port but under Macedonian rule.

I want to mention at this point that Tyre was the Sister City to Carthage. Carthage is located on the other side of the Mediterranean Sea south of Rome and played a key role in Rome's development as a super power. Had Alexander sacked Carthage as he intended to, our world would have been a different world today.

After his gallant struggle and long delay in Tyre, Alexander resumed his trek southward through Palestine, heading for Egypt. His voyage, expectedly, was interrupted as he ran into resistance at the city of Gaza. Gaza was well fortified and defended by Persian soldiers, supplemented by a strong force of Arab mercenaries. Unable to break through the city's fortification by conventional means, Alexander employed his siege engines and within two months reduced Gaza's fortification to rubble. During the course of

the siege Alexander received a wound to his shoulder which put him out of action for a couple of weeks. Being physically fit, however, he recovered quickly and joined the final assault on the city. After breaking through the fortification, a vicious struggle ensued spilling into the streets where Alexander was again wounded, this time in the leg. When the battle was over, ten thousand were killed and the civilian population was rounded up and sold into slavery. Gaza too was resettled with people from the local region, converted into a fortress and placed under Macedonian control.

From Gaza, Alexander's army marched along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea and then turned south into Egypt where huge crowds greeted him as a liberator. Having conquered all the port cities around the eastern Mediterranean coast, the threat from the Persian fleet was finally removed. Before penetrating the interior of Asia, Alexander planned to occupy Egypt by force but it fell without a fight. The Egyptian people hailed Alexander as a liberator, giving him the citadel of Memphis along with its treasury amounting to 800 talents. Egypt was a strategic location for Alexander's Asian campaign and it was now secure.

Something else happened to Alexander in Egypt, something unexpected. Having defeated the Persian King who ruled in place of the Pharaoh of Egypt, in the eyes of the Egyptian priests, Alexander now became Egypt's new ruler but not a Pharaoh. For the priests, unfortunately, it was impossible to accept a foreigner as a true Pharaoh. If Alexander were to continue on his campaign deep into Asia he had to pacify Egypt and gain its loyalty. Egypt was a large, rich country with a huge population capable of supplying his army with all the necessities for the entire campaign. He had to do whatever was necessary to secure it, which meant that Alexander had to become Egypt's undisputed ruler. The only way to do that was by becoming an Egyptian Pharaoh. Unfortunately, a foreigner could only become a Pharaoh by divine intervention.

Accepting this challenge Alexander took a trip to Siwa to visit the religious order. When he arrived at the temple of the oracle, the high priest greeted him as the "son of Zeus-Ammon and master of all lands". Why the priest greeted him this way is unknown, perhaps an error in translation? Alexander was delighted with the

pronouncement and humbly accepted his proclamation as the "Son of God".

After returning to Memphis during the winter of 332-331BC, Alexander took a small division from his army and went down the Nile River. Just before reaching the Mediterranean coast he saw a perfect strip of land upon which to lay the foundation of a great city which would bear his name, Alexandria of Egypt. Alexandria, in time, would bring about change in intellectual and economic life as never before experienced and for the next one thousand years would become the center of civilization. With the founding of Alexandria, a port city facing the Mediterranean, Alexander transformed his military efforts into business opportunities not just for the Macedonians but for the entire known world. Alexandria was to become the leading multinational, multicultural, commercial trade centre of the world.

The closing of the entire Eastern Mediterranean coast forced the Persian navy to move on and opened the way for the Macedonian fleet to dominate the waters.

After returning to Memphis, Alexander met the reinforcements sent to him by Antipater and ordered the army to prepare to march. Before leaving, however, he sent a scientific expedition up the Nile River on a discovery mission and also appointed a couple of native satraps and Macedonian overseers to govern Egypt. Alexander did not want to entrust the governing of such a large country to a single person.

In early spring of 331BC Alexander left Memphis and headed for Phoenicia. He stopped at Tyre for a while and made some changes to the government there before proceeding north towards Damascus.

The Great King Darius, in the meantime, having received Alexander's answer to his peace offer began to amass a great army. Darius offered Alexander the marriage of his daughter, 10,000 talents and the lands east of the Euphrates in exchange for peace. Parmenio and his older officers encouraged Alexander to accept the offer but Alexander declined wanting it all: Darius's lands, money

and his crown. Having no alternative the Great King began preparations for another battle.

The Persian Empire was vast and Darius had no problem raising an army. Besides the Persians there were many other races that offered assistance. The Indians even sent him fifteen elephants. Besides raising a great army Darius was also careful to find open space for his choice of battleground, the kind that would give him advantage over Alexander. This time Darius was determined to get things his way and made sure everything was done correctly.

While Darius was raising an army, Alexander was marching northward preparing to cross the Euphrates River. As expected during war, his advance force, which was sent to build a bridge over the mighty river, faced opposition from the satrap of Syria and Mesopotamia. But the moment Alexander arrived with his army the Satrap fled and the bridge was built with relative ease. Then as Alexander advanced towards the Tigris River the local spies led him to believe that Darius was on the other side waiting to prevent his passage. Assuming the reports were accurate, Alexander force-marched his army to catch up but Darius was nowhere to be found. Alexander's army crossed the Tigris on September 20th, 331 BC and marched on in a southeasterly direction until it reached the village of Guagamela. There he found Darius's army clearing and leveling the land to give his chariots advantage over the Macedonian phalanx.

In battle formation, Darius stood on his chariot at the center. By his sides stood the mounted guard and Persian infantry. To the right and to the left stood the City State mercenaries. At both wings stood a combined force of cavalry and infantry. In front of the wings stood the allied cavalries and front and center stood fifteen elephants. In front of the battle line stood 200 Scythian chariots ready to roll along the cleared, smoothed out ground.

Alexander was initially planning to deploy the usual oblique formation with the offensive right wing commanded by himself and the defensive left wing commanded by Parmenio. Due to the overwhelming numerical superiority of his opponent, however, Alexander decided to add a second battle line capable of fighting a

second front behind him, in case he was surrounded. In other words, if Alexander's forces were to be surrounded their formation would take the shape of a flexible square and push the enemy outwards on all four fronts.

Expecting to be immediately attacked, Darius ordered his battle line to form and waited. After sizing up the situation, Alexander decided not to attack and camped his troops about four kilometers away from Darius's camp. That evening Alexander ordered his men to rest for the night. Darius's men, expecting an attack at any time, stood ready all night.

The morning after, October 1st, 331 BC, Alexander, with a well-rested army, approached from the north but found his right wing too short to match the opponent's. To compensate he continued to stretch his line but his opponent continued to match his moves. Darius, however, feared that if he moved too far off the cleared ground he would compromise the mobility of his chariots and ordered the attack. The chariots rushed to outflank Alexander but Alexander's men were prepared. The archers struck first and took out most of the charioteers while Alexander's front line quickly formed into columns, allowing the rushing chariots to pass. Trapped by columns of men and unable to maneuver, the horses were overpowered by Alexander's grooms, effectively disabling the chariots. Now, as the two lines of battle were drawing close, Alexander noticed a gap in the Persian left and sought the opportunity to take the offensive. Leading his companions he swerved and rushed into the gap and began to roll towards the center. The phalanx also pushed hard towards the center squeezing the battle towards Darius. Frightened by this sudden fierce attack, Darius turned his chariot around and fled. His guards formed a protective circle around him and they too fled. In his absence, his troops in the center and left wings followed suit. It was Issus all over again. Darius left the battlefield before the battle was decided.

The rapid movement of the phalanx in the center of Alexander's formation caused a gap in the Macedonian line, which could have been exploited by the enemy. But instead of closing in on the line, the undisciplined Persians and their allies rushed in to plunder

Alexander's camp. The moment the enemy disengaged, Alexander's second front line went into effect and chased the looters back.

In the meantime, Parmenio was having trouble and had sent for Alexander to help him. By now Alexander's companions had broken through the enemy lines and were just about to pursue Darius. As much as he wanted to catch him, Alexander could not leave the battle unattended. Disappointed as he was, he turned his companions around and made his way towards Parmenio, only to run into the fleeing looters. A bloody cavalry engagement ensued as the trapped enemy soldiers now desperately fought for their lives. By the time Alexander reached Parmenio, the battle was over. Parmenio had overwhelmed his attackers and was now free. Unfortunately, so was Darius. This was the second time Alexander was robbed of his chance at gaining a total victory, complete with the capture of Darius.

Even before the battle of Guagamela was over Alexander acted quickly and sent an advanced force to Susa to take possession of the treasury before it was looted.

With the battle won, Alexander went in search of Darius and rode through the night. Unable to find him, the next day he returned to Guagamela (Arbela) to harvest the fruits of his victory and bury his dead. It is estimated that enemy losses were between fifty and sixty thousand while Macedonian losses were estimated at less than one thousand. When the dust settled, Alexander's victory was celebrated with the burial of the fallen soldiers, with gift giving ceremonies and with Alexander's acclamation as King of Asia.

Confident that the Persian threat was over, to ease the tension back home, Alexander loosened his tight grip on the City States by giving them autonomy. With the Persians defeated, Alexander no longer feared a City State-Persian alliance but he could not completely discount the Spartan threats in the potentially explosive Peloponnesus.

Soon after his victory Alexander left Arbela and continued to journey southwards to Babylon, expecting to run into resistance from the surviving Persian army. To his surprise, however, the same

Persian satrap who fiercely fought Parmenio in Guagamela now came out with his sons to peacefully greet Alexander and surrender the city. What was more surprising was that not only the city leaders but also the entire general population came out en masse to greet their new King. They decorated the streets with wreaths and flowers to welcome the Macedonians.

After spending about a month in Babylon, on November 25th, 331 BC, Alexander set off for Susa. On his way there he received word that his advance force, previously sent to secure the city and take possession of the treasures, had successfully completed its mission. Like Babylon, Susa surrendered without a fight with the great treasure depot of the Persian King intact. In spite of spending great sums of money to finance his campaigns, Darius still had enough treasure left to purchase a small country or as Michael Wood puts it, equivalent to the national income of the fifth century Athenian empire for 150 years. It is estimated that apart from the precious stones, 40,000 silver talents and 9,000 gold darics (coins) were also discovered and fell into Alexander's hands. Alexander was a happy man indeed.

Alexander arrived in Susa on December 15th, 331 BC, and was greeted by the governor and a delegation of important people bearing rich gifts including a dozen Indian elephants. Some of the money received was sent to Macedonia to finance Antipater's campaign against the Spartans. In the spring of 331 BC, the Spartans formed a Peloponnesian coalition and were preparing to fight Macedonia. Antipater unfortunately had his hands full putting down Thracian uprisings and was unable to immediately respond to this Spartan provocation. The Spartans took this as a sign of weakness and began to attack cities loyal to Macedonia. Antipater quickly finished off the northern campaign and expediently marched south. When he arrived he found the Spartans and their allies besieging the city of Megalopolis in Arcadia which had remained loyal to Macedonia and would not surrender. There was a great battle and Antipater won a decisive victory. The mighty Spartans were vanquished and begged for peace. Antipater took most of the nobles as hostages and referred their fate to the League as Alexander had previously done with the Thebans. Unfortunately, the League of Corinth, seeing this as another blow to their freedom, did not have

the stomach to pass judgement and left the fate of the captured undecided. It was now up to Alexander to determine their punishment. When they arrived in Asia, Alexander held a trial where it was decided that the troublemakers would be executed and the rest freed. Sparta, however, was forced to join the League of Corinth.

With the defeat of Sparta, the legacy, culture and way of life of the ancient City States ended forever. From then forward, Macedonia ruled over them for centuries until the Roman wars.

After collecting his treasure, Alexander appointed a Persian satrap in charge of civil duties and two Macedonian commanders in charge of the troops and citadels. While still in Susa, he also received several thousand fresh Macedonian troops for his next campaign.

After a bit of rest and relaxation, Alexander was on the move again, this time headed for Parsa (Persepolis) but first he had to cross the land of the Uxii. While the people of the plains submitted without a fight, the highlanders, bound by old traditions, demanded tribute as payment for passage through their lands. Everyone had to pay, including the Persian King as many had done before him. Alexander unfortunately was not the sort who would easily yield to bandits and marauders. Instead of paying tribute he unleashed his army upon them. He sent a strong detachment behind their lines to cut off their retreat while his main army attacked from below. After a short battle the Uxians were overpowered and fled, only to be annihilated by the Macedonians waiting at their rear. It was now Alexander's turn to impose a penalty demanding from them annual tributes of 100 horses, 500 draught animals and 30,000 sheep.

At this point Alexander decided to split his army in two. Parmenio went with the allied forces to Parsa via the main southern road while Alexander with the second force took a shortcut to the Persian Gates through the treacherous mountains. After five days of forced march, Alexander arrived at the pass only to run into serious resistance. In anticipation, the Persians had built a wall across the pass. A sizable force was waiting for the Macedonians to arrive. Upon contact, Alexander initiated a direct siege but was unable to penetrate the barriers. The Persians had artillery and archers mounted above the

wall. From there they rolled great boulders and rained arrows and javelins down upon the Macedonians below. Alexander suffered heavy casualties and had to retreat. Discouraged by the heavy losses, Alexander's officers were about to give up the siege claiming that it would be easier to go around than lose more men attempting the impossible. "Impossible? It is not impossible." Alexander exclaimed. "It is so simple that even that old shepherd over there can show you how it is done. Bring me the old man here and I will prove it to you." When the old man arrived, Alexander had him questioned about the local terrain. Being a shepherd all his life the old man was familiar with the local landscape, especially the passes that led through the treacherous terrain. With relative ease the old shepherd was able to lead Alexander's army behind the Persian position.

Alexander left a strong cavalry force and two battalions of the phalanx at the entrance to the gorge. To deceive the enemy about his numbers, Alexander ordered his men to burn the normal number of campfires at night. Then when the signal was given, they were to assault the wall. Alexander in the meantime took a commando force and assault troops through the long and winding twenty-kilometer path and after a day and two nights travel, reached his destination. He gave the signal to attack at dawn and after a bloody clash the Persian force was totally annihilated.

Victorious, Alexander resumed his journey towards Parsa only to be bogged down by heavy snowdrifts, ravines and watercourses. Part way he received incentive to get moving again when a messenger arrived with news that Parsa was ready to surrender. If, however, Alexander didn't hurry to get there in good time the inhabitants would plunder its treasures.

Alexander acted at once ordering the infantry to follow as best as it could while the cavalry dashed all night at breakneck speeds until it reached the Araxes River at dawn. There was no bridge so his engineers hurriedly built one from timbers and stones in record time, allowing the cavalry to cross and ride on. Alexander arrived in time to marvel at the splendor of Persian culture and to secure his treasure. His gaze at the city's magnificence reinforced the reality that Persian rule was over. Alexander was now the new lord and master of Asia as he planted his feet in Parsa and sat himself at the

throne of Xerxes. Soon after taking control of the city, Alexander ordered his troops to burn down Xerxes's building as a symbolic act to show that he had now accomplished what he had set out to do. It was an act that he would later regret.

While in Parsa, Alexander received news of the final Macedonian victory over the Spartan coalition. Alexander must have been ecstatic at the knowledge that the once feared and mighty Spartans had folded not before him but before Antipater, a mere general. There was nothing that could stand in Alexander's way now. His army proved itself invincible against any foe and amply demonstrated its cunning and might in all kinds of battles and under all conceivable circumstances.

With the Spartan threat out of the way, the last bastion of City State resistance was over and Alexander no longer needed to hold the City State armies hostage. With much fanfare, gift giving and bonus pay he dismissed the entire League troops from their duty. The Thessalian cavalry, which proved itself worthy in battle, he rewarded handsomely and sent home. Those who preferred to stay in Alexander's commission were accepted as paid mercenaries, not as allied soldiers. With the fall of Sparta the so-called "alliance" also ended and Alexander's campaigns from here on forward were waged by Macedonians only. Alexander and his army took a long deserved rest during the winter months before setting out to occupy Ecbatana, the last of the Persian capitals.

The treasures Alexander found in Parsa were even greater than those found in Susa. It is estimated that he collected 120,000 Persian talents from Parsa alone and another 6,000 talents from Pasargadae, a nearby town that also surrendered without a fight.

In May 330 BC, after about four months rest, Alexander left Parsa and headed northwards. It seemed unusual that Alexander would remain still for this long but Peter Green believes that he was waiting for the Persian New Year festival to commence so that he could participate in it. That unfortunately did not happen and Alexander left for Ecbatana to again look for Darius. Darius, in the meantime, hoped that Alexander would be so intoxicated by the overwhelming treasures and the decadent life in Parsa that he would

retire in the luxurious quarters of the western palaces and forget about pursuing him. Just to be on the safe side however, Darius began to amass a new army in case Alexander dared to attack. Darius would then quickly escape into Bactria, destroying the countryside and leaving nothing behind.

When Alexander found out that Darius was in Ecbatana he went after him. Anticipating Alexander's move Darius quickly sent his baggage train and harem to the Caspian Gates while he prepared a trap for Alexander in Ecbatana. Counting on the assistance of his allies, the Scythians and Cadusians to provide him with massive reinforcements, Darius challenged Alexander to a battle. When Alexander heard of Darius's challenge, he instructed his baggage train to follow behind while he force-marched his Macedonians in pursuit. But before reaching Ecbatana, Alexander learned that Darius had not received the reinforcements he expected and had resolved to flee. When Alexander arrived at Ecbatana he was a week too late. His 500-kilometer break neck march was for nothing. Darius had cleared the city treasury of its 7,000 talents and had slipped away eastwards with 6,000 infantry and 3,000 cavalry troops. This was a great disappointment for Alexander making him even more determined to hunt Darius down.

Before leaving on his journey deep into Asia, Alexander built a treasury house at the citadel of Ecbatana to safeguard the 180,000 or so talents that he had amassed from Susa and Parsa. Parmenio was put in charge of guarding it. After dismissing the allied forces, his loyal Macedonian general Parmenio, having no army to command, was reduced in rank to military area commander. He was then placed in charge of guarding Alexander's treasury house at Ecbatana and securing his communication lines to the rear. Parmenio was seventy years old when Alexander diplomatically coaxed him into retiring from the front lines.

With his treasury secured and Parmenio in charge of local affairs in Persia proper, Alexander was free to pursue Darius in present day Iran, by way of the Caspian Gates. It is a shame that such great effort was expended in the pursuit of a single man in such a reckless manner during July in the heat of the desert.

Alexander force-marched his army northward and covered 320 kilometers in eleven days, moving relentlessly in an attempt to overtake the Persians before they crossed the Caspian Gates. When they reached Rhagae, about eighty kilometers from the Caspian Gates, Alexander discovered that Darius had already passed through. Alexander at that point decided to stop the pursuit and allowed his army rest for five days before continuing on through the Gates. When they crossed the Gates, Alexander was informed that Darius had been deposed by his own satraps and was now their prisoner. Alexander quickly deployed his fastest cavalry on an all night pursuit and in the morning when they reached Darius's camp they discovered that Darius had been arrested and taken away.

Alexander continued his search and when his Macedonians finally caught up to him they found Darius in chains and weakened from stab wounds. After a wild all night chase, the next day Alexander's men discovered Darius mortally stabbed by javelins. Darius's own satraps murdered him to prevent him from falling into Alexander's hands, alive. Darius was around fifty years old when he met his tragic end in July of 330 BC.

After learning of the agonizing circumstances under which Darius had died, Alexander took his body back to Parsa and gave him a kingly burial in one of the Archaemenid royal cemeteries. Alexander, to the surprise of his Macedonians and especially the citizens of the City States, did something unusual by declaring his desire to avenge the murdered Darius. He declared that the rebels who had murdered their royal master would be punished severely while those faithful to him would be held in high honour.

With the death of Darius, the impression was that the war was over. A rumour was started around the camp that the crusade might be over and everyone would soon be allowed to go home. After all, the allied forces had been dismissed and Darius was dead, what other purpose would there be to go on? This was obvious to everyone of course except Alexander who now wanted to avenge Darius's death by going after his murderers. It was obvious that Alexander had motives different from his Macedonians. Alexander was not out to avenge anyone but rather to continue the conquests that would satisfy his own desires. His loyal soldiers, unfortunately, were

becoming weary and wondered when, if ever, they would be able to go home to enjoy their hard-earned earnings in peace?

Alexander convened a meeting of his officers and soldiers and put an end to the rumours about going home and then ordered the army to prepare to move again. Even though Alexander got his way (again), this time unfortunately a rift began to develop between his own desires and those of his men. Alexander was well aware of the problems he was about to face and began to look at non-Macedonians as possible candidates for his civil as well as military administration. To lessen their loneliness, he even encouraged his men to take wives from the captive women and bring them along on the campaign. As he was moving away from Macedonia, Alexander knew all too well that receiving new recruits and maintaining a long distance communication link with home would become more and more difficult, especially since he was planning to make “conquering” a way of life.

After a few days rest the army was on the move again and headed east towards Hyrcania. On his way through Iraq, Alexander encountered wild tribes that had never before been conquered and fierce battles broke out. After subduing some he made them pay tributes of horses and livestock. Some, especially the very skilled horsemen and archers he drafted into his service.

While crossing Iran, Alexander found a new enemy with different fighting skills that offered him no great battles. It was an enemy in small numbers that hid during the day and attacked at night. It appeared in the rear and hit at several places simultaneously and quickly disappeared. When Alexander went in pursuit, it entrenched itself in inaccessible terrain or dispersed itself and vanished into the woodlands. Alexander, in response to these terror attacks, reorganized his army into small mixed units that could fight many independent battles simultaneously or come together as one large unit if necessary. Alexander also, for the first time, employed riding archers and javelin throwers who could attack on the move. With the new fighting methods and the conscription of foreigners into his military, Alexander’s army was no longer the same army as when he had started out.

After spending two weeks of summer in Hyrcania, Alexander moved eastward to the northern side of Areia. There he received news that Bessus, one of Darius's satraps who was also a suspect in Darius's murder, had been recognized in the province of Bactria as King of Asia. Alexander was about to set out for Bactra, the capital city of Bactria, in pursuit of Bessus when he received news that the satrap of Areia was in support of Bessus's recognition and himself was planning an insurrection in Areia. Without losing any time, Alexander, with part of his army in a fast paced two-day march, showed up unexpectedly in Artacoana, the capital of Areia. His presence brought great fear among the rebels and the insurrection collapsed.

Unfortunately, during the forced march Alexander lost Nicator, Parmenio's son and commander of his Guards Brigade. Nicator fell ill and died on his way to Artacoana. Alexander was too much in a hurry pursuing Bessus to stay and honour his fallen soldier himself as he did with so many others, so he gave that task to Philotus, Nicator's brother which in the long term proved to be a mistake. Alexander was determined to put down Bessus as soon as possible and after arriving in Artacoana, went on the move again. He had learned that Bessus was raising a large army recruiting from Bactria and from the wild nomadic tribes beyond the Oxus.

Alexander was now entering uncharted territory and did not know what to expect. To avoid further trouble he founded a Macedonian settlement, which he named Alexandria-of-the-Areians, the first of many military garrisons positioned at strategic points throughout the eastern provinces.

For some reason Alexander abandoned his haste to reach Bactra by direct route and decided to travel south, perhaps to tame the rest of the provinces before heading north for the Hindu Kush. He secured these regions too by founding several new Macedonian settlements such as Alexandria-in-Arachosia, present-day Kandahar and Alexandria-at-the-Caucasus. To build his cities, Alexander's army laboured all through the winter without rest.

In the spring of 329 BC, after a short rest, Alexander led his army over the snowy Hindu Kush. Despite the opposition Bessus offered

him, Alexander emerged victorious and entered Bactria. Bessus fled and disappeared in Sogdiana. Alexander occupied Bactria including the capital Bactra and then advanced northward across the Oxus River. It has been said that there was no wood to build a bridge so it took the army five days to cross the Oxus River. They swam across the river using inflated leather skins, which had been sewn together from their tent coverings.

As soon as Alexander entered Sogdiana, Bessus fell out of favour with his supporters for not putting up a fight. Then gradually his own troops deserted him. Bessus's fall from grace did not mean that the rebellion was over. In time a new and much more dangerous antagonist would take his place and carry on the national resistance.

After capturing Bessus, Alexander continued his trek northward past Maracanda until he came upon the Jaxartes River where he reached the extreme northeast limit of the Persian Empire. Beyond there, in the broad steppes, lived nomads who were always a danger to the empire. To defend against attack and keep watch on the river, Alexander founded a frontier Macedonian settlement and named it Alexandria-Eschate or Khojend.

While Alexander was occupied with the preparations for the founding of his new city, a Persian rebellion was festering and erupted into violent revolts in a number of localities. Alexander did not waste time before unleashing his army and crushing the insurrection with much bloodshed. All the towns that participated were destroyed and their inhabitants executed. But instead of crushing their spirits, Alexander's actions inflamed the rebels and soon afterwards even more uprisings took place, on a greater scale. At one point the rebels managed to defeat the Macedonian expeditionary force and besiege Maracanda. Their action, however, angered Alexander to a point where he himself took a contingent of light troops and force-marched 300 kilometers in three days in pursuit of the rebels until they were subdued and severely punished. When he was finished, he headed south into Bactra where he spent the winter of 329-328 BC resting.

During the following spring, Alexander split his army in two and left Craterus behind in Bactria to protect the city while he moved

north into Sogdiana to put down more rebellions. While Alexander was rounding up rebels, he instructed Hephaestion to plan out several cities in Sogdiana. A new city named Alexandria-the-furthestmost emerged which was later populated by Macedonian immigrants.

Victorious over the rebels, Alexander gave command of Sogdiana to Coenus while he and his army moved on to Nautaca to spend the winter.

Of all the rebellions that erupted between 329 and 327 BC, only one remained undefeated. The rebels here were perched high upon an inaccessible rocky citadel in the mountains of Sogdiana. In the spring of 327 BC, Alexander marched his army from the wintering grounds of Nautaca to the high fortress of Sogdiana and summoned the rebels to surrender. Unfortunately, the only answer he received was laughter and ridicule. They said that the only way they would surrender was if Alexander's soldiers suddenly developed wings.

Alexander turned to his men and asked for volunteers, offering high rewards to those who would scale the highest peak. As it turned out, among the Macedonian soldiers were mountain climbers and some 300 of the bravest and boldest volunteered. They undertook the climb in the dark of night using ropes and iron tent pegs for spikes, which they drove into the icy cold rock. Thirty of them fell to their death during the climb but the rest made it to the top. Then early the next morning, in the dawn of first light, the rebels saw, to their astonishment, these Macedonian supermen high above them and immediately capitulated, surrendering their fortress. Among the rebels captured was the Bactrian prince, Oxyartes, who had with him his beautiful daughter Roxane. In the judgement of Alexander's companions, Roxane was the most beautiful woman they had ever seen, second only to Stateira, the wife of Darius. Alexander fell passionately in love with her and soon afterwards made her his wife.

Soon after this campaign was over, Alexander marched eastwards towards Paraetacene to put down another citadel of resistance. Here too Alexander found the fortress perched high on a steep rock surrounded by deep ravines and very rough terrain. It seemed that the more impregnable the fortress looked the more Alexander was

determined to penetrate it. He loved challenges and so did his Macedonians because they too seemed eager to do the impossible.

With a bit of Macedonian ingenuity, a lot of determination and with whatever nature had to offer, the Macedonian engineers constructed long ladders from the surrounding tall pine trees descending into the ravines. From the bottom they raised a causeway over the ravine to the citadel walls. They then built a penthouse above the causeway to protect the soldiers from falling artillery and began to bombard the citadel walls. It did not take too long before the shaken rebels offered to surrender.

This being the last bastion of resistance, Alexander had put down all resistance in the Far East and was free to return to Bactra. Alexander was hesitant to leave Sogdiana unresolved before continuing on his trek to India. Here he met a fighting people with great determination much like his own. He needed to pacify them but not by just defeating them in battle. He needed to show them that he had earned their respect but not just by employing them into his services. He needed to make them partners the old fashioned way, by marrying one of their kind, the way Philip would have done.

Before returning to Bactra Alexander married Roxane at the top of the citadel in the castle he had just conquered. His marriage to Roxane was a symbol of reconciliation with his former enemies and was meant to have great political importance. The marriage ceremony was conducted according to Iranian customs, which was meant to flatter the Iranian national pride.

By 328 BC, Alexander had conquered the entire Persian Empire, at least the empire that belonged to Darius III. The ancient authors gave no account as to why Alexander wanted to go beyond the Persian realm but as soon as he completed his conquests of eastern Iran, Alexander began preparations to invade India. I believe Alexander acted not so much on his desire for conquest but on his overwhelming curiosity to see what was beyond the eastern realm of the known world then. No doubt, while dealing with the mountain Indians of eastern Iran, he had heard stories about India that did not fit with his previous knowledge of that part of the world.

Before leaving Bactra, Alexander parted with tradition and appointed Amyntas, a Macedonian, instead of a foreign satrap to secure the important satrapy of Bactria. Amyntas was left well armed with 10,000 infantry and 3,500 cavalry, more soldiers than Alexander had started with seven years before.

In the spring of 327 BC, while his army stood at the Hindu Kush contemplating the sight of the eastern edge of the world, Alexander meticulously planned the next step of his campaign. For the Indians, Alexander's approach through the Hindu Kush was a reminder of the Aryan invasion long ago. Nomadic Aryans invaded India around 1500 BC, destroyed the Indus valley civilization and exterminated the Indus inhabitants, thus ending the most brilliant civilization of the ancient world.

On his journey to India, Alexander brought with him his young queen Roxane, who a year later bore him a son. Unfortunately the child died soon after birth.

In early summer of 327 BC, Alexander divided his army into two. The main column, commanded by Hephaestion and Perdikkas, went down the Kabul River and over the Khyber Pass to build bridges and prepare for the invasion. Alexander meanwhile, with his lightly armed units, took a different path along the Kunar Valley in east Afghanistan and from there he crossed into northwestern Pakistan.

Along his journey Alexander encountered stiff opposition, which required severe fighting. The fearless Indian tribes along the mountainous terrain had numerous warriors and presented difficulties for Alexander's advance. The fighting was so severe that during the first contact both Alexander and Ptolemy were wounded.

After crossing the Swat River, Alexander encountered more formidable tribes and the fighting became even more intense. The Indians fought bravely but eventually relented. After losing Massaga, their chief fortress, the Indians left for Aornos (Pir-Sar), another fortress. Situated at the bend of the Indus River, this 1,500-meter high fortress was impossible to scale. Sensing the limits of his army's capability, Alexander, for the time being, decided not to

pursue the enemy any further. He turned his army around and marched southward down the Indus River.

Later, using different strategies, Alexander attempted to besiege the Aornos fortress several times without success. Alexander could not enter Punjab with Aornos intact. He had to break its resistance. If conventional means did not work then he had to invent new methods of attack. Of all the new methods attempted, the most successful proved to be the flooding of the ravines surrounding the fortress. As soon as the water rose high enough in the ravine to bridge the army's position with the rock, Alexander's siege-engines moved in for the kill. The resistance soon broke and the army was able to rush in and subdue their opponents. Alexander was the first to reach the top, completing the conquest of Aornos. This was one of the most brilliant feats of strategy and tactics in his career. With Aornos out of the way Alexander was now free to pursue his journey to Punjab. The downing of Aornos gave birth to the legend of the Macedonian supermen. The Indians regarded the fortress impregnable and believed that the god Heracles once tried to conquer it without success.

In March 326 BC, Alexander turned southward on a journey to catch up with Hephaestion and Perdikkas. When he reached them he gave his army a month of well-deserved rest. After crossing the Indus River, over the pontoon bridge previously built by Hephaestion's engineers, Alexander entered into the land of his ally Ambhi. Alexander, trusting no one, marched into Taxila battle ready but none materialized. Ambhi welcomed Alexander with many gifts and received him as his guest in the capital Taxila.

In Taxila the Macedonians, for the first time, encountered many wonders, strange manners and customs. To the scientists' delight they also discovered flora they had never seen before. It was here too that Alexander met those "naked philosophers" (Buddhist monks) and came in contact with the doctrine of Buddha. For the next three days the Macedonians were treated royally with lavish gifts. Not to be outdone, Alexander reinstated Ambhi as rajah of Taxila and showered him with gifts of his own, which included thirty horses and no less than 1,000 talents. This generosity was motivated by Alexander's wish to have Ambhi on his side, as he was

receiving intelligence reports of large concentrations of enemy troops ahead. In spite of making him rajah, Ambhi was still a vassal king. A Macedonian military governor, with a strong garrison at his disposal actually governed Taxila.

Alexander invested a great deal of time and considerable effort negotiating peaceful terms with the other two Indian rajahs in that region but it seemed that peace was not possible before war. Porus, one of the rajahs negotiating with Alexander, made his terms very clear. If Alexander wanted his kingdom, he had to earn it in battle.

Porus's army was already amassing at the banks on the other side of the Jhelum River as more reinforcements began to arrive. Alexander could not afford to waste much time so he ordered his engineers to build a bridge. Since there were no building materials available in the vicinity, Alexander sent Coenus to dismantle the pontoon bridge from the Indus River, cut it into small sections and transport it over land on oxcarts. While Coenus was looking after the bridge, Alexander reinforced his army by adding elephants and Indian recruits to his infantry.

As he was getting ready to meet Porus, Alexander did not count on a monsoon. Perhaps unaware of the Indian climate in June, Alexander led his army during continuous, steaming, torrential rain. The skies had opened up and pounded the unknowing Macedonians for over two months without a break. Alexander traveled over the Salt Range covering about 180 kilometers in a little over two days before reaching the Jhelum River. A great achievement under monsoon conditions.

Unfortunately, the Jhelum was so swollen from the monsoon rains that it was impossible to cross. Besides, even if crossing was possible, Porus was waiting on the other side with archers, chariots and elephants. To a casual observer it would have appeared that the opposing armies had reached a stalemate. Neither could act without severe consequences.

To reinforce the idea that he was going to wait for more favourable conditions before attacking, Alexander ordered continuous supplies to be delivered to his camp in full view of his enemy. While doing

that he sent surveyors up and down the river in search of a good place to cross. In the meantime, the troops were kept on full alert with activities suggesting the possibility of an imminent attack. When nothing happened for a long time, the enemy tired of Alexander's antics began to ignore the distracting maneuvers. As luck would have it, the surveyors did find a good place to cross. It was on a large wooded island where the channels at both sides were narrow. The spot was located about 25 kilometers upstream from camp and was ideal since there was a ravine on the near side of the bank, a good place to hide troops.

To ensure a successful crossing, Alexander had to thoroughly confuse the enemy about his real intentions so he ordered his troops to light fires over a wide area every night. At the same time Ptolemy would take a large cavalry force and run up and down the riverbank making as much noise as possible while making false attempts to cross. Initially, all these demonstrations were taken seriously and every move and maneuver was counteracted with opposing forces on the other side. After some time, however, when it became obvious that these were only tricks to agitate the opposing troops and lower their morale, Porus began to relax his vigilance. Porus must have thought that Alexander's real aim was to break his army's morale and attack him when he was at his weakest. Unfortunately for Porus, Alexander was much cleverer than that.

Alexander had to make his move in less than two days because the other rajah, Abisares of Kashmir, was about 80 kilometers to the north and coming his way. Even though Porus was at ease with Alexander's exercises, his patrols kept constant watch. Any attempt at crossing, even undetected, would be overwhelmed by Porus's forces as soon as it was spotted. To maximize his chances, Alexander divided his army and directed simultaneous but separate attacks at different points on the river. Not knowing where the attack was going to come from, Porus had to divide his forces in order to counter the Macedonians. In the meantime, the pontoon bridge was assembled in secrecy and ready to be deployed.

In the dark of night, Alexander, with a force of 10,000 infantry and 5,000 cavalry, slipped away up the banks to make the 25-kilometer trek to attempt the crossing at dawn. The baggage train and a large

part of the army remained at the base camp. Alexander had given orders to openly start making preparations for an attack at the crack of dawn. He even had someone who looked like him come out of his royal tent, wearing the royal cloak, barking out orders.

A second group, consisting of three battalions of the phalanx, the mercenary cavalry and infantry, was dispatched from the main camp to the halfway point between the main camp and Alexander's crossing, with orders to wait and cross only after Alexander was engaged in battle. Craterus, in command of the forces at the main camp, was also given orders to wait and not cross until Porus had moved from his current position in pursuit of Alexander.

This was indeed a brilliant plan and certainly posed a dilemma for Porus. What was Porus to do? He did what any skilled commander would have done. He dispatched a strong force to stop Alexander from crossing. Alexander, however, anticipating his move, countered it by depending on his best Macedonian troops to make the crossing at lightning speed and put up a great fight on the other side; a move that to this day remains unparalleled.

Alexander did receive some help from his gods who provided him with deafening thunderclaps and torrential rain, which masked the noise of the embarkation. Even though the crossing was made successfully, all was not well. It seemed that Alexander's surveyors had made an error. The bank Alexander landed on was not the expected shore, but another elongated island. It was a long and arduous struggle to get across the fast flowing torrents of the mighty Jhelum River. Exhausted and drenched in mud the Macedonians finally made it across. Porus still did not know where the main attack was going to take place. This exhausting and pointless exercise of Alexander's he suspected was another deception to lure his forces away from the main attack. After some hesitation, however, and to be on the safe side, Porus eventually did dispatch his son with 2,000 cavalry and 120 chariots, but by then it was too late. Most of Alexander's assault force had made it across and easily subdued the Indians.

After a brief clash the Indians fled leaving behind about four hundred dead, including Porus's son. While pursuing the fleeing

Indians Alexander was joined by the second group of his army, which by now had also made it across. Alexander again divided up his forces and took command of the cavalry, which ran ahead at galloping speed while the foot soldiers followed behind at a fast marching pace.

When Porus received news that his son was dead and that Alexander had crossed the river, he decided it was time to face him and marched his forces upstream to do battle. Only a small force, consisting mostly of elephants, was left behind to hold back Craterus. It is estimated that Porus had at his disposal approximately 2,000 cavalry, 20,000 infantry, 130 elephants and 180 chariots. Porus chose a level, sandy plain for the battleground and positioned his infantry in a wide central front reinforced with elephants about 30 meters apart. At the wings he positioned his chariots and cavalry along with a flanking body of infantry.

Alexander's cavalry arrived first but stayed back and would not engage the enemy until the infantry arrived. Alexander had about 11,000 Macedonian infantrymen and 6,000 cavalrymen. While waiting, Alexander kept his forces out of sight and carried out detailed reconnaissance of Porus's dispositions. A frontal attack using his cavalry would be difficult, pitting horse against elephant. The phalanx might do the trick but not while Porus's cavalry was still active. The cavalry would have to be disabled first so that there was no chance that it would outflank the phalanx.

To knock out the Indian cavalry Alexander decided to attack Porus's left wing. The idea was to keep two cavalry divisions hidden from the enemy while carrying out the attack with his entire visible cavalry, which numbered a little less than the enemy's total mounted force. A force that size was sure to overwhelm Porus's left wing and he would have to draw reinforcements from his right wing. The commander of the hidden divisions was given specific orders to circle around Porus's right wing and stay out of sight until the left wing was engaged. If Porus transferred troops from the right wing to feed the engagement, he was to charge across behind the enemy lines and attack from the rear. Otherwise he would engage the enemy normally. The phalanx was ordered to delay engagement until there was evidence that the enemy was thrown into confusion.

The mounted archers attacked first and almost immediately disabled the chariots. Alexander's cavalry charged next and, as expected, Porus committed his right wing to deliver a striking blow. The two hidden divisions, under the command of Coenus and Demetrius, broke cover and engaged the Indians from the rear. Instead of striking a blow at Alexander, Porus's cavalry received a blow and the Indians fell back to the protection of the elephants.

With the enemy cavalry put out of action, the Macedonian phalanx and heavy infantry advanced on Porus's center. But attacking angry elephants was not an easy task. Each elephant had to be encircled, its driver picked off by the archers and while the elephant fought back it had to be speared and slashed until it was brought down. The infantrymen had to resort to slashing the elephant's trunk with swords and chop at its feet with axes before the animal could be brought down. Many of those doing the hacking and chopping did not fare well either since the elephants fought back smashing, impaling, stamping and crushing their tormentors to a bloody pulp.

As Porus's battle line was pressed back the elephants squeezed together and began to trample their own troops, causing further casualties. As Alexander drew his cavalry ring tighter around Porus's army, he ordered his phalanx to lock shields and move in for the kill. By now Craterus had crossed the river and was in pursuit of those who had broken through Alexander's ring. The Macedonians had just had a traumatic experience and were in no mood for forgiveness as the battle soon turned into a massacre.

The elephants became frantic and trampled more Indians than enemies. The Indians, including Porus, fought and resisted to the bitter end. Wounded by a javelin, Porus saw no point in resisting any further and rode off on his elephant. Alexander pursued him and with diplomacy convinced him to surrender. Alexander showed great admiration for Porus and gave him the respect a king deserved. This was the last great battle the Macedonians would fight. Considering that it took place under monsoon conditions, something the Macedonians had never before experienced, this may have been the most difficult battle of their entire campaign.

When it was all over, Alexander appointed Porus king of his own dominions and later extended his kingdom to the Hyphasis. Porus in turn remained loyal to Alexander until he died. To secure his position in Punjab, Alexander commissioned two new cities, Nicaea and Bucephala, to be built on the Jhelum. Nicaea was built where Alexander crossed the mighty Jhelum River in honour of his success. Bucephala was built where the battle took place and was dedicated to Alexander's horse Bucephalus, which was said to have died of old age.

After a month long, well-deserved rest Alexander summoned his army and headed eastward. He crossed the Chenab River which was three kilometers wide due to excessive rain. By the Chenab he founded another city which of course he named Alexandria (Sohadra). Somewhere east of the Chenab, near a city called Sangala, the Macedonians ran into stiff resistance and a horrific battle ensued where 17,000 Indians were slaughtered and 70,000 more were taken captive.

Alexander continued his eastern journey traveling below the high mountain ranges and making his way through water drenched fields in stifling heat and dripping monsoon skies. Long lines of dirty, tattered Indian refugees followed as the Macedonian army snaked its way across the countryside. After crossing the Ravi and the Beas Rivers into modern Punjab, the army camped for a short rest only to be frustrated by Alexander's future campaign plans. It must have been some time ago that Alexander had realized that his original assumption about the geography of this region was in error. He also must have found out from the Indians that the Indus River did not empty into the Nile, as he had earlier informed his troops. Why he kept this information a secret from his troops is unknown.

Alexander waited for an opportune time to inform his troops that his maps were in error and that they were nowhere near the end of the world. In fact he informed his troops that they had to march twelve more days in the desert and cross another great river, the Ganges, before they might reach the end of the world. This information was not well received by his troops.

It appears that Alexander wanted to continue his campaign eastward and venture towards the Ganges but his giant plan was met with refusal. His army was getting tired to the point of exhaustion and would no longer follow him. They had traveled 18,000 kilometers in eight and a half years and they were tired. The sweltering weather and continuous torrential rain, which they had endured for seventy days, did not help the situation. Alexander found the predicament he was in hard to accept. Even after making many speeches and doing much sulking, his men would not relent and stood their ground. Alexander was powerless to act. After spending three days in his tent contemplating his predicament, he came to the realization that his men were right, it was time to turn back.

To commemorate his great advances and honour the gods who gave him his victories, Alexander ordered the construction of twelve tower altars on the east side of the Beas River, one for each Macedonian god. He had his army construct the towers from square stones, which stood seventeen meters square and twenty-five meters high.

With a heavy heart Alexander turned his army around and sometime in mid September 326 BC started his march back towards his newly founded city near the Jhelum River. The next major task he would undertake would be to build a fleet of ships that would carry his army down the Indus River and into the ocean to the south. Approximately 800 vessels were constructed to transport horses, grain, men and cargo. About 80 thirty-oar warships were built for defense. Alexander did not intend to command the fleet so he appointed Nearchus, his intimate friend from youth, as admiral.

In November 326 BC Alexander divided his army into two columns, boarded the ships and began his voyage down the Jhelum River. A blast of trumpets gave the signal to start rowing as each column took its position at opposite banks. Craterus commanded the column on the right and Hephaestion commanded the one on the left. There was a great commotion as the pilots called out rowing commands and the oars splashed in unison, attracting onlookers who came to see the spectacle and serenade the soldiers on their voyage. Unfortunately, all was not well and before the fleet reached the Chenab, Alexander received information that a couple of tribes, the largest and most

warlike, were preparing to do battle with him down river. Alexander, at the time, was not certain where the battle was going to take place so he hastened his pace down the Jhelum in hopes of passing the junction of turbulent waters where the Jhelum met the Chenab.

As it turned out, there was no sign of the enemy at the river junction but the turbulence did cause a great deal of damage and many ships were in need of repair. While repairs were made the army set camp near the banks, giving Alexander time to formulate a battle plan. The enemy territory was located between the Chenab and Ravi Rivers and a waterless desert protected their settlements. The most logical and efficient method to reach them was by water up the Chenab River. Alexander expected that the enemy too would think along the same lines so his plan included a bit of a surprise.

After his repairs were completed Alexander divided his army into three columns. He took the first column by land through the desert into the heart of enemy territory. The second column, commanded by Hephaestion, was sent up the Chenab River. The third column, commanded by Craterus, was ordered to hold the territory near the mouth of the Ravi River. Alexander's land column encountered much resistance and a bloody battle ensued when he stormed and took several towns. Many attempted to escape but were intercepted by Hephaestion and Craterus. During the storming of one of the towns Alexander was wounded. While climbing a castle wall he fell victim to an enemy arrow which penetrated his chest. Believing him to be slain, his troops vented their fury on the enemy who fought back with equal ferocity.

Alexander was laid on his sacred shield and carried out on a stretcher to his ship. News of his alleged demise traveled like wildfire bringing grief to his troops. But Alexander was not dead and quickly regained consciousness after the arrow was extracted. In spite of all assurances, however, his men were not convinced until he himself rose to his feet, walked out of his tent and mounted a horse so that everyone could see him from the distance. Seeing their king alive brought joy to the troops whose shouts echoed throughout the land. His soldiers, from all sides, came to gaze upon him, shake his hand and show their affection. But most surprising of all was his

enemy's reaction. Alexander's sudden rise from the dead spread terror and panic among the enemy ranks, causing mass surrenders. Even the enemy tribal kings voluntarily and humbly submitted themselves to Alexander's will.

After Alexander recovered from his wound, the fleet resumed its course down river until it reached the Indus where Alexander founded another city, which he named Alexandria (at the confluence). By now it was February 325 BC and Alexander had reached the halfway point of his river voyage. The second part of the voyage was just as turbulent as the first and even more fighting was needed before the region was conquered. Fortunately, Alexander had developed a reputation as a fierce fighter and many tribes were reluctant to fight him and acquiesced. There were others further south, however, who were influenced by the Brahmins and fought back fiercely. After achieving victory, Alexander severely punished the Brahmins by having some of them hung for inciting riots and influencing the population to take up arms against him.

It was July 325 BC, when Alexander arrived at the Indus delta and camped for a rest at the city of Patala. Here Alexander reflected on the journey that took him from Kashmir through the entire Punjab down to the Indian Ocean. India was a great, rich and fruitful country and now it belonged to Macedonia.

While Alexander was busy conquering new land, his scientists and explorers were busy examining the country's exotic plants and animals, studying the Indian political and religious systems and cataloging the mineral wealth of this vast territory. Besides learning about India, much knowledge was imparted the other way. Being more advanced in metallurgy, the Macedonians taught the Indians how to smelt their silver and gold. The Macedonians also shared their knowledge of medicine and art, especially sculpting. Having been misled before by geography, Alexander was determined to correct that problem as well.

During his rest at Patala, Alexander and his advisors busied themselves looking for a sea passage from the Indus into the Tigris and the Euphrates. Alexander sent expeditions to explore the western and eastern branches of the Indus River delta in hopes of

finding a safe passage. It was during these expeditions that the Macedonians experienced, for the first time, the sudden and frightening ebb tide of the ocean. After determining that the eastern branch of the Indus delta was easiest to navigate, Alexander dug wells and set up grain depots for his fleet all along the coast before returning to Patala.

By now it was nearing the end of August 325 BC and Alexander was anxious to get going. While admiral Nearchus and the fleet were ordered to wait until the end of the monsoon season, Alexander left Patala to make preparations for provisioning the fleet along the way. On his way, Alexander ran into resistance again and had to subdue more tribes before turning westward. After appointing a Macedonian satrap to keep the region secure, Alexander left Hephaestion behind with orders to build another Alexandria city. At the coast before turning westward, Alexander left Leonnatus behind with orders to wait for the fleet and to build a second Alexandria city.

To further secure a supply line for his fleet, Alexander and his army turned westward into the Gedrosian Desert. This may have been one of the most difficult journeys Alexander and his army had ever encountered. There were no enemies to speak of only the scorching sun. Provisions, especially water, were in short supply and the army suffered immensely. Discipline, however, did not break down because the officers and Alexander himself suffered along with the men. Alexander even refused to drink water if there was not enough for everyone. His soldiers respected that and would not let him down. They traveled by night because it was too hot during the day and many perished from exhaustion, dehydration and starvation. They resorted to slaughtering their animals, including their horses, to survive. The desert was completely barren and dry and the local population subsisted strictly on seafood, consisting mostly of mussels.

It took Alexander sixty days to cross the desert before reaching Pura, the capital of Gedrosia. He marched on foot with his soldiers and shared with them his provisions as well as his courage and perseverance. He showed great respect for his men and treated them not like common soldiers but as comrades. This is the kind of man

Alexander was. He always came through for his men, even in the worst of circumstances, which exemplified his true character as a person and his feelings for his Macedonians. It is unknown how many of Alexander's people the desert took, but according to ancient sources (Arrian) a great many were lost. Even at times such as these, Alexander's scientists paused to observe and note the desert plant life. Pura was like heaven for the survivors who, with plenty of food and drink, quickly recovered from their ordeal. By the conquest of Gedrosia, Alexander's full subjection of Asia was complete. It was now the beginning of December 325 BC, and Alexander was on the move again headed westward to Carmania where he had made prior arrangements to meet with Craterus. Before its departure the army was split and Craterus was sent via a different route to Carmania where he was expected to rendezvous with the main army. Craterus took the north road via the Bolan Pass and turned westward past Kandahar (Alexandria in Arachosia) where he did some fighting, before turning to Carmania. Here the field armies were again recombined and supplied with animals and provisions by the local satrap. Before leaving, Alexander held a festival of thanksgiving for his successes in India and for his passage through the deserts of Gedrosia. Here too Alexander received news that the fleet had to depart a month earlier than expected due to the change in mood of the Indian population which had started to become hostile after Alexander's departure. According to reports, the sea voyage seemed to have had more success than the land trek with no crew losses, except for some suffering due to bad food and water. With the exception of one minor skirmish the sailors faced no armed resistance.

Like Alexander, Admiral Nearchus never bypassed an opportunity to have the scientists study the local flora and fauna, as well as record the customs of the native Indian coast dwellers. It was here too that the Macedonians saw whales for the first time. The sea voyage unfortunately was no pleasure cruise and the prolonged exposure to the hazards of the sea and lack of proper diet took its toll on the men. When they finally landed on shore and met their comrades, they were weakened, scruffy and unrecognizable. Nearchus and a few others came ahead of the fleet to report their arrival. When Alexander met them, even before a single word was exchanged, he was gripped by despair and devastated at the sight of

their condition. Thinking that they were the only survivors of the fleet he wept uncontrollably. When finally Alexander gained his composure and Nearchus informed him that the fleet was safe, Alexander wept even more with joy and held a festival with offerings of thanks for its safe return. Soon afterwards, Nearchus joined the fleet for its final voyage to Susa. Hephaestion was sent by the south road to Persia to acquire provisions while Alexander, with the light troops, took the north road on a direct course to Pasargadae.

It was January 324 BC and this would be Alexander's second visit to Pasargadae. More than five years had passed since he had last visited the city but to Alexander it seemed like an eternity. The last time he entered Pasargadae he was a mere Macedonian general but this time he was a Great King who had outdone not just mere mortals but legendary gods. Unfortunately his accomplishments alone could not keep the peace in his empire. His prolonged absence gave the impression that he was either dead or not going to return. Thinking along the same line many of his Persian satraps became rebellious, attacking Macedonian garrisons, plundering Macedonian temples and generally mistreating Alexander's subjects.

Alexander was now back and needed to make an example of those who had turned against him. By stern punishment he hoped to warn all others that such behavior would not be tolerated.

In one instance he executed a satrap along with his followers for usurping the title of Great King. In another, he tortured the priests in charge of a tomb that was plundered. At Persepolis Alexander had a man hanged for usurping the satrapy of a previously appointed satrap who had since died. Peucestas, a Macedonian who was comfortable with Persian customs and had learned to speak the Persian language, replaced the hanged Persian satrap.

According to Arrian, upon his return to Persepolis Alexander was saddened to tears after he gazed at the destruction he had caused the last time he was there. He was stricken with grief as he realized the symbolic value of the age-old buildings and temples that he had torched, now lost forever. He had done this for the sake of the City States to take vengeance for the crimes of Xerxes. Seeing the rubble and charred remains of what was once a great civilization and

realizing what he had done made him feel great remorse. The City States were now but a distant thought for which he cared not at all. In the last years he spent in Asia, Alexander had come to the realization that here too many rich civilizations existed far beyond what he had previously imagined. The City State idea that Asia was populated with uncultured and unworthy barbarians was only a narrow concept that reflected more on the City States than on the Asians. The effects of his conquests did not change Alexander's character as many have claimed. What had changed was Alexander's perception of the new worlds, which he came to understand and respect.

In February 324 BC, Alexander left Persepolis and went to Susa where he was reunited with Nearchus and the fleet. Here too he had to deal with unruly satraps. Alexander had appointed Harpalus, his childhood friend, as treasurer of Ecbatana in 330 BC. Harpalus escaped with much of Alexander's treasure and squandered it away on his own extravagant lifestyle.

During his stay in Susa, which lasted the spring and summer of 324 BC, Alexander encouraged the idea of mixed marriages. To show that he was sincere he married Stateira, Darius's daughter. He convinced some of his officers and soldiers to marry foreigners and rewarded them with gifts and dowries.

During this time Alexander also amnestied all exiles (about 20,000) in his empire, except those who were criminals, and allowed them to return to their homes. This order was begrudgingly obeyed by the City States. Athens especially disliked it since the majority of the 20,000 were political exiles and displaced persons from that region.

During the summer of 324 BC, Alexander left Susa for Ecbatana. He sent the bulk of his army ahead with Hephaestion on a march on the Tigris River, while he and his light armed units sailed down the Euphrates River to the Persian Gulf. After observing the scenery and satisfying his longing to sail, Alexander went up the Tigris and joined Hephaestion at Opis. Just before reaching Opis near Babylon, Alexander decided to reveal his future plans for his army's reorganization. One of his objectives, which became a bone of contention with the Macedonians, called for the retirement of the old Macedonian veterans who Alexander believed could no longer fight

because of old age or debilitating wounds. His army did not take the news well, especially the idea of losing its respected veterans. Alexander had a mutiny on his hands. Alexander's intentions may have been noble but his men did not see it that way. To some it appeared that Alexander was phasing out the conservative Macedonians only to replace them with foreigners. For some time now Alexander had been building his army with foreign recruits, mostly from Persia. The Macedonians had fought them in the past and were not happy having them among their ranks. To the conservative Macedonians it appeared that Alexander wanted to make the Persians partners and equals and that did not sit well with them.

During the mutiny harsh words were exchanged. Alexander infuriated to the point of rounding up thirteen of the ringleaders and executing them immediately. He then dismissed the entire Macedonian army and stormed away shutting himself in his royal castle for three days, entertaining only Persians and refusing to speak to any Macedonian. On the third day some Macedonians requested an audience with him. After pleading for his time they were granted permission to see him. It was an emotional reconciliation as Alexander greeted his comrades speechless and in tears. When it was over, Alexander threw a great festival in honour of this reconciliation. As it turned out, it was not a reconciliation between himself and his troops but, in the interest of the empire, it was a reconciliation between the Macedonians and Persians.

At the great festival, Alexander had his Macedonians sit next to him and next to them sat the Persians and other nationalities from the empire. It was said that in all about 9,000 people of various nationalities attended. Religious ceremonies were conducted in both the Macedonian and Persian traditions without incident. This enforces the idea that even then, as today, many cultures could live together in peace and harmony.

Alexander knew that without peace and harmony between the various people he had little or no hope of holding on to such a vast empire for any reasonable length of time. Peace and harmony, however, could not be achieved without freedom and equality of all races. This feast was a great moment for Alexander, not only because he attempted to bring reconciliation between the races but

more importantly because he gave birth to multiculturalism, a concept that was well ahead of its time.

Following the festival, Alexander went ahead with his original plans and dismissed about 10,000 of his veteran soldiers. Each man, in addition to his pay, also received an extra talent. The task of leading the veterans back to Macedonia was given to Craterus. Upon arriving in Macedonia he was also instructed to replace Antipater. Antipater in turn was to be given orders to lead fresh troops back to Alexander. Alexander felt that Antipater and Olympias could use a break away from each other and he himself could also use a break from their incessant complaining and bickering.

When the great festival was over, Alexander left Opis and resumed his trip to Ecbatana. After spending a few months there, he went to Babylon where he began to unfold his grand plans for the future.

Alexander's campaign plans against the west were based on intelligence information he had obtained beforehand about the strength of the various states and their political ties to one another. Besides military plans, Alexander had made plans for scientific exploration, constructing geographical maps, plotting ocean routes between Alexandria and Susa and developing trade routes between the various regions of his empire. Planning for world conquest was never too far from his mind but that plan he only shared with his most trusted companions like Hephaestion. Unfortunately he was no longer alive. Not too long ago, while at Ecbatana during a festival, Hephaestion contracted a fatal fever and died. It was a terrible loss for Alexander and for the Macedonians. Alexander took the loss with great difficulty and mourned him for days without food or drink. Hephaestion's corpse was taken to Babylon where a great monument was erected in his honour. Also, to preserve his memory, he was never replaced as second in command next to the king. That position forever remained vacant.

After arriving in Babylon, Alexander's first priority was to prepare an expedition to explore Arabia. For the time being his interests in Arabia were to explore the region and gain information. He had no intention of invading the mainland. He only wanted the coastline and islands, which offered good harbours for his trading ships.

Alexander's greatest ambition was to establish a connection by sea between Alexandria and Babylon. He was so certain his dream would become reality that he ordered the excavation of a huge harbour at Babylon. It was large enough to hold over 1,000 ships, which included his entire Asian navy and all the merchant ships in the region.

After initiating that project, Alexander became involved in building canals to regulate the flow of the Euphrates and the Tigris. Alexander wanted the region to prosper so he made arrangements to settle the north coast of the Persian Gulf. To promote trade on the Gulf between the mouths of the Tigris and the Euphrates he founded Alexandria Charax, a town suited by its geographical position to become a great harbour for Babylon.

While stationed at Babylon, Alexander received new recruits from various regions of his Asian Empire as well as cavalry reinforcements from Macedonia. Here for the first time Alexander started to reorganize his army to include mixed nationalities among his ranks, entrusting command positions to Macedonians. Unfortunately, Alexander's attempts to reorganize his army, along with his many other plans would not come to fruition. It has been said that on June 2, 323 BC, after participating in several festivities that lasted through the night, Alexander began to show symptoms of a fever. Some say that he may have contracted malaria, which is common during the hot summer months in the marshy areas of Babylon. Alexander was physically fit but his personal involvement in so many activities and the stress he subjected himself to during the planning and preparation of the various expeditions had weakened his immune system and his ability to resist the disease. Alexander himself believed that he would recover because on June 3rd he ordered his generals to make plans to set sail on June 7th.

On the evening of June 3rd, Alexander was taken to the royal gardens on the west bank of the Euphrates for some fresh air and a speedy recovery. The next day he was feeling better and sent word for his generals to come and meet with him on June 5th. That night unfortunately his fever came back and did not leave him. On June 7th when the fleet was ready to move he ordered it to stand by, hoping that he would soon be well and able to join it. Instead of

getting better he became sicker as the day progressed and by the next day he was so ill he could hardly speak.

On June 9th he called for his generals to assemble overnight in the court. The other officers waited outside in front of the gates. The next day his condition worsened and he was moved back into the palace. When his generals came to him he could recognize them but was so weak he was not able to speak a word to them. During the night and the next day his fever worsened and he was no longer able to see visitors. His troops, fearing the worst, demanded an audience with their king but the officers would not allow it. Disobeying their officers they forced the doors open and filed past Alexander's bed in a long procession only to witness his weakened condition. Alexander with difficulty could only nod slightly and greet his companions in arms with his eyes as they filed past him in silence and deep emotion.

During the evening of June 13th, 323 BC, Alexander passed away. He was not yet thirty-three when his life was snatched away, not in a glorious battle by the enemy's sword, but by malaria, a mere microscopic parasite, a terrible way for the greatest conqueror of conquerors to die.

No one expected Alexander would die, let alone this quickly. With Hephæstion dead, there was no single leader who could step in and take charge of the empire. The leaders of the army at Babylon were suddenly faced with difficult problems. The only one who now had any authority to act was Perdikkas to whom the dying Alexander had handed his signet ring. Once more the assembly of the Macedonian army was summoned to the forefront to do its duty and elect a new king. Unfortunately, new problems arose as old traditions clashed with new ones. The wishes of the infantry, in whom the old Macedonian spirit was entrenched, could not reconcile its differences with the wishes of the more modern cavalry which was loyal to Alexander's modern ideas. Arguments came to blows before an uneasy compromise was reached where Arrhidaeus, the candidate of the infantry, was to conjointly rule with the cavalry's choice, the unborn son of Alexander and Roxane. These were indeed unfortunate choices since Arrhidaeus, Philip II's son was epileptic and dimwitted, and Alexander's child had not yet been born.

Additionally, it was decided that each general was to assume responsibility for designated satrapies in accordance with the decisions reached in Babylon. Ptolemy son of Lagus went to Egypt, Lysimachus went to Thrace, Antigonus went to Greater Phrygia and Perdikkas remained in Babylon. There was one more issue placed before the assembly and that was what to do about Alexander's latest plans. Not surprisingly, the assembly unanimously decided to cancel them.

The news of Alexander's death traveled like wildfire throughout the empire but hardly caused a stir in Asia. In the City States, on the other hand, it was welcome news causing an explosion of emotions that resulted in the dissolution of the Corinthian League. Athens was the first to rise and summon the City States to fight against Macedonia. A new League, headed by Athens, was formed and rose up against Macedonia in what was termed the "Lamian War". The City States could not contain their hatred for Macedonia and unleashed their fury with all their might. Unfortunately, the entire City State might was not enough to overwhelm Antipater's Macedonians. Victorious, Antipater stripped Athens of its position as a power at sea and restored Samos to the Samians. He then forced a change of constitution on the Athenians, stripping them of their democratic powers. Additionally, a Macedonian garrison was installed on Athenian soil to remind the Athenians of who was in control. Antipater made peace with the rest of the insurgent states individually and dissolved their newly formed League.

Unlike the City States, with the exception of a few minor disturbances, caused mostly by disgruntled City State citizens, Asia remained peaceful for a relatively long period. Unfortunately without Alexander's persuasive politics, peace slowly gave way to conflict. Even though our ancient sources fail to reveal the real motive for the conflict, I suspect it was greed for wealth and the desire to rule.

Initially it was the more ambitious satraps in Asia who fought each other for a bigger piece of their empire. Later it involved Alexander's generals who each ruled a piece of his empire but were not content with what they had and wanted more. The most powerful of these successors were Antigonus and his son Demetrius

who gradually acquired most of Asia. Against them were a coalition of Ptolemy of Egypt, Seleucus of Babylon, Lysimachus of Thrace and Cassander, son of Antipater, of Macedonia.

About six years after Alexander's death, in 317 BC, a chain of events took place in Macedonia that would forever change its course in history. It began when Olympias murdered King Philip Arrhidaeus, which gave Cassander reason to vanquish her. Without Olympias's protection Cassander murdered the unhappy Roxane and young Alexander. With Alexander's family dead and no king to rule, the fate of the empire remained in the hands of his generals who were now fighting each other.

The stage was set for the Great Macedonian Empire to decline when the army failed to appoint a single strong leader. It was apparent from the start that Arrhidaeus, Philip II's epileptic and dimwitted son and Alexander III's unborn child were not chosen for their leadership skills but rather for their non-interference. Who then was truly going to rule the empire?

After fifty years of struggle and strife Alexander's generals partitioned his empire into three pieces. In the end, the Antigonids took Macedonia and the City States, the Ptolemies took Egypt and the Seleucids took Asia. Many died senselessly before the conflicts reached equilibrium and the partitioned lands assumed a sense of normalcy (see Arrian). There was one positive result from all this. Even though the empire was partitioned and ruled by different dynasties, it was always ruled by Macedonians. For centuries Macedonians ruled the empire and traveled freely throughout their world, which stretched from the Adriatic to the Punjab and from Tadzhikistan to Libya. They maintained contact with each other and with their homeland as many traveled back and forth to seek employment and visit family and friends.

After Alexander's death and the conclusion of the Lamian Wars, most of what we refer to today as City States lost the privileges granted to them by Philip II and Alexander III. For fifty or so years after Alexander's death, they were ruled by Macedonians and were used as pawns in a power struggle for dominance. During the later years, however, some of the states organized themselves into

leagues but unfortunately they were never able to hold alliances for too long. This was partly due to the characteristic politics they played internally and mainly due to outside influence from the rich and powerful Macedonian rulers.

Arsov - Petar Pop Arsov (1868-1941)

Petar Pop Arsov was a teacher from the village Bogomila, Bogomila Region. In 1894 he wrote a leaflet “The Stambolovism in Macedonia and its Representatives”, severely criticizing the Bulgarian ecclesiastical and educational propaganda in Macedonia, exclaiming: “The Exarchate gives money but buys the wind because the nationality cannot be bought with money.”

In 1891 he founded the Macedonian student group in Sofia. In 1892-3 he became editor of the Macedonian journal “Vine”.

On October 23, 1893, in Solun, Petar Pop Arsov, along with Ivan Hadzhi Nikolov, Dame Gruev, Hristo Tatarchev, Anton Dimitrov and Hristo Batandzhiev, founded the Secret Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (TMORO), later renamed the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO), with aims of bringing about the liberation of Macedonia within its geographic and historic borders.

In 1910 he was expelled from Macedonia and left for Russia. During the Balkan Wars, he became an active member of the St. Petersburg society. He died in 1941.

Reference: Page 273, Michael Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question.

Asprov - Petre Asprov (1923-1975)

Petre Asprov was born in 1923 in the village Oshchima, Lerin Region. Due to some problems in Oshchima, Asprov left home at a young age and went to Bitola where he enrolled in a four year teacher’s program at the gymnasium.

Just as he finished school, in 1944, Asprov joined the Aegean Macedonian brigade in Yugoslavia and took action against the Nazi sponsored Albanian bands, which at the time were roaming Gostivar, Tetovo and Kichevo Regions. He stayed with the Aegean brigade until it was disbanded in May 1945. After that he returned to Greek occupied Macedonia and became a leader in the youth organization Peoples' Liberation Youth Alliance for Aegean Macedonia (NOMS).

Asprov remained active in the Lerin Region to the end of the Greek Civil War. After that he fled to Poland and became a teacher, teaching Macedonian to refugee children from Greek occupied Macedonia. Unfortunately the Greek authorities in Poland did not appreciate his work and accused him of being a "Titoist" and had him beaten, tortured and imprisoned.

After his release he returned to the Peoples' Republic of Macedonia in Yugoslavia where he became active in the effort to find homes and jobs for Macedonian refugees from Greek occupied Macedonia. Petre Asprov died in 1975 in a car crash after falling asleep behind the steering wheel of his car.

Reference: Nikola Stefov

Atsev - Mirche Atsev (1915-1943)

Mirche Atsev was born on October 15, 1915 in the village Oreovets, Prilep Region. He became a member of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in 1940 and joined the Peoples' Liberation Struggle in 1941.

Atsev was one of the most renowned leaders of the Communist Party and of the Peoples' Liberation Movement in Macedonia. His career as a revolutionary began in his school days when he joined the progressive youth movement in the Bitola Gymnasium. He continued his revolutionary activities while studying at Belgrade University and later in the Prilep Party Organization.

As a result of his persecution by the police, for his revolutionary work, he was forced to live underground from the time he became active in 1940.

During his involvement with the Peoples' Liberation Struggle, Atsev was a member of the provincial committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia for Macedonia and a member of the central headquarters of the Peoples' Liberation Army and of the Partisan movement in Macedonia. He was one of the main organizers to initiate the first Partisan movements in Bitola and Resen.

In early 1942 he became secretary of the provisional committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia for Macedonia. He was also a leader in the Prilep and Veles Region struggles.

In December 1942, Mirche Atsev and Strasho Pindzhur fought bravely but were unfortunately captured by Bulgarian agents. Mirche Atsev died in 1943, a brutal death when he was thrown out of a prison window.

Reference: Page 7, Macedonian Almanac, 1984.

Berovski - Dimitar Pop Georgiev Berovski (1840-1907)

Dimitar Pop Georgiev Berovski was born in Berovo in 1840. Dimitar received his initial education in his hometown Berovo and later continued it in Solun. When he was about eighteen years old, at the insistence of his family, he enrolled in the Odessa Seminary in Russia.

Dimitar came from a rich family of a long line of priests and was expected to follow in the Berovo family tradition. He was also one of the first Macedonian intellectuals to become educated in Russia. Dimitar spent four years, from 1858 to 1861, studying at the seminary in Odessa. Unfortunately he was not interested in learning and in 1861 he was expelled. Under these circumstances he did not dare go home and face his very strict father so he went to Belgrade instead and enrolled in the Belgrade Military Academy. In Belgrade he met up with many Macedonians, including Ilo Markov

Maleshevski, whose main preoccupation at the time was to find a means to liberate the Balkan people from the Ottoman yoke. In this cause, Dimitar found his calling and joined Ilo Maleshevski's band in the July 5th, 1862 Serbian revolt against the Turks. Dimitar completed his course at the Belgrade Military Academy in 1863 but still lacked the courage to return home and face his father, so he enlisted in the Serbian army. Then in the fall of 1863 he finally did what he desperately yearned to do for years, he returned home and took on a job as a community teacher. He also became involved in church matters and taught in the Berovo church school. He became very popular with his community and was elected "representative of all church matters" which immediately brought him into conflict with the regional bishop. But instead of stepping down as Bishop Jepotej requested, Dimitar and twenty-two men organized a revolt, later termed the first "Maleshevski Revolt" also known as the second "Berovski Revolt", against the bishop. The revolt was successful and, in 1874, Jepotej was driven out of Berovo and Maleshevo. Unfortunately Dimitar, through his actions, became an outlaw and was forced to flee and in 1875 he disappeared in Solun. In the Solun underground he met a number of people with different ideas and became convinced that school and church problems from the Patriarchists and Exarchists in Macedonia could be solved through organized unions.

When the 1875 rebellion in Herzegovina began to gain momentum, Dimitar gave up on the idea of unionizing and began arming for liberation by revolutionary means.

In December 1875 he began organizing a rebellion in Macedonia to avert some of the pressure away from Herzegovina.

Dimitar's biggest obstacle in realizing his plan was the lack of funds. To raise the necessary funds Dimitar called on his seventy-five year old father-in-law, Reverend Stojan Razlovski. He asked the reverend to sell all his property in Berovo for him, including his church holdings, house, fields, etc., and bring the money to him in Solun so that he could purchase arms and ammunition. Reverend Stojan did what he was asked and also contributed some of his own assets. He sent his son Kostantin to deliver them.

After the arms were clandestinely purchased, they were secretly delivered to Razlog and other places in eastern Macedonia. While still in Solun, Dimitar ordered the fashioning of a flag which his Cheta would carry during the imminent Razlov Rebellion. The flag was a Red Lion on a yellow field with the words “Makedonija” at the top and “Stanete da ve Oslobodam” (Rise to be Freed) at the bottom.

When all plans were finalized, Dimitar and Kostantin arrived in Razlog with the final shipment of arms and munitions. Soon after their arrival they formed an advisory council consisting of thirty members. Later during a meeting, the council elected Dimitar Berovski as head and leader of the uprising and chose the village of Razlovo as the place to start the rebellion.

Another council meeting was held on May 7th, 1876 during which it was revealed that a number of Turkish tax collectors had entered the village Razlovo. This was the moment they were waiting for. Orders were given to immediately inform the village and start a demonstration first thing the next day.

The next day the rebels rushed the Turks, killing and wounding many, took their legal papers; tax papers, deeds, etc., and burned them in the village square.

As soon as they were done, the rebels, led by Dimitar Berovski, fled for Maleshevo where three hundred more armed rebels were expecting them. Unfortunately they never arrived at their destination. They were ambushed by a band of Bashibuzuks at the village Mitrashintsi and were forced into an uneven battle. Unable to break through, the rebels returned to Razvovtsi. Dimitar, who at the time had received a wound on the head, immediately called on Tsone Danchov and his rebel band from the village Laki, Kozheni region, for assistance. Tsone’s Cheta of forty, together with Dimitar’s Cheta of thirty, were able to demolish the Bashibuzuks and Dimitar and his band proceeded on their way to the village Smiljani to pick up more ammunition from one of his stashes. Dimitar’s wound to the head was unfortunately a lot more severe than he initially anticipated, which put him out of action for a while. By the time he was ready to fight again the uprising had been

squelched. Even though unsuccessful, the Razlog uprising had great significance for the Macedonian people in their struggle to liberate themselves.

Wounded, Dimitar lead his Cheta away from danger and spent the winter of 1876-1877 in the mountainous village of Sazhdanik in the Osogovo Mountain Range.

In 1878 Dimitar Berovski joined Cheta's with Ilo Maleshevski from the village Dolni Tsrkvenets just in time to participate in yet another rebellion, the Kresna Uprising.

The Kresna uprising started on October 17th, 1878 in the village Kresna. Early in the morning Dimitar Berovski's combined Cheta of four-hundred rebels attacked a Turkish stronghold, liberating more than thirty-five villages on both sides of the Struma River. As the uprising gained momentum, the rebels liberated the City of Bansko and the village Razlovtsi.

The initial success of the uprising swelled the ranks of rebel volunteers and led to the formation of a Macedonian cavalry. New buildings began to spring up in the free territories along with military and civil administrations, including a police force. Dimitar Berovski was elected mayor.

When it appeared that the uprising was going well and spreading, the Bulgarians became involved in hopes of turning it to their advantage and offered the rebels help. The Macedonian leaders, including Dimitar Berovski, knew very well where this was going and refused their help. They also uprooted their agents from the leadership and dismissed them. The Bulgarians did not take kindly to this and assassinated Stojan Karastoilov and imprisoned Dimitar Berovski.

The loss of leadership threw the uprising into chaos and on June 6th, 1897 the rebellion was over.

It is important to note that this rebellion ceased due to foreign (Bulgarian) intervention, not from Turkish involvement.

After his release from prison, Dimitar Berovski officially assumed a civilian life working the land and attending to civil matters of daily life. Secretly he was a clandestine agent of the Macedonian cause transporting arms and munitions from Bulgaria to Macedonia. He was a close friend and associate of Gotse Delchev and some say he even manufactured bombs and explosives for the Macedonian revolutionaries.

Dimitar Berovski was very disappointed and disillusioned after Delchev's death and the failed 1903 Ilinden uprising.

Dimitar Pop Georgiev Berovski died on December 19th, 1907.

References: Pages 178-188, Macedonian Almanac, 1991.

Page 27, Macedonian Magazine, # 428, December 1988.

Bogoevski - Mite Bogoevski (1919-1945)

Mite Bogoevski was born in the village Bolno in Resen in 1919. He joined the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in 1939 and the Peoples' Revolutionary Struggle in 1941. He was a secretary in the regional committee of the Communist Party in Resen.

In March 1942 he was jailed by the Bulgarian police but was not charged due to lack of evidence and was later released. After his release he resumed his education in the Belgrade Faculty of Commerce.

In September, 1942, after the formation of the Communist Party of Resen, his village Bolno was blockaded by the Bulgarian police in an attempt to capture him alive. A shootout ensued but he was unable to break through the blockade. Mite Bogoevski along with his associate Stevo Naumov were forced to take their own lives to avoid being captured.

Reference: Page 9, Macedonian Almanac, 1984.

Chakalarov - Vasil Chakalarov (1874-1913)

Vasil Chakalarov was born in the village Smrdesh, Kostur Region in 1874. He went to elementary school in his hometown Smrdesh

where he learned to speak Greek and Bulgarian. Besides Macedonian, his mother tongue, and Greek and Bulgarian which he learned in School, Chakalarov also spoke fluent Albanian which came handy during his revolutionary days.

In 1893 Chakalarov was imprisoned for assaulting a Greek teacher but escaped to Bulgaria where he worked in a quarry and learned the trade of cobbler.

While in Bulgaria, Chakalarov was recruited by the Vrhovist Sarafov into IMRO.

In October 1900 Sarafov sent Chakalarov to Greece to investigate ways to purchase arms. Then in July 1901, when Chakalarov returned to western Macedonia from Bulgaria, he was dispatched to Greece to start purchasing arms. Several previous attempts had been made but without success. The Greeks refused to sell arms to the Macedonians. This time, however, Chakalarov, fluent in Greek and dressed as an Albanian purporting to be from Jannina, fooled the Maltiniotis brothers in Athens and they sold him arms.

In February 1902 he again went to Greece and purchased more arms, which he personally made sure were delivered to Smrdesh. During the winter of 1901-1902 Chakalarov, Kliashev and Moskov, assisted by Pop Trajkov, went to the villages, distributed whatever arms they had and organized two new Cheti.

Subsequently, Chakalarov was instrumental in organizing a number of village Cheti including the ones in Nestram and the Turkish held Chestnut Region southeast of Kostur.

At the end of June, early July 1902, Chakalarov with about two-hundred men went after the notorious Kote Hristov from Rula, Karangelis's paid assassin. They attacked and managed to take the lower half of Rula but Kote with some thirty men held the upper half and managed to survive. Chakalarov, with the aid of Kliashev, went after Kote again at the end of August and yet again Kote managed to escape. During his second trip to Greece in 1902, Chakalarov had learned that Kote was in the employ of Karavangelis.

At the end of August 1902 a new menace arrived in western Macedonia, the Vrhovist Colonel Yankov. Upon his arrival with seventy men, at the village Zagoricheni, Yankov, as a representative of the “Exterior Movement”, summoned all the Cheta chiefs in the Kostur and Lerin Regions for a meeting. At that time Gruev had given orders to disarm Yankov, but Chakalarov and the other Chiefs decided to meet with him with a view of reaching a peaceful resolution. To be safe, they picked a place near the village Blatse and scheduled the meeting during daylight. The Turks, however, got wind of it so the bands had to flee. The meeting was re-scheduled for September 15th when they again met near Sisani. Yankov made it clear that he was in Macedonia to raise a rebellion. He said “all was ready. The date was fixed for September 20th, 1902 and the signal would be the ringing of the church bells. The Russian Generals of Skipka will come with Tsonev [Yankov’s superior] and the Bulgarian army and that Macedonia would be free within two weeks”. His appeal was made directly to the fighters and to the villagers. When the Cheta Chiefs refused to follow his plans, he publicly humiliated them by calling them cowards.

Chakalarov immediately sent dispatches warning the villages not to trust Yankov and went in pursuit. Chakalarov caught-up with Yankov just outside of Kolomnati as Yankov was about to address an assembly of fighters. Chakalarov however, cut his speech short by denouncing him in front them. No rebellion was raised on September 20th.

Since then Yankov tried to publicly discredit Chakalarov by inventing all sorts of misdeeds, but without success. He then resorted to assassination attempts, which were unsuccessful. During the August 2nd, 1903 Ilinden Uprising, the Kostur Cheti, under the command of Lazar Pop Trajkov and Vasil Chakalarov, staged successful raids liberating Klisura and Neveska. They then turned southward and, with the support of over three thousand villagers, attacked Kostur but were unable to take it.

Subsequent to the Ilinden Uprising, Chakalarov fought against Turkish and Bashi-Buzuk retaliations and arms searches trying to keep the villages and civilians safe.

Chakalarov was a cruel but brave and competent leader and a notable revolutionary. He once cut off a man's tongue for informing on the Cheti to the Greeks. The man pleaded that Greece gave him what he needed, his explanation for why he did what he had to do. Upon cutting his tongue, Chakalarov told him Macedonia gave you this tongue because you needed it, but since you decided to use it against her I am now taking it back. You can go to Greece and ask them to give you a new tongue. Let them help you since you so much want to help them.

In 1912 Chakalarov and his Cheta joined the fight to help the League (Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia) get rid of the Turks. The League's victories and intense propaganda were so convincing that even Chakalarov bought into them and welcomed the "liberators" with open arms.

Vasil Chakalarov died in 1913 near the villages Bel Kamen and Neveska, Lerin Region.

Reference: Dakin, Douglas M.A., Ph.D. The Greek Struggle in Macedonia 1897 – 1913. Salonika: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1966.

Chento - Metodija Andonov Chento (1902-1957)

Who was Metodija Andonov Chento? A brief overview of his life, a chapter taken from the book "Metodija Andonov Chento" by Fidanka Tanaskova, Nova Makedonija, 1990.

Let us start from the beginning:

Metodija Andonov Chento was born on August 17th, 1902 in Prilep. He was born to a poor family right when his mother, Zacharia from Prilep, and father, Andon from the village Lenishte, moved to Prilep and settled under Marko's Fortress. A few months later Metodija, their first male child, was born. Three girls were born before him but because of poverty, disease and generally poor living conditions they did not survive.

The Andonov family had no land, no roof and no money to speak of so they had to work for low wages in the opium poppy and tobacco fields in Prilep, earning very little money; barely enough to live on. Metodija also suffered the same fate. From his young days as a child he experienced hunger and the struggle for survival. He became well acquainted with the feeling of being very poor, having no food to eat and living on the edge between life and death.

Metodija became a wage earner at a very young age and did whatever he could to contribute to the family's income, mainly through apprenticeships and manual labour, exploiting all possible means of employment available to him at that time. But despite all the cruelty life threw at him, Metodija still had a strong desire to learn as much as possible and attended school as conditions would allow him. By the outbreak of World War I he was in grade four. Then with Serbia's clamp-down on Macedonia after WW I, he was forced to continue his education in Serbian, a foreign language for the Prilep born youth. This was yet another blow to Metodija but that did not deter him, in fact it did quite the opposite. After some interruptions in his education he continued to learn and work in the gardens and shops, on the railroad and in road and tunnel construction.

By age fifteen he worked from very early in the morning until the late hours of night. The long hours and hard work, however, were too much for the malnourished youth to bear; yet he still persisted. As luck would have it, trouble followed him everywhere he went, like a curse. After his father experienced a long and hard illness, Metodija became the head of the Andonov household. At age seventeen he was forced to knock on the door of the dark halls of the Prilep Monopoly. But with a single look and a shake of their heads, the employers there rejected him outright. They did not want to employ a youth of skin and bones, who, with all his troubles, insisted that he was a grown up man with experience in hard labour. But somehow he did manage to squeeze through the Monopoly gates and got a job.

Times were difficult, life was uncertain, wages in the halls of the Prilep Monopoly and in the tobacco fields were very low; life was an everyday disappointment for young Metodija, whose struggle for

survival became his destiny. But he was optimistic and stoically patient, waiting for better times to come and making plans for a different and better future.

The opening of the vocational trade school in the city was a welcome turn in Metodija's life as he registered in it with great enthusiasm and high expectations. Around 1921 the first gymnastics organization in Prilep was also founded, in which Metodija quickly became an active and valuable member. Because he was very good at giving instructions he was privileged to often lead the ranks of a Cheta (squad) in exercise.

One day while calling out the exercises, instead of calling out "napred cheto!" (squad forward!), he called out "napred chento!" (chento forward). His friends and members of the squad broke into laughter and because of that they began to call him "Chento". In the beginning he resented being called "Chento" and was angry with the boys but when they took the nickname outside the gymnasium, to the streets and to the marketplace, the name stuck and became his permanent nickname. In time he forgave his friends.

Being good at what he was doing opened up new opportunities for Metodija at the gymnasium. Because he was an excellent student, his teacher recommended he receive a government grant and an opportunity to be sent to Belgrade or Zagreb to further his education. But how could he leave Prilep? Who would look after his family? His family at the time was in a difficult financial situation so he decided to stay in Prilep.

When the Monopoly closed down, Metodija again found himself out of work and had to turn to the local shops and taverns to seek employment. What was going to happen tomorrow? This was Metodija's constant dilemma as he tried hard, working long days and nights, to eke out a living as an apprentice, assisting craftsmen in the Prilep shops. But in spite of trying to work hard, he could not endure the tempo of this difficult life, so he became a bit more ambitious and jumped ahead in life. In 1926 he was awarded his first personal certificate from the authorities to open his own store, which over the years and decades turned into a successful business.

In the fall of the same year he opened his first truly modest, grocery store but that was in the beginning before his business became one of the most prominent businesses in the Prilep market. His store was one of the most important places in Prilep for conversation and meeting people. Naturally this attracted many prominent, progressive and intelligent intellectuals who often got together for talks in Chento's store, located just under King Marko's castle. This was most certainly a very important place, because it was in the heart of a truly rich, interesting and unique city, where both memorable moments and unpleasant events were taking place.

Ever since Metodija's trade school days he was interested in reading socialist literature, especially about workers rights. One time he was quoted as saying, "As athletes and as members of the mandolin orchestra it is not appropriate for us to want the king and to accept that we are South-Serbians. Unfortunately the government had different expectations and was looking for results that were the opposite. The more they thought we were not persuaded, the harder they tried to oppose our self recognition and revolt. We were not what others wanted us to be and we would not let them impose it on us. We accepted membership in the Sokolsko Organization so that we could get together more often and discuss ideas and come to agreements without fear of falling under the watchful eyes of the police which forbade gatherings, especially in the evenings..."

In Metodija's interesting and eventful life it is worth mentioning his attempt at marriage to a young woman named Vasilka Pop Atanasoa after his engagement to her in 1929. Valilka was a priest's niece from a religious family which had certain expectations of the groom to be. One of these expectations was that, as a member of the family, Metodija could not be involved in politics, especially in Marxists politics, because as far as the church was concerned they were plain wrong and bad for the church. In addition there was a certain very vocal priest named Grdanovikj who warned people during his sermons to avoid people like Metodija who associated with opponents of the king and country. But the most serious blow to Metodija came when he, after six years of trying to get married, was told that the Church would not give him its consent to have a wedding.

Being unhappy with Pop Grdanovikj's hypocrisy and with some other personalities in the Church, who, according to him, preached equality but, in a kind of submissive way, did very little to help him marry his fiancée. His reply to them was very simple; a marriage can also take place without the help of the church. So he defiantly decided to have it his way. Metodija left for Novi Sad where he applied for permanent residence and in 1930 had a civil wedding. He married Vasilka Pop Atanasoa outside of the Church, which for many was unprecedented and full of never before seen "impudence", a shock, not so much to her family, as it was to some others in the city.

Unfortunately the novice groom had no idea how many legal barriers, canonical hurdles and other obstacles he would have to face before he would be able to acquire a valid and legal marital status. This gloomy chapter of the start of his new life was ended in 1936, by the Cessation Court in Belgrade. By then the Andonov family had increased by two with the birth of their two sons and Metodija had built a solid reputation in the marketplace.

Metodija became friends with many progressive people in the city and his store was the place where students gathered and shared progressive ideas. About this, Metodija was quoted as saying, "I enjoyed the most, our discussions about the past and about a new and more successful future, our Macedonian future, which we must struggle for and achieve. I enjoyed our discussions about our great leaders from this region such as Gjorche Petrov, Pere Toshev and other prominent names from the Macedonian revolutionary past. Such discussions gave me will and satisfaction and made me feel wonderful and enthusiastic..."

Sometime before 1934, Prilep students brought back pamphlets from Belgrade with a message from the Communist Party calling on people to begin fighting against the government and work through the more reputable legal opposition parties. There was a drive to form a new Macedonian movement called the "Macedonian National Movement" or MANOPO, whose platform called for an autonomous Macedonia in a Federal Yugoslavia.

Young people started to become more active in politics and took the role of being the bearers of the new and progressive front. They became the orators of the Macedonian truth and the writers of the new pages of life in Prilep. They carried and dispersed leaflets which students brought from Belgrade bearing Dragoljub Jovanovich's signature, who Metodija sincerely believed supported the struggle for an autonomous Macedonia, unlike Ljuba Davidovikj who did not even want to hear about Macedonia or the Macedonians. As punishment for his participation in carrying and distributing leaflets, Metodija was denounced and later imprisoned.

The warnings and threats from the authorities made it difficult for Metodija to continue to be active in politics in the city. So with help from his like minded friends and civil officials, in 1935, Metodija was nominated for candidacy in Vlatko Machek's United Opposition which supported a Federal Yugoslavia. However, due to falsifications and unfair practices on the part of his opposition, he never made it as a candidate.

A year later, according to information provided by the district chief of police, Metodija was sentenced to imprisonment and was fined 4,000 dinars for allegedly organizing a political rally without a permit and without permission from the police. Metodija naturally appealed the charges but his appeals fell on deaf ears. At the time no one helped him, not even the Governor in Skopje who did not denounce the charges, so in August Metodija had to pay the fine and serve his sentence.

Eventually however, the truth was revealed and the Government Court in Skopje reversed the Governor's decision but that was of little comfort to Metodija because by then it was December 31st, 1938 and too late. There was little satisfaction when justice arrived two years too late after being endlessly dragged through the legal process.

On the positive side however, during the same year Metodija became more involved in politics and his reputation as a good businessman grew in the marketplace. However, his next big challenge was to be elected to the National Assembly where he would have to wage uncertain battles. But before he could do that he

had to gain support from the people of his own town, where he was born. Then as a candidate to the United Opposition, a party which he supported some time ago, he would have to run a strong race in the party challenge.

Metodija received much encouragement from the students with whom he had cooperated in the past, from the members of the Communist Party, whose names then and in the coming years would become even more known and respected, as activists and fighters in Macedonia and beyond, people like Kuzman Josifovski, Mirche Atsev, Borka Taleski, Joska Jordanoski, Ljuben Lape, Dimche Mire...

Next he entered the electoral race by signing up for candidacy in the Agrarian Party, a member of the United Opposition. There he fought a number of battles with Jotsa Jovanovikj, leader of the Serbian Agrarian Party. The fights were mostly about Jovanovikj's attitude towards the national rights of the Macedonian people. It was a persistent and enormous struggle for Metodija right from the start but he managed to persuade many people to see things his way.

While this was going on, the people from Prilep did not stand by idly, wasting time, or expecting others to do things for them out the goodness of their hearts, they took matters into their own hands and made contact directly with Vlatko Machek, leader of the United Opposition who did support the national rights of the Macedonian people in a federally regulated Yugoslav State.

Under pressure, Jovanovikj and the Agrarian party finally backed down and accepted the task of representing the national rights of the Macedonian people as requested but placed some conditions of their own, including the right not to emphasize the national rights of the Macedonian people before the elections. Such matters were to be dealt with after the Party's victory.

Over the course of the electoral race everyone worked hard drafting agreements, campaigning, organizing and traveling all over. Metodija too was doubly engaged. As a storekeeper he kept busy meeting people at his store and using his facilities as a meeting place for the members of the party. As an activist and supporter of the

party he also worked directly on the ground. It was by no accident that the slogan “Chento-Machek” was coined during the final stages of the electoral race.

On the day of the elections many people from everywhere arrived at the City Centre around Metodija’s store, too many to be accommodated inside or outside. Among the people present in the crowd were his friends from the Sokolsko and Belosidelsko Organizations, the mountain climbers, the Hajduk football players and others.

There were people marching through the centre of Prilep heading for the polling stations. They were carrying banners on long poles with slogans praising democracy, peoples’ rights and freedoms. But as they marched on the Bitolsko Road towards Gjordere, they found themselves blocked by police and military barricades. The march turned into demonstrations as the participants began to shout “democracy now” and “down with the government”. Unfortunately the demonstrators found themselves powerless before the bayonets of the charging gendarmes and had to disperse.

After that episode doubt began to creep into Metodija and his friends as they waited for the election results. But when the final count was taken there was much excitement as Metodija found that out of the 3,815 votes he had received 2,113, convincing him and his friends that there was a sure victory ahead. Unfortunately the JR3 party, which at this point had won a majority, used a legal rule to take 40 percent of the lost seats from the opposition. One of those seats belonged to Metodija. It was estimated that they did this because, most likely, the JR3 party was afraid of Metodija’s controversial politics and did not want an enemy such as him in the Parliamentary Assembly.

After facing the JR3’s dirty electoral games and after finding out that he was being unfairly set up by Machek and later by Gabrilovikj, it became very clear to Metodija that “no one was going to give the ‘Macedonian’ a hand”. About this Metodija later wrote: “It is important [for Macedonians] to lead and win their own battles for ‘rights and the truth’ without any help from outsiders, regardless of whether it is done by elections or by any other means. Because

for whatever support is given there is always a high price to pay. Also, the usefulness of such support will, most likely, amount to almost nothing”.

Almost every leader of the regime made promises and as a result made advances in the electoral races and generally received as many votes as possible. But when the elections were over the leaders disappeared and with them disappeared all the promises made that would have “benefited” the people.

That is why it was important for Metodija and his supporters to divorce themselves from the Machekovtsi, Gavrilovikji, Tsvetkovikji and some of the others. It became necessary to fight and strengthen the ranks and to avoid divisions in the well politicized Prilep masses of progressive and patriotic people.

As a store owner and a person belonging to the guilds, the people of Prilep elected Metodija to represent the Prilep retailers and caterers in the Industrial-Commercial Chamber in Skopje, where, during Assembly sessions Metodija posed many "awkward" questions and boldly and openly stood against the politics led by the Chamber, which were in favour of the industrialists and the state but worked against the traders who were burdened with fines and fees which they had to pay at the expense of their poor customers.

Metodija could not stand for but did not want to keep quiet about the constant trumpeting, whining and complaining about the King doing “so much” for the people of South Serbia (meaning the Macedonian’s) and that the Macedonian’s had done nothing in return for the state. “And how many of those complainers asked how these poor, tormented, overtaxed and beaten down people felt?” asked Metodija in response to the bitter insults hurled by people from the regime. Then one day when he could no longer stand any more insults, he stood up in the Chamber and, among other things, said:

“We have had enough of these allegations, of being accused that we are loafers and that the state has given us more than it has taken from us. I say this is not correct! I say that the state has taken a lot more from us and has given us nothing. If you feel that way, then

why not leave us alone and let us manage our Macedonia as a free people. If you know so much about how Macedonia is today then why not leave and come back in five to ten years and see what Macedonia will be like then...”

“Such impudence, how dare he stand up and speak like this...” was recorded in the Session minutes by the sober supporters of the regime who reported the incident directly to the President of the Council of Ministers via a stern confidential letter dated June 8th, 1940. In the letter they expressed worries that Macedonia might separate: “The idea of creating a free Macedonia has penetrated to such an extent that all it requires now is a spark, (especially) from the youth, for the situation to explode into flames...”

After that Metodija, a known autonomist and separatist from Prilep and a bitter rival of the regime, became a target of all sorts of accusations. However, unable to silence him, the regime pinned all sorts of things on him until they had him imprisoned...

At the Chamber of Commerce Plenum in Skopje, in front of 60 representatives from every corner of Vardarska Banovina, Metodija again voiced his concerns: “Why do we submit resolutions and petitions. Why talk when those responsible in Belgrade are proving to be incapable of leading the state and the economic policies towards us, in Yugoslavia... Let us have a free Macedonia...”

But no matter what he said or did, the current administration continued with business as usual, so Metodija wrote a letter to the Viceroy in Skopje asking him to suspend the current administration, which consisted of Serbs only, until the next election and in the meantime appoint a commissar. Of course all these open attempts at removing the administration aggravated his opponents, who, among his other provocative qualities, viewed this one as arrogant and harmful to Serbian governance. About this, in 1940 the regime protectors of the peace, on duty in Macedonia, wrote to the Minister complaining that “the people of Prilep feel strongly that there are no Serbs living in Prilep. Also there are activities of concern conducted in the southern parts of the country by communist and separatist forces.”

The regime estimated that 98 out of 100 people in Prilep were against the Serbs. This was proof that there was cause for alarm and that there was need for harsh and concrete measures to be taken. A special place on the chart of “biggest troublemakers” and dangerous offenders was reserved for Metodija, a man who openly defied authority and caused unrest in the more nationally conscious population. The regime did whatever it could to “safeguard” the youth from having their minds muddled and infected with national and patriotic feelings.

One of many such examples is the FK Hajduk Prilep affair. FK Hajduk Prilep was an organization that Metodija formed and financed. Before the end of 1949 the regime, with a number of like-minded supporters, joined the organization and in Metodija’s absence, called for a hasty assembly, elected a new leadership and called for a complete break with Metodija.

In the memories of the people of Prilep lived the August 2nd Ilinden picnic held at Shatorov Kamen, which, even though it was under surveillance, the organizers always managed to fully accomplish their aims. On that day, by the old tradition, all people named “Ilija” went there to celebrate their name day. Metodija was there to celebrate his son’s name and of course there were many others there who found other reasons to attend. When enough people arrived, Kole Chasule called on Metodija to give a speech, during which, among other things, he said:

“No, we do not need to believe anyone from the other side because their promises are empty and they use them only for their personal interest. We need to fight for our rights and for our freedom alone, by ourselves. Look what Machek did. He promised federal regulation of Yugoslavia and national rights for the Macedonian people that never materialized. Where is Machek now (Vice-President in the Tsvekovikj Government)? Why will he not allow the same volunteers that he supported in sending to the Spanish revolution, return from France? When they left to fight on the fronts he supported them. That’s because he was in opposition then, now that he is in power he does not support them. Our way is the Ilinden way. Long live Ilinden, long live a free Macedonia...”

As soon as Metodija returned to Prilep from Shatorov Kamen the people who attended the picnic descended upon the city and formed an organized column of demonstrators, later joined by more demonstrators. When they arrived at the promenade they listened to a speech given by Borka Taleski. Then continuing on through the city they passed by the Monopoly and shouted out slogans like “Down with the King and the dynasty” and “Long live free Macedonia...” The final speech was given in Trizla by Kuzman Josifovski before the gendarmes and the army arrived and attacked the unarmed demonstrators.

Metodija managed to slip through the crowd and reach his home but the police were not too far behind. When they knocked on the door, Metodija’s sick, old mother told them that she was too sick to come to the door and was unable to open it for them. But the police knew they had Metodija in their hands, so they watched his house all night.

The next morning when Metodija stepped outside he was captured and, together with Borka Taleski, Trajko Tartsan, Kole Chashule and Kotse Kjurhija, was jailed and remained behind bars for weeks. Metodija was only allowed to leave jail the day his mother died. Accompanied by gendarmes he was allowed to visit his mother for the last time before she passed on.

The agitated police spy ring kept a night vigil, meticulously compiling reports about the day’s “unpleasant events”. The next day, on August 3rd, 1940, the Prilep Region authorities recorded the previous day’s activities in a confidential document, describing in detail everything that took place during the Ilinden gathering, including the criticisms leveled against the government by the organizers. Among other things they also warned the government that there were calls for the people to oppose the regime and to avoid enlisting in the army.

The shortest straws were drawn by Talevski, Kurchija, Tartsan and Metodija, who were accused of having broken various laws including violating the law of public safety and order. So for being a danger to society they were imprisoned at the Ada Tsiganlija Prison and at the beginning of September they were surrendered to the local

investigative judge. Four weeks later they were transferred to the Velika Kikinda Prison where they remained until the end of November 1940.

After that they left for home but it was a bitter experience for Metodija, being paraded by the gendarmes, tied in chains, bayonets pointed at him in front of the people and in front of his family, being brought to the railway station to be sent to prison in Serbia...

But in spite of removing the so-called “troublemakers” from the streets, the headaches the authorities suffered in the region not only continued but in time escalated. Headaches provoked by disobedient “nationalists” who “misled” the people to not even want to speak the Serbian language, an act which a police report called “one of the greatest evils”.

The Macedonian intelligentsia, young working shop owners, students, etc., at every opportunity instead of speaking Serbian in public places, spoke the Macedonian language. This was particularly characteristic where the anti-regime movement was strong and had greater influence.

Metodija at that time, even though he had a family with four children from 18 months to 8 years old, was active with his friends in initiating and directing open attacks and violence against the regime and exhibiting intolerance towards the ruling elite.

On December 8th, 1940 the National High School in Prilep was full of people. At that time about 200 parents were invited for a very serious discussion, a discussion which turned out to be orders and threats, ordering parents of the children attending that school to forbid their children to speak the Macedonian language anywhere, not even at home. On top of that, no one in the audience, not even the parents, was allowed to speak in their defence.

But even with the hard days at Ada Tsigalija and Velika Kikinda prisons fresh in his mind, Metodija could not just sit there and let this injustice pass without a challenge. So he jumped into the fire with both feet and was ready to be engaged in new battles. He

accepted a nomination from Joska Jordanovski of the Local Committee to participate in the affairs of the Gymnasium.

The scandal in the Prilep high school was, without precedence at the time, a typical example of the tough and relentless stand people took to uphold their ideals and beliefs and without much care for the revenge, cruelty and torture the authorities would inflict on them.

Metodija Andonov Chento died on July 24, 1957.

By Fidanka Tanaskova, translated and edited by Risto Stefov

Delchev - Gotse Delchev (1872-1903)

Gotse Delchev, the son of Macedonian patriots Nikola and Sultana Delchev, was born on February 4th, 1872 in Kukush, a town 35 km north of Solun. His parents had been instrumental in raising rebellions directed against the Patriarchate and had been active in the Razlog and Kresna uprisings in 1878.

Gotse completed his elementary education in Kukush, then attended high school in Solun where he studied literature and social studies. He then entered the Sofia Military Academy in July 1891 where he furthered his knowledge in military and scientific discipline. He was expelled from the Academy for his social tendencies and returned to Macedonia in 1894.

He was always keen to learn and kept up with Macedonian national affairs. He played an active role in the political clubs of Solun and Sofia and kept in close contact with others like himself, especially the socialists. They greatly contributed to Gotse's involvement in IMRO and helped shape the course of the Macedonian national liberation movement. The years 1894 to 1903 represented the final revolutionary stage of Gotse's short life. His career as a teacher took him to Novo Selo (near Shtip) and Bansko from 1894 to 1896. Later he became involved with the revolutionary cause, preparing the Macedonian people for the armed uprising. While teaching in Novo Selo he met Damian Gruev the leader of the IMRO central committee. The two men shared similar ideals and became close

friends. In 1895 Gruev convinced Delchev to join IMRO. It wasn't too long afterwards that Delchev became IMRO's undisputed leader. Gotse was a realist as well as an idealist who loved people, hated tyranny and saw the world as a place of many cultures living together in peace. The international and cosmopolitan views of Delchev were far ahead of his time and could be summarized in his proverbial sentence: "I understand the world solely as a field for cultural competition among nations".

As a realist Gotse knew that in order for a revolution to be successful it had to be a "moral revolution" of the mind, heart and soul of an enslaved people. They needed to feel like people with rights and freedoms, not like slaves. With that in mind Gotse set out to build a revolutionary conscience in the Macedonian population, thus setting the revolutionary wheels in motion.

The inclusion of rural areas into the organizational districts contributed to the expansion of the organization and the increase in its membership, while providing the essential prerequisites for the formation of the military power of the organization, and had Gotse Delchev as its military advisor.

The primary question regarding the timing of the uprising in Macedonia implicated an apparent discordance among the representatives at the Solun Conference in 1903, with Delchev opposing the uprising as premature. Since then he tried to oppose an early uprising. He met with Gruev in Solun and convinced him to delay at least long enough to get organized and prepare for it. He would have had a chance to speak to the entire leadership during the Smilevo Conference, scheduled to start on May 3rd, 1903, but he never made it.

Delchev was killed on May 4, 1903 near the village Banitsa, Seres Region in a skirmish with Turkish forces. Delchev's remains were transferred to Bulgaria in 1923. Then, after the Second World War, on October 10th, 1946, they were transferred to the People's Republic of Macedonia. The following day they were enshrined in a marble sarcophagus, which to this day is displayed in the yard of the Sveti Spas (Holy Savior) Church in Skopje.

Delchev will be remembered as the undisputed leader, strategist, ideologue and diplomat of the original IMRO. He was a man who almost single-handedly sowed the seeds of resistance amongst the Macedonian peasantry, through foresight, popularity, tactical skill and enormous enthusiasm.

References: Pages 35-37, Macedonian Almanac, 1972.

Pages 4-6, Macedonian Magazine, # 421, May 1998.

Pages 269-270, Michael Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question.

Georgievski - Petre Georgievski (1923-1947)

Petre Georgievski was born in village Oshchima in 1923. In 1928 Petre's father left Oshchima for Australia to seek work as a pechalbar and never returned. Petre, the eldest of three brothers, was five years old at the time and was left in the care of his mother and grandmother. After finishing grade six in public school, Petre assumed responsibility for managing the household and farm. His family was poor and on many occasions Petre had to seek work outside the home to make ends meet. Prior to the occupation (before 1941), Petre took on odd jobs including road construction work. During the occupation he regularly traveled in and out of Albania, purchasing and selling fabrics.

Petre was a bright young man and did not agree with the injustices of the Greek Fascist regime; especially the inequalities created between Macedonians and Greeks. It was no surprise that he and a friend, Lazo, were the first from Oshchima to sign up with the Partisans. The promise of equal rights inspired the duo to take a trip to Malimadi to make contact with the Partisans. Unfortunately soon after their trip, Lazo had a severe attack of appendicitis, which ended his life. Petre went on to join the political wing of the workers revolution and worked hard to fight exploitation. During the occupation Petre joined the antifascist uprising and organized the collection of arms and ammunition and recruited members for his organization. During the spring of 1943, in the Lerin and Prespa Regions, when the first Partisans began to organize Petre was one of the first to volunteer his services.

During the conflict Petre proved himself to be brave and decisive. He was an excellent organized and able leader, both politically and militarily.

During one of his missions Petre was severely wounded but was lucky to escape with his life. A mortar hit the barrel of his rifle and exploded on contact. The rifle was completely obliterated and he received severe burns to his hand and a gushing wound through his throat. He was taken to a hospital in Yugoslavia where, after several surgeries, he recovered.

By 1945 Petre was back on his native soil and ready to fight for what he believed. During the Greek Civil War he was one of the first to enlist and became one of the first organizers in the region. He became a member of the Peoples Freedom Fighters and joined the Presidency of the Youth Organization for the Lerin Region. He was well liked by all Oshchimians and moved freely in and out of his home, even in daylight, without any fear of being betrayed.

Unfortunately this fearless, battle hardened fighter and volunteer took too many risks during his missions and one day he fell prey to the enemy. After blowing up several trucks on the railroad connecting Lerin to Solun and successfully completing his mission, Petre ran into enemy fire. During the skirmish Petre was severely wounded. With both legs broken he lay immobilized awaiting his fate. When the enemy approached he agreed to surrender but the enemy's enthusiasm was cut short when he pulled out his Thompson, cutting them to pieces. He then shot himself.

Near the village of Tserevo on March 23rd, 1947, to avoid capture, Petre took his own life and became the first Oshchimian of the Greek Civil War to die for Macedonia. Even in death his enemies did not let him rest. The Monarchist Fascists took him to Surovich and hung his body in the City Square, in full view as a reminder of what would happen to Macedonians who dared stand up and fight for their rights. With heavy hearts the people of Surovich paid Petre their last respects.

Reference: Page 22, Macedonian Magazine, # 265, May 1975.

Ginova - Mirka Ginova (1916-1946)

Mirka was the most outstanding Macedonian woman freedom fighter, organizer and leader of the Greek Civil War. She was a teacher and an outstanding fighter for national, political and cultural equality of the Macedonian people. She was the first woman to become a victim of Greek monarcho-fascism in Greece.

Mirka was born in 1916 in the village Rusilovo, Voden Region. She was not even two years old when she lost her mother to influenza.

After finishing elementary school in Katranitsa she applied to the school of home economics in the city of Voden but was not accepted. Failing that, she enrolled at a similar school in Lerin and was accepted. Later she went to Kostur and graduated as a schoolteacher. Although she enjoyed learning, Mirka's experience in school was not very pleasant.

After graduation and placing numerous applications, Mirka was unable to get a teaching job for the next six years. The reason: she was Macedonian.

Given her revolutionary family background, the Greek authorities found it very dangerous to have her as a teacher in any of the Macedonian speaking villages. Fortunately, just before the start of WW II, Mirka was finally given a teaching job in the village Kutugeri, in Voden region.

Later Mirka found a teaching job in the Macedonian-speaking village Vlkojanevo, in Voden Region. In view of the outbreak of the Greek-Italian War and later the German invasion, she felt compelled to return to her own village and together with her neighbours she joined the underground movement against the occupation.

In the spring of 1943 Mirka joined the newly-formed youth organization EPON (National All-Greek Youth Organization) and became a committee member in the organization. Soon afterwards her talks of patriotism caused her popularity to rise not only among the Macedonian youth but also in the entire general public in Ostrovo region.

During the summer of 1943, Mirka joined the CPG (Communist Party of Greece) and EAM (National Liberation Front) and began campaigning against the German-Bulgarian occupation and organized resistance movements in the Macedonian villages of Ostrovo Region.

Around the end of 1943 Mirka came into contact with the Macedonian Partisans, in the now Republic of Macedonia, who during that time were stationed in the mountains Kozhuf and Kajmakchalan.

With the formation of the Voden Macedonian Battalion in the summer of 1944, within the ranks of ELAS (National Peoples Liberation Army) Mirka worked very hard as a recruiter of young Macedonians. She was very patriotic, charismatic and a big influence on the Macedonian people. As a result of her efforts many joined the Voden Battalion in Kajmakchalan.

During the battle of Muaren-An, at village Ostrovo near Voden, on August 2nd, 1944, when the Partisans attacked a German compound filled with troops and munitions, Mirka, with a rifle in hand, was at the forefront fighting the enemy face to face.

After Germany's fall and the capitulation to ELAS, according to the Varkiza Agreement, Mirka did not surrender her arms. She went to the Macedonian people and continued the war against the new reactionary Greek government which, with greater fanaticism continued to terrorize and murder the Macedonian population.

In March 1945 Mirka, through Vangel Shamardanov-Ilindenski, came into contact with the leadership of TOMO (Secret Macedonian Liberation Organization) the newly formed Macedonian organization in Voden and became a valuable and active member. TOMO was created to defend the Macedonian people against acts of aggression from the Greek Monarchists and their nationalistic henchmen.

On July 20th, 1945 in the Tupchesto Region, between the villages Krontselovo and Vlkojanevo near the city of Voden, TOMO held a

regional conference. Among other things, the work in progress with regards to TOMO's districts was reviewed and a decision was made to change TOMO's name to NOF (Peoples Liberation Front) for the Voden Region.

During the same conference a new ruling body was elected and sworn in to run the newly formed NOF for Voden Region. The new ruling body members consisted of: Vangel Ajanovski-Oche political secretary, Vangel Shamardanov-Ilindenski organizational secretary, Risto Kordalov in charge of military matters and of the Partisan detachment of NOF; Petre Popov in charge of propaganda and campaigning; Risto Bukavalov, in charge of financial matters; Tashko Hadzhijanev leader of the youth movement and Mirka Ginova in charge of the women's movement.

From this moment on Mirka worked even harder and together with her associates formed two new NOF associated organizations, the NOMS (Peoples Liberation Youth Alliance) and the AFZ (Women's Antifascist Front) for Voden Region.

Mirka, besides being a devout patriot, was also a charismatic leader and knew how to arouse people's emotions. She quickly became very popular with the youth and with all the Macedonian people with whom she came into contact. In no time she became the most famous fighter in Voden Region.

NOF for Voden Region soon began its actions against the Greek Monarchists who terrorized the Macedonian population in the region. Its armed wing, remnants of ELAS fighters, first attacked the Monarchist gendarmes in the villages Lukovets, Pozharsko and Sarakinovo. Then they attacked the Greek army watchtowers in Jankulovi kolidi, Kajmakchalan and in the village Gorno Rodivo. They also liquidated a number of traitors who collaborated with the Greek police.

Mirka Ginova, member of the district committee of NOF and secretary of AFZ for Voden Region, was by now deeply involved with organizing serious resistance against the Monarchists and former supporters of the Fascist occupiers. That is why the Greek police and gendarmes pursued her with all their strength.

A series of events started taking place which eventually led to Mirka's demise. The first was on June 28, 1946 when two NOF couriers Vangel Goglev-Bezandako and Tashko Bobev, going from the village Vlkojanevo to the village Krontselovo unexpectedly ran into a Greek patrol and had a skirmish. The encounter tipped off the Greek army that there might be a Partisan presence in the region around the village Vlkojanevo.

A little later the same soldiers grabbed a couple of goat herders from Vlkojanevo and under extreme duress forced them to reveal the position of the NOF detachment in the Pochep woodlands. Fortunately the NOF contact Vani Brev from Vlkojanevo got wind of the situation and was able to warn the NOF fighters, avoiding the ambush.

On July 30, Risto Kormanov (commander of the NOF detachment for Voden region) and Captain Adamidis Filotas-Katsonis (commander of the CPG Partisan detachment in the Voden region), received orders to go to Mount Karakamen to retrieve arms and ammunition from the warehouse under the command of Captain Hristos Palamas-Mavros.

On July 4, 1946 Dimitar Limbov, Tashko Sapundzhiev-Kuliman and Vangel Goglev-Bezandako were ordered by Risto Bukovalov-Zhikov to go to Dupen-Most, located between Vladovo and the city of Voden, to liquidate the informants Giorgi Panchev and Giorgi Bapka-Daskalot who were expected to arrive in Voden from the village Vladovo.

Unfortunately they didn't follow orders on the belief that Dimitar Limbov could resolve the situation without killings. Mr. Limbov, who was also from the village Vladovo, was confident that he could stop the informants from informing and would in fact convince them to join the Partisans. So the informants were allowed to enter Voden unabated. Unfortunately, Dimitar was very wrong and as future events would show, his mistake would have consequences for the Partisans.

The same day a group of fighters, under Risto Kordalov and Captain Katsonis's command, after finishing their duty on Mount Karakamen, returned to Voden and camped at Kusa and Dolga Livada.

The following day Risto Kordalov wrote a letter to Risto Bukovalov-Zhikov, asking him to take his troops to a pre-designated place. He arrived at base camp around midnight.

Earlier the same day the leaders of NOF, among them, Mirka Ginova, Giorgi Atanasov-Blazhe, Vangel Shamardanov-Ilindenski, Lazo Kamdzhev and others arrived.

The political leaders of CPG, Georgios Mustakides-Aleko who was responsible for the ELAS reservists in Voden during the German occupation; his wife Hrisula a member of the regional committee of CPG for Meglen region; another person named Tarzan from the village Orizartsi and the Nun-Nurse Irina from Voden, had also arrived.

The purpose of this gathering was to get the NOF leadership together with their Greek associates to discuss organizational issues as well as examine options for opening a Partisan hospital on Mount Kajmakdzhalan.

By now a whole week had passed since the initial discovery of the Partisan base camp by the Monarchists on June 28th. Unfortunately none of the fighters or the leadership of NOF or CPG was aware that they had been discovered.

On the morning of July 6th around 8:00 AM, courier Giorgi Mitrev-Gunush, from the village Pochev, arrived panting and soaked in sweat. With great difficulty he made it through an approaching group which he believed were enemy soldiers. They were coming from the village Dragomantsi and were advancing towards the Pochevska wooded area. At rough count he estimated there were about 600 of them and they were well armed.

The leaders of both organizations immediately reacted and began to analyze the situation. They should have taken defensive measures

sooner, however they had no confirmation that the approaching group was indeed the enemy. For example none of the villages, Vlkojanevo, Teovo, Lukovets, or Krontsevelo, in the immediate vicinity had reported enemy activity in the area. The conclusion was that the Group must have been local riflemen known to frequent the area. They did however take precautionary measures just in case.

The fighters decided to move out and retire at Staro Vlkojanevo. Defense of the headquarters was relegated to headquarters. Risto Kordalov and his group of fighters were made responsible for the defense of the NOF and CPG delegates.

Unfortunately before any of these plans could be put into action, the enemy arrived within firing range. The fighters immediately opened fire and proceeded with the evacuation.

Among the 60 or so armed Partisans there were another 30 political leaders, NOF administrators, Communists from the city Voden and some new recruits who had not yet been armed.

The battle was intense. After a three hour bloody firefight the enemy made headway and squeezed some of the Partisan fighters out. Due to the intense firefight, ten Partisans had to abandon their position and flee. The enemy took advantage of the situation and rushed the camp. During this critical time, while attempting to escape, a judgment error was made. Whoever was leading the NOF and CPG delegates to safety took a wrong turn and ended up face to face with the enemy.

When Captain Katsonis with his group met up with Risto Bukavalov and his group they realized that the camp was left unguarded and there was a high risk that the enemy would capture some of the delegates. They decided to return and set up position around the hills of Kusa and Dolga Livada in wait. Unfortunately the enemy did not return that way so they eventually left.

Before dawn Bukavalov and Katsonis sent Toli, one of their fighters, to the village Vlkojanevo to find out what the villagers knew. The moment he returned he gave them tragic news. Mirka Ginova, Tome Mihailov from the village Gugovo, regional activist

of NOF, Dimitar Limbov from the village Vladovo, activist of NOF, Giorgi Proiov from Voden, activist of NOF, Petre Popdimitrov-Direkot from Voden, activist of NOF, Risto Stojanov from the village Karasinantsi, Gumenchisko Region, activist in CPG in Voden Region, his wife Hrisula, member of the regional committee of CPG for Meglen Region and Irina, the Nun-nurse from Voden had all been captured.

As soon as it became dark, Bukavalov and Katsonis, along with about 20 fighters, left and traveled overnight to Kronchelsko. They spent the day hiding in Momin Grob and during the evening they left for Bunarot, the main NOF base in Rodivsko place. When they arrived they met Risto Kordalov, Vangel Shamardanov-Iindenski, Giorgi Atanasov-Blazhe, Lazo Kamchev and about 20 other fighters who had succeeded in penetrating the enemy ring and had escaped.

According to eyewitness accounts the group, consisting of NOF and CPG delegates, was led by Mirka Ginova and Georgios Mustakidis during the final moments before their capture. Before entering Kusa and Dolga Livada it seems that instead of taking the path towards the NOF detachment they took an entirely different path. Obviously whoever led them did not know the terrain well so instead of escaping the ambush they literally fell into enemy hands. Mirka was the only one in the group that was armed and only with a handgun. She held off the enemy as much as she could but when all her rounds were gone the enemy subdued them in hand to hand combat. Enemy soldiers immediately began to abuse and beat their captives, treating Mirka the worst.

A little later the prisoners were transferred to lockup in the Vlkojanevo Monastery just above the village Vlkojanevo. The moment they were locked-up the Monarchists began interrogations to uncover the captives' identities.

They suspected that one of the females they captured was the infamous Irini Gini (Mirka Ginova) but they needed verification. Since no one would confess, even after extreme torture, the Monarchists brought in some of Mirka's former co-workers to point her out. They did the same for the other captives.

After establishing their identities the prisoners were brutally tortured for days. They were beaten with rifle-butts, punched and had their hair pulled. The Greek Monarchists endeavored to break the prisoners' spirits and then paraded them through the streets of Voden. They wanted the people to see them for the wretches they were. The people however did not see them that way. Instead they saw the Monarchists for the monsters that they were and could hardly contain their hate for them.

The parades unfortunately were only the beginning of the indignities Mirka and the others would suffer before they were put to death.

Mirka was hated the most and as a result suffered the most. According to eyewitness accounts, Mirka was taken outside of Vodev several times and tortured. In Giavaliochitsa she was buried underground alive and shot several times in the forehead with blanks. For three days and nights a motorcycle was left idling under her window to mask her screams while they shoved needles under her fingernails, tightened a metal band around her head and placed boiling hot eggs under her armpits. But nothing could break Mirka and in the end she was as hard as granite.

A few days later, on July 23rd, 1946, the prisoners were transferred to Enidzhe Vardar, where they were tried by a military tribunal and sentenced to death in accordance with law 509. They were accused of being traitors, of having autonomist and separatist desires and of committing treasonous acts against the state. They particularly wanted to ruin Mirka Gineva's good name and reputation.

During the trial, which was held at the first elementary school in Enidzhe Vardar behind closed doors, the Monarchists made every effort to paint NOF and the Macedonian freedom movement in Aegean Macedonia as nothing more than an autonomous movement aspiring to partition Aegean Macedonia from Greece.

No one besides military types and gendarmes were allowed to enter the court during the trial but some accounts of the trial did manage to leak out. Mirka's trial was unforgettable. Friend and foe alike admired her. She was fearless and spoke the truth. In response to the trumped-up charges, in part she replied "I am a leader of NOF.

During the occupation (German, Bulgarian and Italian) I fought against the Germans and the henchmen Kalchev and Dimchev and hit them with the same fanaticism as I fought against the German occupier. NOF is not a military but a political democratic organization fighting for equal rights for the Macedonians within the confines of the Greek State. We fight for freedom and democracy...”

Mirka Ginova and associates Tome Mihailov, Dimitar Limbov, Giorgi Proioy, Petre Popdimitrov-Direkot, Risto Stojanov and Georgios Mustakidis-Aleko were found guilty of all charges and condemned to death by execution. Hrisula and Irina were sentenced to hard labour and life imprisonment.

Three days after the verdict Mirka and her associates were taken to the Enidzhe Vardar cemetery and placed in front of a firing squad and shot. Mirka met her death singing the international hymn. This heroic act was even recognized by the enemy.

A report to headquarters of the regular army, among other things said, “The seven executed were in good spirits and refused blindfolds. The greatest bravery among them was shown by the teacher Irini Gini (Mirka Ginova) who sang the international hymn and called out slogans of freedom.”

Mirka’s trial received a great deal of publicity both inside and outside of Greece and inspired many young people to join the Partisans.

Associated press, on the same day of the execution, wrote the following: “26 July Solun. Early this morning the execution of Irini Gini and her six associates was carried out. A military court in Andes Vardar found them guilty. Gini is the first woman in Greece to be executed for political reasons”.

The most glittering testimony of Mirka’s heroic death however, came from an anonymous letter sent to her father by a military reporter from a Greek newspaper.

The letter in part said, "At six o'clock this morning, sadly, Irini lost her life. My respects for your daughter who faced her end with a smile on her face singing courageously to the astonishment of everyone present. She was amazingly heroic and showed no fear in the face of death. It was the same for the other six but mostly for her. I am not writing you to compliment your daughter but to tell you the truth as I witnessed it..."

Mirka Ginova gave her life for the freedom of Macedonia and the Macedonian people. She suffered immensely but died a hero, that is why in the hearts and minds of all Macedonians she will forever be remembered as a fighter and a legend.

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Glavinov - Vasil Glavinov (1869-1929)

In 1893 Vasil Glavinov established the Macedonian Socialist Party amongst emigrants in Sofia. He had been influenced by Blagoev's "What is socialism and is there any basis for it in our country?" and was drawn into progressive circles at an early stage. His followers, including Nikola Karev, spread socialist literature throughout the Balkans, most notably in the form of newspapers such as *Political Freedom*, in 1898, and *Socialist Dawn* in 1903 to 1908.

Glavinov was active in workers' organizations within Macedonia, predominantly in the Veles Region, and maintained a close relationship with the leftward trends of the Organization (IMRO).

"It is clear that the revolution and the realization of the Balkan federation can only be accomplished by a proletariat that is conscious and powerful, and by a revolutionary social democratic party. That's why solving the task of the Balkan federation will only be possible when the proletariat of all the Balkan states organizes itself separately from the bourgeois and petit-bourgeois parties, into

an independent class organization, imbued with the teachings of its class, and with a socialist spirit.” Vasil Glavinov (1869-1929)

Reference: Page 271, Michael Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question.

Gligorov - Kiro Gligorov (1917-2012)

Kiro Gligorov was born on May 3, 1917, in Shtip, Kingdom of Serbia (then controlled by Kingdom of Bulgaria) and died on January 1, 2012 (aged 94) in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia. He was a Macedonian and belonged to the political party Socijal Demokratski Sojuz na Makedonija (SDSM). He was an Atheist.

Kiro Gligorov was the first President of the Republic of Macedonia, serving from 1991 to 1999. He held various high positions in the political establishment of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, including as Secretary of State for Finance in the Federal Executive Council, a member of the Yugoslav Presidency, as well as President of the Assembly of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from May 15, 1974 to May 15, 1978.

Gligorov graduated from the University of Belgrade's Law School and was a participant in the National Liberation War of the ethnic Macedonians from 1941 as a secretary of the Initiative committee for the organization of the Antifascist Assembly of the National Liberation of Macedonia (ASNOM) and a finance commissioner in the Presidium of ASNOM.

After achieving parliamentary democracy in the Republic of Macedonia in 1990, he became the first democratically elected president of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia on January 27, 1991. On April 16, 1991, the parliament adopted the constitutional amendment for removing the "Socialist" adjective from the official name of the country, and on June 7 the same year, the new name Republic of Macedonia was officially established, hence Gligorov continued his presidency as the President of the Republic of Macedonia.

He served for two terms, from January 27, 1991, to November 19, 1999. He was re-elected for his second term in office on November 19, 1994. He led his country to independence proclaimed after the referendum held on September 8, 1991, and tried to keep it out of the Yugoslav wars, a task made difficult by disputes with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Albania, Bulgaria and Greece who all faced separate issues with the Republic of Macedonia.

On October 3, 1995, Gligorov became a target of a car bomb assassination attempt in Skopje. While en route from his residence to his office, the vehicle carrying Gligorov was blown up by an explosion from a parked vehicle, killing his driver and injuring several passers-by. Gligorov was seriously injured above his right eye and was immediately conveyed to the hospital.

Since the incident there have been no suspects brought to book and no progress has been made in the investigation of the case. However, there have been short-lived speculations as to who could be the culprits. Shortly after bombing, the Minister of Internal Affairs Ljubomir Frchkovski publicly claimed that “a powerful multinational company from a neighbouring country” was behind the assassination attempt, with the Macedonian media pointing at the Bulgarian Multigroup and the Yugoslav KOS as possible suspects. During a meeting between Multigroup head Iliya Pavlov and Gligorov in Ohrid, Pavlov assured Gligorov that his organization was not involved. All investigations were futile.

Gligorov was incapacitated until November 17, 1995. He was permanently blind in one eye as a result. Stojan Andov was acting president during Gligorov's recuperation.

Gligorov died in the early hours of January 1, 2012, in his sleep. It is known that his request was that the funeral be private with only his closest family in attendance. He was buried in Butel Municipality, Skopje.

Kiro was the father of Vladimir Gligorov, a re-founder of the Serbian Democratic Party.

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Gruev - Damian Gruev (1871-1906)

Damian (Dame) Gruev was born on January 19th, 1871 in the village Smilevo, Bitola Region. He was educated in Bitola, Solun, Belgrade and Sofia.

Gruev came into prominence in 1888 during the student revolt in Solun. He was one of the main organizers of the student protests against the use of the Bulgarian language in Macedonian schools. He voiced his discontent for the assimilatory tactics, deception and propaganda the Bulgarian State was using in Macedonia. He demanded that Bulgarian be replaced by the Macedonian language in Macedonian schools.

For taking part in the protests, many students, including Gruev, were expelled from the Solun Gymnasium. After the expulsion Gruev and his associates and close friends left Solun for Belgrade to continue their education. Unfortunately, there too they found themselves surrounded by anti-Macedonian Serbian propaganda and a Serbian

desire for a “Greater Serbia” to include Macedonia. Within a year and a few months, they left Belgrade and went to Sofia to continue their education. There too they were greeted with new disappointments and persecutions.

In 1889 Gruev enrolled in the Faculty of Philosophy in Sofia and took a course in history. At the same time he was clandestinely working for the Macedonian cause.

Gruev left Bulgaria in 1891 and returned to Bitola where he and his like minded associates began to lay the foundation of an organization of “pure revolutionary character”.

Gruev, along with some of his closest associates like Peter Pop Arsov and others, was one of the key initiators of the “Association” which in time became the “Young Macedonian Academic Association” which in January 1892 began to print the famous revolutionary publication “Loza” (Vine).

Using Loza, written in the Macedonian language, the “association” aspired to create a single Revolutionary Organization intended to eventually liberate Macedonia and the Macedonian people, not just from the Turks but also from foreign intervention.

In mid 1892 Gruev went to Solun to take a job as proofreader in Kone Samardziev’s printing house. There he met up with his old school chums and associates; Petar Pop Arsov, A. Dimitrov, Dr. Hr. Tatarchev, Iv. Hdzhi Nikolov, Hr. Batendzhiev and others. Together they began drafting the makings of a constitution for the new organization.

The new organization became a reality on October 23rd, 1893 and came to be known as the “Tajna Makedonska Revolutsionerna Organizatsia” (TMRO) (Secret Macedonian Revolutionary Organization) (later named IMRO) and the members that formed it became its “Central Committee”. Gruev was elected secretary of the central committee.

In the summer of 1894 Gruev organized the first local revolutionary organization in the town of Negotino. Soon after, with Pere

Toshev's assistance, he organized the first district committee in the city of Shtip. Gruev also visited the cities Resen, Ohrid and Struga and found the environment quite amicable to his revolutionary ideas. In Shtip the conditions were even more to his liking so he decided to remain and teach there during the 1894-1895 academic year.

In the fall of the same year Gruev met Gotse Delchev for the first time. Delchev independently shared Gruev's idea of creating a Macedonian secret revolutionary organization.

Soon after their initial acquaintance the two men found they had a lot in common and became intimate friends. Delchev, with his gentle character, sincerity and honesty, made an excellent impression on Gruev who wasted no time into recruiting him into IMRO. Since then the two men worked very closely, widening the revolutionary circle around Shtip.

With time IMRO grew in strength, especially after the years 1895 to 1897 when Gruev went back to Solun to work as a school inspector. With his uninhibited ability to travel, Gruev became the body and soul of the Central revolutionary committee.

Under his direction the organization began to issue a secret revolutionary paper, introduced ciphers, issued pseudonyms for its cooperatives and established secret channels of communication between the various local and regional committees. He also appointed representatives to purchase arms and provisions for IMRO.

Gruev's ability to travel uninhibited in Macedonia was a key factor in spreading cells of the organization, not only throughout Macedonia but also in Endrene (Dardanelles).

With time Gruev's achievements were becoming a threat to Bulgaria's aspirations for Macedonia. To curb IMRO's success, the Vrhovists created the "Revolutionary Brotherhood" in Solun which, while pretending to be part of IMRO, was carrying out terrorist activities and blaming them on the real IMRO. Under the leadership of the Vrhovist Garvanov, the "brotherhood" ordered the execution

of Delchev, Gruev and a number of other Macedonian revolutionaries.

Soon after discovering he was a wanted man, Gruev moved to Bitola and continued his revolutionary work there. He began to issue another paper, opened Sunday schools and raised money through a special "revolutionary tax" to purchase weapons and supplies.

While in Bitola, Gruev resumed his job on the teaching staff and assumed leadership of the Bitola District revolutionary movement.

Gruev's activities in Bitola District did not go unnoticed by the Turkish authorities. Due to their number and intensity, after his arrival, led the Turks into believing that he may be responsible for them. He was arrested on August 6, 1900 and held in the Bitola jail until May 1902. Fortunately his confinement was not an obstacle to his revolutionary work. By means of secret writings, ciphers, etc., he was able to stay in constant contact with the various local revolutionary committees and he was able to direct the affairs of the Bitola revolutionary district from prison. Even Delchev was able to visit him twice, unsuspected.

From May 1902 until March 1903, Gruev was imprisoned in the Podrum Kale prison in Asia Minor from which he continued to lead the Bitola District.

After his release, as a result of the general amnesty, Gruev went to Solun for a meeting with Delchev where, among other things, they discussed the illegally proposed May 1903 general uprising. Delchev reiterated that this was an illegal decision, declaring that an early uprising would be suicidal and urged Gruev to convince the leadership to delay it. He also recommended that the uprising take place only in regions like Bitola which were prepared for combat.

The decision to start the uprising early was instigated by the pro-Bulgarian Vrhovists. The Vrhovists did not want the Macedonians to succeed. In their estimation an early uprising would not only extinguish all Macedonian hopes of liberation but at the same time would weaken Turkey enough to ensure Bulgaria an easy victory.

Gruev took Delchev's advice and delayed the general uprising for several months. He also decided to only involve western Macedonia and only those regions which were ready for combat.

Unfortunately, not all of the leadership agreed with Gruev's assessment. Many believed the Vrhovist propaganda which was promising Bulgarian military aid and which would be delivered the moment the uprising began.

To put the matter to rest, the leadership decided to hold another congress, this time in Smilevo, Gruev's hometown. The congress was scheduled to start on May 3rd, 1903 but unfortunately it was without Delchev. Delchev was killed by the Turks on May 4th and could not add his voice of reason to the debate. Without Delchev the Vrhovists continued to make empty promises and persuaded the leadership to support an early uprising which was scheduled for Ilinden, August 2nd, 1903. Having no other choice Gruev threw his own support with the majority and decided to go ahead and risk it all on an early uprising.

Gruev himself actively took part in the insurrection and fought numerous battles against the Turkish army, gallantly defending his temporarily freed hometown, Smilevo. Unfortunately with the arrival of a large Turkish army in Macedonia, numbering over 300,000 troops, his chances of a successful general insurrection were completely diminished. The promised help from Bulgaria never materialized.

When the uprising was over Gruev stayed in Macedonia and once again began to tour the various revolutionary districts, disarmed the insurgents and stored weapons and materials for the future. Even though he lost the fight, Gruev never lost hope. He believed there would be a better day and another fight.

The years 1903 and 1904 were disastrous for the Macedonian people but Gruev and his remaining revolutionaries kept up the peoples' spirits and continued to fight against foreign propaganda, organizing and preparing for another opportunity to strike his enemies again.

In May 1904, under Gruev's presidency, the Prilep Congress was held and the decision was made to decentralize the organization's power and give the districts more authority. A little later he took leadership of the Skopje District.

During the summer of 1905, under Gruev's presidency, the very important Seres Congress was held. In October 1905 Gruev played an important role in the Rila Congress by maintaining a strong unity and faith in the organization.

After the Rila Congress the right wing factions within the organization began to cooperate more closely with the Vrhovists and declared war on IMRO.

Gruev was disappointed and disillusioned by the turn of events but continued to do his work. He went to Solun to finish some business and, on his way back while going through the village Rusinovo in Berovo District, he and his Cheta were betrayed to the Turks.

On December 23rd, 1906 a numerically superior Turkish force surrounded Gruev and his Cheta. The Macedonians fought heroically in this uneven struggle down to the last man.

When the Turkish Central authorities found out that Gruev was among those killed, they immediately telegraphed the local governor to uncover the buried bodies and take a photograph of Gruev. The autocratic bureaucracy of Tsari Grad was not convinced that Gruev was actually dead and wanted to see for themselves that this great disturber of the empire, Gruev, was really dead.

Reference: Pages 128-130, Macedonian Almanac, 1976.

Gruevski - Nikola Gruevski (1970-

Nikola Gruevski was born in August 21, 1970 in Skopje, Macedonia. He is a Macedonian, belongs to the Political party VMRO-DPMNE, is married to Borkitsa Gruevska, is an economist by profession and Orthodox by religion.

Nikola Gruevski, M.Sc. is a Macedonian politician who has been Prime Minister in the Republic of Macedonia since August 27,

2006. He has led the ruling VMRO-DPMNE party since May 2003. He was Minister of Finance in the VMRO-DPMNE government led by Ljubcho Georgievski until September 2002.

Born at Skopje in 1970, Gruevski was brought up in a family that was neither privileged nor poor. His father worked in furniture and design and his mother was a nurse. After his parents' divorce, his mother brought him up. When he was four, she went to work in Libya, like thousands of other Yugoslav citizens, and took him with her. After their return Nikola completed his primary and secondary education in Skopje. After having graduated from the Faculty of Economics at St. Clement of Ohrid University of Bitola in 1994 (where he dabbled in amateur dramatics and boxing) he entered the nascent finance sector, and was the first person to trade on Skopje's stock exchange.

In 1996 he acquired qualifications for the international capital market from a London Securities Institute. On December 12, 2006, he obtained a Master's degree from the Faculty of Economics at Ss. Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje. Gruevski founded the Brokerage Association of the Republic of Macedonia in 1998 as its president and made the first transaction at the Macedonian Stock Exchange.

Gruevski divorced his first wife and married again in May 2007 to Borkitsa Gruevska with whom he has two daughters: Anastasija and Sofija.

Gruevski paternal grandparents stem from Krushoradi, a village located in Greek occupied Macedonia, where his grandfather Nikolaos Grouios/Nikola Gruev (1911-1940) was born.

Up until its official Greek annexation after the Second Balkan War in 1913, the village was called Krushoradi, afterwards, in 1926, the Greek administration changed the name to Achlada. Nikola's father fought in the Greco-Italian War, where he lost his life. His name is mentioned on the war memorial in Achlada among the names of the locals who were killed during World War II. Some years later, during the Greek Civil War, Gruevski's grandmother and father, like thousands of other Macedonians in Greek occupied Macedonia, fled

north to what was then Yugoslav Macedonia, where they restored their original Macedonian names.

Ljubcho Georgievski's government sold the Macedonian Telecom to Hungarian Matáv and the OKTA oil refinery to Hellenic Petroleum. Gruevski also implemented financial reforms, including the value added tax of 18%, requiring fiscal receipts for all Macedonian businesses, which was a program designed to fight tax evasion.

Gruevski is the leader of the ruling party VMRO-DPMNE. After VMRO-DPMNE was defeated in the Macedonian parliamentary election, 2002, there was a period of infighting within the party. Gruevski emerged as the pro-EU leader, and was elected as a leader of the party, after Ljubcho Georgievski left his position. Georgievski set up his own party (VMRO-People's Party), but VMRO-DPMNE retained most of the party's supporters.

The VMRO-DPMNE won the Macedonian parliamentary election, 2006. On August 25 Gruevski constituted a new government. His government has many new faces, mostly in their 30s in key ministries and other positions. During the election Gruevski earned the distinction of becoming the first elected European head of government born in the 1970s. He remains the second youngest head of government in Europe, surpassed only by Montenegrin prime minister Igor Lukšić.

In June 2007 Gruevski attended a meeting in Tirana, Albania, along with U.S President George W. Bush, President of the United States, Sali Berisha, Prime Minister of Albania and Ivo Sanader, Prime Minister of Croatia.

On June 1, 2008, the coalition led by Gruevski's party VMRO-DPMNE won the Macedonian parliamentary elections. This was his second electoral victory in a row, winning more than half of the seats in the parliament. Some polling stations, unfortunately, were marred by a number of violent incidents and allegations of fraud in some ethnic Albanian dominated municipalities. He created a coalition government with the Democratic Union for Integration.

On June 5, 2011, the coalition led by Gruevski's VMRO-DPMNE party won the Macedonian parliamentary election. This was his third electoral victory in a row, winning 56 out of the 123 seats in the parliament. Gruevski formed the new government, again in coalition with the Democratic Union for Integration.

On January 6, 2012, Gruevski opened the triumphal arch "Porta Macedonia" in Skopje as a monument to 20th anniversary of Macedonian independence, and admitted that he personally has been a supporter of the Skopje 2014 project.

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Guli - Pitu Guli (1865-1903)

Pitu Guli was born in 1865 in the town Krushevo. It is unknown how much education he received but as a youngster he was clever and demonstrated an independent and rebellious nature. Guli's family was very poor so he had to start work at an early age. When he was seventeen he left for Sofia, Bulgaria on pechalba (migrant work).

Well aware of the socio-economic and political situation, three years later Guli returned to Macedonia and started his own band of outlaws, rebels and freedom fighters and joined the revolutionary movement.

In 1886, a year after his return from Bulgaria, Pitu was tried in Solun (charges unknown) and sentenced to eight years imprisonment, seven of which he spent in the prison Trapezund in Asia Minor.

In 1894 he again returned to Krushevo, married and joined the Secret Macedonian Ordin Revolutionary Organization (TMORO).

In 1902 Guli went to Bulgaria and a little later, while returning home, he ran into Toma Davidov's band, which at the time was crossing over into Macedonia. Unfortunately at the border he was wounded and had to return to Bulgaria for medical treatment.

As a Cheta Chief, Guli was fully committed to the Macedonian revolutionary cause and on March 1903 he again crossed the Bulgarian-Macedonian border and headed for Krushevo.

From April to August 1903 he diligently trained and prepared his troops for the August 2nd Ilinden Uprising.

Being a Vlah himself, Guli was a contributing factor in gaining the support of the Vlah population in the Krushevo district.

During the uprising Guli commanded a large and respectable rebel force that fought heroically and held its ground at Mechkin Kamen, near Krushevo, until it was annihilated by a much larger Turkish force.

It was not long after the rebellion started that a newly mobilized Turkish force arrived in Macedonia. At that time the IMRO General Staff urged the rebels to retreat, mostly to avoid endangering the civilian population.

By mid-August Krushevo was surrounded by a large Turkish force but Guli refused to abandon his position and decided to make a last stand at Mechkin Kamen. The battle lasted about a day and Krushevo fell to enemy hands.

Guli and his men gave their lives for Macedonia. Their heroism has been enshrined in Macedonian poetry and songs.

References: Pages 22-23, Macedonian Magazine, # 272, December 1975.

Pages 20-21, Macedonian Magazine, # 505, May 1995.

Hadzhi-Dimov - Dimo Hadzhi-Dimov (1875-1924)

Dimo Ivanchev Hadzhi-Dimov was born on October 2nd, 1875 in the village Gorno Brodi, in Seres Region. Dimo's father, Hadzhi-Dimko, was a well-known national revivalist who was jailed many times, by the Turkish authorities, for his activities. To continue his activities and avoid going to jail he left Macedonia and took his family to the city Dupnitsa (Stanke Dimitrov) in Bulgaria.

In 1894 Dimo successfully completed his education and graduated, with honours, from the Pedagogical School in Kiustendil. After that he studied for another two years at the University of Sofia. He spent the next ten years as an associate lecturer of the University of Sofia and worked in various institutions including Dupnitsa. He was part of the lecturers association and actively participated in the progressive teachers' movement.

Dimo was an active and distinguished member of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) (United). He was instrumental in developing the organization's charter and directives.

During the Rila congress, in October 1905, he was appointed editor in charge of the organization's journal "Revolutioneren List" (The Revolutionary Page). He was also chosen as the best theoretician of IMRO (United).

After the 1908 Young Turk Uprising, Dimo joined Sandanski in Solun. He emerged as one of Sandanski's strongest and most influential supporters. Dimo was in Solun when the city fell into Greek hands.

After the Balkan Wars he left for Bulgaria and became leader of the Macedonian Progressive Immigrant Movement in Bulgaria.

Dimo was instrumental in organizing a group of Macedonian revolutionaries who intervened on behalf of the Macedonian people at the 1919 Treaty of Versailles Peace Conference and proposed the formation of a free and independent Macedonia within a Balkan Federation.

Dimo Hadzhi-Dimov was murdered in Sofia by the Vrhovists-Mihailovists on September 13th, 1924.

Reference: Pages 22-23, Macedonian Magazine, #439, November 1989.

Jusifovski - Kuzman Jusifovski (Pitu) (1915-1944)

Kuzman Jusifovski was born in Prilep on June 23rd, 1915. He became a member of the Yugoslav Communist Party in 1938 and joined the Peoples' Revolutionary Struggle in 1941.

After finishing his schooling in the Bitola Gymnasium in 1935 he went to Belgrade to study law. In Belgrade he became a student leader and a founder of the organization "Vardar". In 1939 Kuzman left for his hometown Prilep to do some work for the party and a little later he participated in the provincial conference of the

Communist Party of Yugoslavia for Macedonia. Two years later he became a member of the regional committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia for Macedonia.

Immediately after the WW II occupation, Kuzman, as a member of the party leadership in Macedonia, worked in southern Prilep in the Italian occupied zone and established the Party's regional committee for that region. In May 1943, as member of the Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia for Macedonia, he also led the regional committee of Tetovo.

In early 1943 Kuzman became a member of the general headquarters of the Peoples' Liberation Army and of the Partisan movement in Macedonia. During the same year he took part in organizing a meeting between the Macedonian political and military leadership and representatives of Albania, for the purpose of initiating the liberation struggle in Albania. He did the same in Greece with the Greek Partisans.

On February 25th, 1944, after leaving a meeting which he attended with representatives from the central committee of Bulgarian workers party, he was followed by the police and was killed at the railway tracks in Kozle, Skopje.

Reference: Page 13, Macedonian Almanac, 1984.

Karev - Nikola Karev (1877-1905)

Nikola Janakiev Karev was born in Krushevo in 1877. Karev completed his elementary education in his hometown but his family was very poor and could not afford to send him for higher education. Karev had to take a job at a very young age to support his impoverished family.

After completing elementary school, Karev went to work as a carpenter's apprentice. Then at age sixteen he left home and went to Bulgaria on pechalba (migrant work). It did not take him too long to realize that Turkish taxation was not the only exploitation and injustice perpetrated against the Macedonian people. The Bulgarian bourgeoisie was taking advantage of them as well. The Bulgarian

economy was fueled by cheap Macedonian labourers who not only worked for practically nothing, but who were also willing to do the most labour intensive and dangerous jobs.

Karev's first job in Bulgaria was as a bricklayer's assistant. Afterwards he worked as a carpenter in Vasil Glavinov's carpentry shop in Sofia. Vasil Glavinov was the founder of the Macedonian Socialist Group in Sofia, which Karev joined.

In his spare time, besides reading socialist literature, Karev attended evening lectures at the workers' university and promoted socialist ideals to the Macedonian immigrants.

While working in Bulgaria, Karev became partially paralyzed and had to return to Krushevo, to a better climate for treatment. During his therapy Karev could not do any physical labour so he went to Bitola and completed a four-year gymnasium course. He then returned to Krushevo and, together with his close associate Vele Markov, formed a socialist group through which he promoted socialist ideals and propaganda.

Karev's high visibility brought him closer to IMRO and, after joining, he became a member of the Bitola Revolutionary District. After that he was sent to teach in the village Gorno Divjatsi in Krushevo Region for the 1901/1902 school year.

Besides teaching and spreading socialist propaganda among the peasants, Karev also began to promote ideas about liberating Macedonia.

Karev was good at what he did and his leadership, socialist ideals and sympathetic voice for the common man made him very popular among the people in Krushevo Region.

In time Karev, together with his associate Vele Markov, formed the Krushevo District Revolutionary Organization. Karev was appointed a member of its leadership committee and was given a job in Krushevo.

Like Delchev, Karev believed Macedonia could not count on foreign assistance without severe consequences and was always leery and skeptical when free assistance was offered. He adamantly opposed foreign interference and believed in the idea of self liberation by revolutionary means. Even though he did not agree with the outcome, at the Smilevo Congress, to start an early uprising, he did abide with the majority decision and immediately began preparations.

On August 2nd, 1903 Karev and his rebels attacked and took the town of Krushevo. The next day they proclaimed it the “Krushevo Republic”, the first republic ever in the Balkans, and established a revolutionary government. Karev was elected President. The Republic lasted ten days, from August 3rd to 13th, before it was overrun and destroyed by the Turkish army.

While the Krushevo Republic lasted, a sixty member (twenty from each nationality) Republican Council was elected from the three nationalities that lived there. The Council then appointed an executive body called the Provisional Government, with six members (two from each nationality) whose duty it was to enforce law and order and to manage proper delivery of supplies, finances and medical care.

Karev drafted the famous "Krushevo Manifesto" which, among other things, outlined the aims of the Uprising and called on the people to join forces with the provisional government in the struggle against tyranny and enslavement to attain freedom and independence.

Turkish authorities, surprised by the uprising, took extraordinary military measures to quash the newly formed Republic. They dispatched 176,000 soldiers, 3,700 mounted troops and 444 cannons to Macedonia. The entire Krushevo region was surrounded and fierce battles broke out near Sliva and Mechkin Kamen. After a heroic stand, the numerically superior Turkish force broke through the Macedonian defenses, destroyed the Krusevo Republic and cruelly dealt with the rebels and civilian population.

It was estimated that over 200 communities were exterminated, more than 12,000 houses were burned to the ground, more than 70,000 people were left homeless, 8,816 people were killed and about 30,000 people fled their homes to avoid Turkish reprisals. After the failed Ilinden Uprising Karev left for Serbia and spent a couple months in Belgrade. In November 1903 he went back to Sofia and again joined forces with Glevinov and other Macedonian socialists.

In 1905 Karev became a member of the Macedonia-Odrin socialist group and in April of the same year, together with his associate Petar Atsev and his Cheta of twenty-five, returned to Macedonia. Unfortunately on his way through the village Rajchani, Kozheni Region, on April 27th, 1905 he was discovered by Turkish sentries and surrounded by a large Turkish force. Eighteen rebels died that day, including Karev.

When battle broke out Karev's forces took cover. Karev himself and seven of his fighters took refuge in a bunker. They fought until all their ammunition was used up, except for one bomb, which they used on themselves to avoid capture. Surrender was not an option.

References: Pages 104-106, Macedonian Almanac, 1976.

Pages 126-128, Macedonian Almanac, 1984.

Pages 24-25, Macedonian Magazine, # 436, August 1989.

Karposh - Arambasha Karposh

The Karposh uprising was sparked as a consequence of the worsening economic, social and political situation in Macedonia. The Macedonian people, encouraged by the Austro-Turkish War and led by the legendary outlaw Arambasha Karposh, revolted in the middle of October 1689 in northeastern Macedonia, between Kustendil and Skopje. The uprising quickly spread to Kratovo, Kriva Palanka, Kumanovo, Kachanik and other towns. Later, together with the Austrian army, the rebels fought and liberated Skopje and Shtip.

A change in the military and political situation in the Balkans had a crucial effect on the rebellion as the Austrian army was forced to

withdraw. Powerful Turkish forces, reinforced by Tartar detachments from the Crimea, attacked the rebels. After fierce battles the Turks took Kriva Palanka, the rebel stronghold, and then attacked Kumanovo and its newly-constructed fortress. Karposh was captured, taken to Skopje and cruelly put to death on the Stone Bridge across the Vardar.

There are two versions of how Karposh died. One says he was impaled by Tartar lances. Karposh was brought before Selim Giray, the Tartar commanding officer, who at the time was standing on the Stone Bridge over the Vardar River. Selim used him for target practice and impaled him with his lances. He then had his body hurled into the Vardar River.

The second version says Karposh was crucified on a cross. Karposh died early in December of 1689 and with him died the Karposh uprising.

Kazandzhiev - Nikola Kazandzhiev (1880-?)

Nikola Georgiev Kazandzhiev was born in 1880 in the town Radovich, in Radovich Region. He completed elementary school in his native Radovich and then studied for three more years in Skopje. After finishing teacher's school in 1898, he was sent to teach at the village Dabile in Struma Region, where he met Stojan Georgiev, a well known Macedonian Revolutionary and teacher. Through Georgiev, Kazandzhiev became familiar with IMRO and became a loyal and trusted member.

Together with Georgiev, Kazandzhiev began to work widening the revolutionary net over the Radovich and Strumitsa Regions. In 1899, in Dabile, he met Gotse Delchev and became good friends. From 1900 to 1902 Kazandzhiev became a member and leader of the Radovich revolutionary district.

During the 1902 affair when the majority of the IMRO revolutionary leadership was imprisoned, Kazandzhiev, together with Delchev, took on the extra burden of defending Macedonia against Yankov and his Vrhovist Bulgaphils. In spite of warnings not to enter Macedonia, Yankov did, thus provoking an attack from

Kazandzhiev and Mazneikov who drove him right back into Bulgaria. Smarting from his defeat, Yankov hired Spiro Shafkulov from Prilep to assassinate Kazandzhiev, but he was unsuccessful. Yankov then hired a more reliable assassin, the well-known Vrhovist Dimitar Arnaudov from Dojran, but he too failed. Yankov then changed his tactics and betrayed Kazandzhiev to the Turks. As a result Kazandzhiev was sentenced to 101 years in prison but he escaped in good time to join Kosta Mazneikov and Hristo Chernopeev for the 1903, Ilinden Uprising.

After the uprising, Kazandzhiev remained in Macedonia and joined the food drives to feed homeless refugees. He also helped Macedonian immigrants settle in Bulgaria.

In 1905, financially broke, Kazandzhiev wanted to return to teaching but the Vrhovist Bishop Gerasim would not approve his request. Even though the Sultan himself, in 1904, had amnestied all the Ilinden revolutionaries who were teachers, Gerasim would not allow Kazandzhiev to become a teacher again.

Wanted by the police, Kazandzhiev could not return to his hometown Radovish so he left for America.

After a month's travel he landed in Buenos-Aries, Argentina on February 6th, 1906.

Unfortunately, even in Argentina Kazandzhiev could not find happiness and joined the local revolutionary movement. He remained with the Argentine Revolutionary Movement from 1906 to 1948 as a member of the metal workers' syndicate. He was also a member of the Socialist Party of Argentina and organizer of the Macedonian immigrants. For his activities, the Argentine Government imprisoned him from 1943 to 1945 in the Neukien prison camp.

In 1948, together with forty of his associates, Kazandzhiev returned to Macedonia where he was received as a hero with a hero's welcome.

After forty-two years of living abroad, Kazandzhiev finally settled in Skopje.

Reference: Pages 44-45, Macedonian Magazine, # 519, July 1996.

Kiril (-869) and Metodi (-885)

It was during the reign of the Pravoslav emperor Michael III (842-867) that Solun had definitely established itself as the religious and philosophical center of the empire. This was the time when Kiril (Cyril) and Metodi (Methodius) set off on a series of missions to spread the doctrines of Christianity to various places in eastern Europe and Asia. (Solun up to this point had not been invaded by the Slavs, but the Solunians spoke Slavic).

I just want to mention here that, by the eighth century AD, the Macedonian eparchy was controlled by a Macedonian Archbishopric with its center located in Solun and bishoprics existed in eighteen towns including Lerin, Kostur, Voden and Serres.

The brothers Kiril and Metodi were Macedonians, natives of Solun, who were acclaimed as the apostles of the southern Slavs and the fathers of Slav literary culture. Kiril, the younger of the two, was given the name Constantine when he was baptized. It was much later that he received the name Kiril.

Kiril was very fortunate to have studied in Tsari Grad at a young age and received his education from Leo the Grammarian and Photius, a prominent educator at the imperial university. Kiril was an extraordinary student and earned himself the nickname "the Philosopher". After he finished his education he was ordained deacon and later became professor of philosophy at the imperial school in Tsari Grad, where he took over the chair from Photius. Soon afterwards, he retired to the quiet solitude of a monastery. From there, in 861 AD, he was summoned by the emperor, Michael III, and sent on a mission to Christianize the Khazars of southern Russia who lived between the Dnieper and Volga Rivers.

The older brother Metodi was a well-liked, intelligent man who started his career in his father's footsteps. At first he served in the

military in Solun. Later, at age twenty, he became governor of one of the Slav colonies in the Opsikion province in Asia. Then he became a monk and, like his brother, took part in a mission to Christianize the Khazars.

Kiril and Metodi were two of seven siblings. Their father Lev was a prominent Macedonian who served as assistant to the Solun military commander of the Pravoslav army.

The careers of the Solun brothers took a turn for the better in 862 AD when, Rostislav, the prince of Moravia sent his ambassador to Tsari Grad seeking missionaries capable of teaching his people to read and write in their own language. Rostislav, fearful of his powerful German neighbours, sought the opportunity to strengthen his alliance with the Pravoslavs to counter-balance the German missionary influence in his kingdom. Rostislav preferred the ecclesiastical politics of Photius, now patriarch of Tsari Grad, over those of his western counterpart.

When word came that Emperor Michael was looking for capable missionaries, Photius decided that Kiril and Metodi were the most suitable candidates for the job. The Solun brothers, being Slav speakers themselves, knew the Solunian dialect of the Slav language well and accepted the task.

The old-Macedonian dialect was quite well understood by all the Slav tribes. Unfortunately, teaching the illiterate to read and write was easier said than done. Even though the Slavs had a written form of language described as “lines and incisions”, it was not an easy language to learn.

Kiril was familiar with the Glagolic script but that was also too complex a language for illiterate people to grasp quickly. According to Tsarnorizets Hrabar, an advocate of Macedonian literacy, Kiril and Metodi first tried to use the Koine and then Latin alphabets, but proper pronunciation could not be achieved. Slav speech was far too complex to record with just Koine or Latin letters. Kiril was an intelligent man and solved the problem by constructing a new alphabet based on old Macedonian traditions. The pattern and some letters he based on the Koine alphabet but he enriched it by adding

new letters. He borrowed some from the Glagolic script and some he fashioned from ancient Macedonian symbols that had traditional Macedonian meaning. “Peter Hill argues that Old Church Slavonic was more than merely a written dialect. It is naïve, he says, to imagine that this construction of a written language was possible without established tradition. Therefore it can safely be assumed that there was at least some tradition on which Cyril and Methodius could build. Presumably their familiarity with this tradition derived from the fact that they were Slavic themselves.” (Page 198, John Shea, *Macedonia and Greece The Struggle to Define a New Balkan Nation*, Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Co., 1997)

When it was completed Kiril’s alphabet consisted of 38 letters, each accurately and exactly representing a unique sound in Slav speech. The phonetic nature of Kiril’s language made spelling words very simple. One only needed to learn the alphabet to have the ability to read and write. The same is true to this day.

I just want to mention that there are some references claiming that Kiril was the inventor of the Glagolic script, but they are incorrect. Kiril was familiar with the Glagolic script and had composed Glagolic texts but we now know from recent discoveries of ancient inscriptions that the Glagolic alphabet existed before Kiril’s time.

In 862 AD Kiril and Metodi, along with a number of followers, arrived in Moravia in Rostislav’s court. They immediately set out to work and to their surprise Kiril’s vernacular was not only well understood but also became popular with the Moravians. The Pravoslav missionaries continued their work for a while, with much success, but were soon handicapped by the lack of Pravoslav bishops to ordain their priests. Also, their popularity with the Moravians displeased the German missionaries who saw them as competition and harshly objected to their presence.

German hostilities reached their peak when the German Emperor Louis forced Rostislav to take an oath of loyalty to him. The German prelate, the bishop of Passau, who had the power to ordain Pravoslav priests refused to do so out of contempt. Unable to continue their work the missionaries were forced to return to Tsari Grad. On their way back the Macedonian brothers took a detour

through Venice where they learned that the Pope had excommunicated Photius, the Pravoslav Patriarch in Tsari Grad. Pravoslav missionaries and their liturgical use of the Macedonian language were vehemently criticized.

In 858 AD Emperor Michael III, on his own authority, deposed Patriarch Ignatius and replaced him with the more progressive Photius. The Pope, however, did not agree with Michael's decision and proclaimed his deeds invalid. At the same time the Pope denounced both Photius and the emperor.

When Pope Nicholas I found out that the Pravoslav missionaries were in Venice he summoned them to Rome. By the time they arrived, however, Nicholas had died and the political situation had changed for the better. In a turn of events Nicholas's successor, Adrian II, warmly welcomed the strangers, especially when he found out that they were bringing him an important gift. Kiril it seems had recovered some relics of Pope St. Clement when he was in the Crimea visiting the Khazars and offered them to Adrian as gifts.

When they arrived, Adrian conducted an investigation and found no misconduct on the part of the Pravoslavs. In his judgment he permitted Kiril and Metodi to receive Episcopal consecration and allowed their newly converted priests to be ordained. He also approved Slavonic to be used in liturgy.

Sadly, Kiril died on February 14, 869 AD in Rome and never made it back home. After Kiril's death Metodi pleaded with Pope Adrian to allow him to take his brother's body to Solun for burial but Adrian would not permit it. It was the wish of Kiril and Metodi's mother that if either son should die, the other would bring the body back for a decent burial in the family monastery. Unfortunately Adrian would not allow it claiming that it would not be fitting for the Pope to permit the body of so distinguished a Christian to be taken away. He declared that a man so famous should be buried in a famous place. Kiril was buried with great pomp in the church of San Clemente on the Coelian, where the relics of St. Clement had been enshrined.

After Kiril died Metodi took over the cause and leadership of the mission from his brother. Having been consecrated, he obtained a letter of recommendation from the Pope and the Holy See and quickly returned to his duties. At the request of Kozzel, prince of Pannonia, who at the time wanted to revive the ancient archdiocese of Sirmium (now Mitrovitsa), Metodi was made metropolitan (Archbishop). He was given a large area of responsibility with boundaries that extended to the borders of Bulgaria. Unfortunately as the political situation in Moravia was shifting Metodi's title and his papal approval did not mean much to the western missionaries, especially the Germans who began a smear campaign against him. To make matters worse Rostislav's nephew, Svatopluk, allied himself with Carloman of Bavaria and had his uncle driven out. After that it did not take long before Metodi was in trouble again.

In 870 AD Metodi was summoned before a synod of German bishops. They found him guilty of misconduct, no doubt on trumped-up charges, and locked him up in a leaking jail cell. It took two years of pleading before Pope John VIII could get him out. Unfortunately, to avoid further controversies Pope John withdrew his permission to use Slavonic, a barbarous language as he called it, for any purpose other than preaching. At the same time he reminded the Germans that Pannonia was never German and since age immemorial it belonged to the Holy See.

After his release, Metodi continued his work in Moravia but there too he got into trouble. Metodi did not approve of Svatopluk's wicked lifestyle and made his displeasure public. In retaliation, Svatopluk reported Metodi to the Holy See. He accused him of conducting divine worship in Slavonic and of heresy, charging that he omitted the words "and the Son" from the creed. At that time these words were not yet introduced everywhere in the west.

In 878 AD, as a result of Svatopluk's accusations, Pope John VIII summoned Metodi to Rome and conducted an inquiry. Metodi, a serious man and a dedicated Christian, was able to convince the Pope both of his devotion to his religion and of the necessity to use Slavonic liturgy. Even though Pope John was in agreement with Metodi on most matters, he had certain reservations about the use of the Slavonic language. It seems that some of the western

missionaries perceived the Slavonic language as a threat to their own mission and did everything in their power to condemn it. They alleged that, being created by mere men, the Slavonic language was not from God and that God had created the three principal languages, Hebrew, Koine and Latin. Metodi however fought back with equally persuasive arguments, counter-claiming that God did not create the Hebrew, Koine or Latin languages. God created the Syrian language which Adam and the people after him spoke until the flood. Then during the building of the Tower of Babel, God distributed the various languages among the people and created the written form of the languages. His arguments may have bought Metodi some time but he was still in trouble with the German missionaries.

Seeing that he could not easily get rid of him, Svatopluk used his influence as king and persuaded the Pope to appoint Wiching, a known adversary, to work with Metodi. The German (or French) priest Wiching was brought in to assist Metodi as one of his bishops. Wiching was an implacable opponent of Metodi who worked against him tirelessly. This unscrupulous prelate continued to persecute Metodi, even to the extent of forging pontifical documents.

After Metodi's death, Wiching obtained the archiepiscopal see, banished Metodi's followers, and undid as much as he could of Metodi's work in Moravia.

When Wiching was appointed as his assistant, Metodi must have realized that he was fighting a losing battle. In the last four years of his life he took a break from missionary work and translated most of the Bible from Koine to Slavonic. Metodi died in 885 AD, probably from exhaustion. His funeral service was carried out in Koine, Slavonic and Latin. Metodi was very popular with the people and many came to his funeral to pay their last respects.

I just want to add here that Saints Kiril and Metodi were always celebrated in the lands of their missions and after 1880 they were also celebrated throughout the entire western world.

Kliashev - Pando Kliashev (1882-1907)

Pando Kliashev was born in the village Smrdesh, Kostur Region on September 29, 1882. His father was a bricklayer from Smrdesh and his mother was from the village Breznitsa.

Kliashev received his elementary education in his native village Smrdesh then went to Kostur to complete grades one to three of middle school, after which he went to Solun where he completed grades four to six in the Solun gymnasium. He then enrolled in the Bitola gymnasium and completed grade seven, the final year of his education.

After finishing his schooling, in 1900, Kliashev returned to his native Smrdesh and became a schoolteacher.

At the end of 1901, he joined the Kostur District Macedonian Revolutionary Organization. He was already initiated in the IMRO, while studying in Solun, on December 1898 and was a member of the Bitola District Revolutionary Organization.

During the winter of 1901-1902, while Turkish weapons searches were in a lull, Kliashev, Chakalarov and associates distributed what few firearms they had purchased and formed two new bands. Mitre Vlaot in Kostur led one band, under the general direction of Moskov and Chakalarov, and Petrov in the Zagoricheni District led the other band, under the general direction of Kliashev and Moskov.

Kliashev together with his associates and their Chetas spent considerable time defending the Kostur and Lerin Region villages from Patriarchist plunderers like Kote Hristov from Rula, the Turkish army and the Bashi-buzuks.

In 1903 before the Ilinden Uprising, Kliashev, Chakalarov and their Chetas, on several occasions, attacked the Turkish army while it was raiding villages on weapons searches. Between June 5th and 7th, an army of 1,500 Turks attacked the villages Statitsa, Posdivishcha, Kolomnati, Trnovotsa and Denoven. Kliashev, Chakalarov, Karsakov and Antonov retaliated by attacking the Turks in the mountains of Dmbeni and Smrdesh. During this uneven battle the Cheti killed 220 Turkish soldiers and lost 14 of their own fighters, among them were Chakalarov's brother, Antonov and Popovski, their bomb maker.

During the Ilinden Uprising, Kliashev and Chakalarov attacked the Turks in the village Visheni, giving them a devastating blow. They also liberated Klisura and Neveska and attacked the city of Kostur but without success.

After the uprising, Kliashev and his associates continued to fight and protect the civilian population in the Kostur and Lerin Regions from Turkish reprisals. On September 11, 1903, during a visit to the village Aposkep, Kliashev and Chakalarov's Chetas were surrounded by a Turkish force of two-hundred soldiers. The insurgents fought back and by using bombs, broke through the encirclement. They killed eighty Turks in the process and escaped unharmed. The entire Cheta and its leaders escaped and no one was killed.

Pando Kliashev died on July 31st, 1907 on the mountains of the village Drenoveni, Kostur Region, during a battle with the Turkish army.

References: Pages 48-49, Angel Dinev, Ilindenskata Epopea II. Douglas Daikin, The Greek Struggle in Macedonia 1897-1913.

Kliment (and Naum)

The most famous of the Pravoslav disciples were Kliment (Clement), Naum, Angelarius Sava and Gorazd. Even though Gorazd was groomed to take over from Metodi, the first to rise to the occasion was Kliment, also known as Kliment of Ohrid.

Kliment was one of the brightest of Kiril and Metodi's students and played a pivotal role in their careers. After his banishment from Moravia and Pannonia however, Kliment returned to Ohrid to his place of birth (although some claim he was born in Solun). Kliment spent the next seven years, from 886 to 893 AD, in Ohrid doing God's work and teaching the Slavonic language. During his stay in Ohrid he was instrumental in founding the Ohrid Literary School and developing the first university in the Balkans and perhaps in all of Europe. It has been said that three thousand five hundred clergy and teachers were educated in the University of Ohrid. But that was

not all, Kliment was also responsible for writing poetry and translating other works from Koine to Slavonic.

In 839 AD Kliment was joined by one of his life long friends, Naum. Kliment and Naum were responsible for refining Kiril's alphabet as well as re-writing many of Kiril's works from Glagolic to Slavonic (Cyrillic). Kiril, it seems, had written many works in the Glagolic script in anticipation of using them in his teaching but after finding out that Glagolic was too difficult for lay people to grasp, he opted for the simpler Slavonic which he himself created.

During Leo VI's rule the peace treaty between the Pravoslavs and Bulgars was once again breached. When the Bulgar ruler, Simeon came to power in 893 AD he resumed aggression in Macedonia. His armies continued to penetrate further west and south and came to within twenty-two kilometers of Solun. A new peace treaty was signed in 896 AD and Leo VI agreed to pay Simeon an annual subsidy of an undisclosed amount to cease his aggression.

After coming to power in 893 AD, Simeon invited Kliment to Preslav with an offer to make him his son's royal counselor and assistant. The offer did not materialize due to some demands Simeon had made that seemed unreasonable to Kliment. Simeon had some reservations about making the Slavic language official and requested that Kliment modify it. Kliment of course refused, wanting the work of Kiril and Metodi to stay as it was. Simeon himself was educated in Koine at Tsari Grad and had developed ambitions to take over the Pravoslav Empire and become Emperor of a Pravoslav-Bulgar Empire.

When the original offer did not work out, Kliment was given a new appointment in the Velika bishopric in a backward province. This was somewhat of a demotion for Kliment but at the same time it allowed him more time to work on his own projects. He continued to translate chants, psalms, festal fragments from the Bible, moralities and so on.

Towards the end of their careers, both Kliment and Naum built churches on opposite sides of Lake Ohrid. Closest to the city, Kliment dedicated a shrine to the holy healer Panteleimon. A little

later, near the springs of the Crn Drim River, Naum built a monument in honour of Gabriel and Michael, the archangels.

Both Kliment and Naum were buried in the tombs they had built for themselves. Naum was buried in 910 AD and Kliment six years later in 916 AD.

Naum, like Kliment, was also an important contributor to the development of the Macedonian language and culture. It is believed that Naum was born in Macedonia in 835 AD and had been Kliment's inseparable companion since his earliest youth. As mentioned earlier, Naum was a student of Kiril and Metodi and was active among the Slavs in Moravia and Pannonia. Naum, also known as Naum of Ohrid, was inseparable from his teachers and fellow pupils and suffered the same humiliation and injustice they did. Their most difficult and fateful moments came after Metodi's death when, under the influence of German churchmen, the Franks attacked the Macedonian missionaries and tortured them. In the words of Kliment of Ohrid's biographer: "Soldiers, stern men because they were Germans and by nature fierce, their fierceness being increased by their orders, took the priests, led them out of the town, pulled off their clothes and began to drag them along naked. Thus by one act they did them two wrongs: dishonored them and tortured them in the icy fog, which had descended on the Danube banks. Besides this, they put their swords against their heads, ready to cut them, and their spears against their breasts, ready to make them bleed, so they would not die a sudden death..."

"Subjected to cruel torture, some of the pupils succumbed, while the others, among them particularly Gorazd, Clement, Naum, Sava and Angelarius, were declared excommunicate by Bishop Vihing. Their books were seized and burnt. The younger pupils (about 200) were sold as slaves, while these five were driven out of the country."

On their way home to Macedonia, at the request of Boris the Bulgarian prince, Kliment, Naum and Angelarius (who died shortly afterwards) took a detour through Pliska, Bulgaria. After a short visit they felt it was time to return home and continued their work translating books from Koine to Slavonic. Prince Boris insisted that they remain in Pliska but when he couldn't convince Kliment he

insisted that Naum must stay. Having no choice, Naum spent the next seven years, from 885 to 893 AD, in Pliska before returning home to join Kliment.

The establishment of feudal social structures in Macedonia opened the way for mass exploitation not only of the feudal principalities but also of the free peasants who still lived in rural communities. The situation worsened around the middle of the tenth century when the profitable Bulgar wars of conquest came to an end. Having no other substantial sources of income to support the Bulgar military, administrative, court and church systems, the Bulgars turned to feudal exploitation. After everyone took their cut, the Macedonian peasant was left with nothing. Pushed beyond the brink of starvation, the Macedonian peasants revolted in what later became known as the Bogomil movement. Even though it was religious in nature, the Bogomil movement was predominantly a class struggle between the poor Macedonian peasant and his rich foreign rulers. The Bogomil movement was initiated in Macedonia by a Macedonian priest named Bogomil.

Under feudal ownership the peasants were fully dependent upon their feudal lords. Some historians argue that Kliment of Ohrid's visit to the Bulgar capital and his resignation as bishop a few months before his death was in response to the violence and devastation the Bulgars inflicted on the territory of the Bishopric of Velika.

The swift spread of the Bogomil movement prompted Petar, the Bulgar king, to take measures for its suppression but he did not succeed. Bogomilism was strongest in the territory defined by the triangle of the Vardar River, Ohrid and Mt. Shar. His intervention, however, did cause the Bogomils much suffering. But even the cruelest of methods did not stop the insurrection, which in time spread and became a general people's movement. Petar's death and the Russian campaigns drastically reduced Bulgar control over Macedonia allowing the Bogomil movement to flourish, at least for a while.

Krale - Marko Krale (1335-1395)

Comparatively speaking, Marko Krale was a minor figure in Macedonia's history. His legends however, in some parts of Macedonia, rival those of Alexander the Great.

Marko was born in 1335 and became a vassal king in 1371. Marko inherited his kingdom from his father Volkashin who had sworn loyalty to the Ottoman Sultan. As part of the treaty with the Turks, Marko had to recognize Turkish authority and pay tribute to the Turkish Sultan.

With its capital in Prilep, Marko inherited a state that lay between the Vardar River and Albania stretching from the Shar Mountain range down to Kostur, excluding the cities of Skopje and Ohrid. After becoming king, Marko minted his own coins and placed the inscription: "King Marko faithful to Lord Jesus Christ".

Marko Krale was killed on May 17, 1395 in Craiova Romania, during a battle against the Vlach military leader Mircho. Marko was obliged to fight for the Turks as part of his treaty agreement with Sultan Bayazit. Marko Krale, it appears, left no heir. After his death his state reverted to the Turks.

Even though Marko Krale had been a Turkish vassal and fought on the side of Bayazit's army, he was a devout Christian and just before he died he begged God for forgiveness and prayed out loud, asking God to help the Christians. And thus a legend was born. Marko Krale, the fearless legend, has been enshrined in the Towers of Prilep where he was born and by his frescoes and paintings in various churches and monasteries.

There are some who say that Marko Krale got his strength from drinking the milk of a Samovila (Nymph). When Marko was a young boy his father wanted him to learn to be humble so he sent him to herd sheep with the local shepherds. The shepherds, however, were jealous of Marko and tended to isolate and abuse him. One day when they sent him to fetch water from the lake, Marko heard the faint cries of a baby deep in the reeds. His keen sense of hearing led him to the baby whom he rescued from the water. He fed it milk and placed it in a secure, safe place away from the water. He then returned to fetch his water. As he was bent filling his jugs he

was confronted by the Samovila who was frantically looking for her baby. When Marko took her to her baby and explained how he saved it from drowning and fed it milk, the Samovila was so grateful she granted Marko a wish. Marko's wish was to become strong, wise and humble so that he could defend the innocent from wickedness and oppression. His wish was noble and so it was granted. The Samovila gave him some of her milk and, after drinking it, Marko received his super strength.

Confident, Marko tossed the water jugs and returned to the shepherds empty handed. When he was confronted, he gave each shepherd what they deserved and then took his horse and left. He traveled from village to village on a crusade helping those who needed help, righting the wrongs against the innocent and dishing out his own brand of justice against the villains.

Wherever there was a depression in the rocks that looked like a footprint or hoof-print, people said it was Marko Krale's. The legendary Marko Krale and his mighty horse jumped from mountain to mountain dodging enemies and carrying out justice.

There are some who believe that Marko Krale never died and still lives, hiding up high on the mountaintops of western Macedonia. Marko Krale became heartbroken when the rifle was invented. Even with his mighty strength he could not stop a bullet. So, feeling his usefulness outlived, Marko retired high up in the mountains and disappeared forever.

Reference: Page 57, Macedonian Magazine # 560, October 1999.

Maleshevski - Ilo Markov Maleshevski (1803-1898)

Ilo Markov Maleshevski, affectionately known as Dedo Ilo, was born in 1803 in the village Berovo.

Dedo Ilo was one of the most popular Macedonian outlaws of the 19th century. He gave up ordinary life to become an outlaw in 1845 after the Turks killed his brother.

When he was a young man, Dedo Ilo was responsible for managing the Maleshevo seasonal workers who worked in the large fields of the Turkish chifliks (estates) in the Skopje and Seres Regions. From the workers and his own family he learned much about the pain and suffering of the Raja (Christian Turkish subjects without rights) under Turkish rule.

The conditions under which he lived and the different jobs he did helped Ilo develop his outstanding leadership abilities and good character.

According to one of his contemporaries, Dedo Ilo was a peace loving person who had “an inexhaustible love for his homeland and for his people”. That is why he found it hard to tolerate the Turkish tyranny. The last time he and his older brother Stanko were assaulted by their Turkish tormentors, Ilo took his revenge by killing Buliukpasha Gabo Parapun from Berovo and two of his gendarmes. After that he fled to the mountains and remained an outlaw, forming his own band.

His presence in the mountains gave the Berovo and Maleshevo communities encouragement to fight the Turkish injustice. If there was no justice from Turkish law then there was always Dedo Ilo and his brand of justice. Many who could not bear the Turkish tyranny joined Dedo Ilo’s band and fought back as outlaws.

Dedo Ilo’s actions paved the way for others, who were excessively exploited, to form their own bands which eventually became the backbone of the Macedonian revolutionary movement.

Ilo was an excellent vojvoda (leader) with a price on his head, sought by the Turkish authorities but no one could find him and no one dared challenge him. He fought many battles and survived them all. He was one of the leaders of the haiduk movement in eastern Macedonia and organized and led a company in the Razlog and Kresna Uprisings. He was a legend in his own time and died of old age in 1898.

References: Pages 38-39, Macedonian Magazine, # 510, October 1995.

Pages 138-140, Macedonian Almanac, 1985.

Pages 113-116, Macedonian Almanac, 1972.

Mazneikov - Kostadin Mazneikov (1882-1903)

Kostadin Mazneikov was born in the city Strumitsa in 1882. He went to school in Strumitsa up to grade three and then transferred to Ser to a school in Pelagonia where he became a member of the student's movement and a revolutionary. Unfortunately, before he could finish his schooling he had to return to Strumitsa. His father was captured by the Turks and sentenced to one hundred and one years imprisonment. He was taken to Adana Vilayet in Anatolia where he served as a labourer making wooden spoons, canes, small boxes and other items, which the Turks sold to the English. His father was eventually released as part of the general amnesty and went back home to Strumitsa.

As soon as Mazneikov returned to Strumitsa he joined the local revolutionary organization and began to tour and organized the local villages. On different tours he wore different clothing sometimes posing as a tourist, other times as a Turkish Beg, or as a businessman to dodge the Turks and avoid capture.

Upon his arrival in Strumitsa, Mazneikov was given a teaching job in the village Robovo, Strumitsa Region and later was transferred to the village Dobrentsi where he began to organize the community. When he finished he was again moved, to another teaching job in the village Presenikovo where he became a full member of the IMRO. His entry into IMRO unfortunately did not go unnoticed and after being discovered, in 1899, he was forced to flee to Bulgaria to avoid capture. After his return he joined Bozukov's Cheta, roaming the Macedonian mountainside until he became ill. He then returned to Sofia to seek treatment but was arrested for terrorism.

In early 1902 he returned to Macedonia, joined-up with the Maleshevo District Cheta and began agitation in the region. Within three months he was promoted to regional vojvoda (leader) in Radovo Region. He fought many bloody battles and always came out victorious. He was a fearless and courageous vojvoda who fought for the liberty of the Macedonian people.

In 1903 he fought many bloody battles against the Turkish army. The first he fought on April 1st near the village Leski, Kozheni Region. On April 2nd he fought a battle near the village Shipkovitsa, Kozheni Region. On April 3rd he clashed with the Turkish army in the village Vladimirovo in Maleshevo Region. On April 6th a large column of Turkish troops appeared and surrounded the entire Goten Summit in Maleshevo Region. Three Cheti fought the encirclement but could not break it. Mazneikov used bombs in the dark of night to make his escape. This battle cost the Macedonians twenty-five fighters while the Turks lost more than two-hundred soldiers. On May 11th Mazneikov's Cheta was discovered in Dedinsko Region near the village Radovish. It was a bloody battle which lasted the entire day. The Cheta fought heroically against the numerically superior and better equipped Turkish army but was no match for it and was defeated. Mazneikov was severely wounded twice and could not make his escape. To avoid capture, using his revolver, he took his own life.

Reference: Page 23, Macedonian Magazine, # 280, August 1976.

Miladinov - Dimitar Miladinov (1810-1862)

Dimitar Miladinov was born in 1810 in Struga, near the northern shore of Lake Ohrid.

Dimitar started his schooling at the St. Naum monastery and later went to the city of Ohrid where he continued his studies and became a teacher.

Dimitar spent the next two years teaching in Ohrid before deciding to go to Janina, Epirus to further his education. After three years of studying in Janina he returned to Ohrid and resumed his career as a teacher.

Dimitar was convinced that the Macedonian nation could liberate itself from political and spiritual slavery only through education and literacy. Having met the famous Russian Slavist, Victor Grigorovic, Dimitar became one of the prominent figures in the struggle against Greek spiritual influence. His aims were to eliminate the Greek

language from the schools and churches in Macedonia and replace it with Macedonian.

His aims unfortunately came into conflict with the Greek cause and the Greek clergy began to persecute him. His run-ins with the Greek bishop convinced him to leave Ohrid and continue his work in Struga and later in Kukush, Bitola, Prilep and other places.

As a teacher, Dimitar discovered a whole treasure of Macedonian folklore which he began to collect, document and teach.

By doing so Dimitar began the struggle to introduce the Macedonian language into schools and churches.

After a while Dimitar acquired enough literature to have the "Zbornikot na narodni pesni - The Collection of Folk Songs, Riddles and Costumes", published in Zagreb in 1861.

The Collection consists of 662 folk songs, mostly about love. There are also songs about heroes like Marko Krале, Momchilo Vojvoda, Bolen Dojchin, Dete Dukadinche and others. Undoubtedly one of the most important segments of this collection is the Macedonian-Croatian dictionary that has cultural and historical value.

These, along with the works of his brother Konstantine, Konstantinov, Zografski, Shapkarev, Tsepenskov and Verkovich, represent a major event in the cultural history of the Macedonian nation. They are testimony to the fact that the Macedonian nation became aware of its folk art as a national treasure and of the Macedonian language as a noble resource for the written expression and for the development of Macedonian literature and culture. Besides his literary contributions, Dimitar Miladinov also taught the esteemed educators: Partenija Zografski, Grigor Plichev, Konstantin Miladinov (his brother), Kuzman Shapkarev and others. After being joined by his brother Konstantin and while working as a tutor in Struga, on the order of the Turkish authorities, the brothers were sent to Solun and later to Tsari Grad in defense of allegations made against them by some Greek clerics. The Miladinovs were charged with treason on the grounds that "some of the poems in their collection contained satirical allusions and attacks upon the Turks and Greeks". The song which caused particular offence was "Stoyan

and Patrick", celebrating the exploits of the national hero Stoyan against the Turks and Greeks. Because of these charges the brothers were sentenced to life imprisonment.

Dimitar died in jail on January 23rd, 1862, in Tsari Grad (Istanbul), just two days after his younger brother Konstantin died.

Dimitar did not live to see his collection of works printed.

References: Pages 30-32, Macedonian Magazine, # 461, January 1992.

Page 5, Macedonian Almanac, 1971.

Miladinov - Konstantin Miladinov (1830-1862)

Konstantin Miladinov was born in 1830 in Struga, just north of Lake Ohrid.

Konstantin started his education in Ohrid where he was taught by his brother Dimitar. Then he went to Epirus to study at the gymnasium in Janina and finally he enrolled in the faculty of philology in Athens. After that he went to Russia to further his study of philology at the Moscow University.

While in Russia he tried to find a publisher to publish the collection of Macedonian folklore but was unsuccessful.

Later he traveled to Vienna where he met Bishop Josip Strossmayer from Croatia who agreed to financially help Konstantine with the publishing expenses. As a result, " Zbo rnikot na narodni pesni - The Collection of Folk Songs, Riddles and Costumes" was published in Zagreb on June 24th, 1861. This publication did not go unnoticed and some of it appeared in foreign sources.

Morfill wrote in detail about the work of the brothers Dimitar and Konstantin Miladinov and their Collection of Folk Songs, indicating and briefly commenting on various characteristics and elements of the songs, and quoting some of them in his own translation into English. As such he made them accessible to the Anglo-Saxon world only 22 years after they were first published in Zagreb.

Morfill paid particular attention to the oral folk tradition, devoting a great deal of space to the Miladinov brothers' collection. He mentioned that the songs in it were collected by both men, but published by Konstantin in Agram (Zagreb).

Morfill's reference to Konstantin's preface to the Collection is brief: "In his preface, Konstantin Miladinov speaks of the great wealth of popular songs among his countrymen. He tells us that from one young girl alone, in Struga, he collected 150 beautiful songs".

Morfill was moved by the fate of the two brothers which he described as "very melancholy". He thought it necessary to acquaint the reader with it, to bring home the reality of Turkish rule. Noting that he owed much information on the Miladinovs to Veljo D. Stoyanov and his interesting articles published in *Casopis Ceskeho Musea* in 1866, he wrote that Konstantin joined his brother Dimitar "in Struga, in Macedonia, at the Albanian frontier, where the latter was exercising the profession of a tutor", that later, on the order of the Turkish authorities, they were sent to Solun, and thence to Tsari Grad (Constantinople), after allegations had been made against them by some Greek clerics. He pointed out that the Miladinovs were charged with treason on the grounds that "some of the poems in their collection contained satirical allusions and attacks upon the Turks and Greeks", and the song which caused particular offence was "Stoyan and Patrick", on page 13 of the Collection, celebrating the exploits of the national hero Stoyan against the Turks and Greeks. Because of these charges the brothers were sentenced to life imprisonment. Morfill described Strossmayer's efforts through the Austrian consul in Constantinople to get them freed, the endeavours of the Russian government and the secret murder before the order of release was issued.

Although Morfill sympathized sincerely and deeply with the two brothers on the tragic fate, he was not sufficiently acquainted with their teaching aimed at raising the Macedonian national consciousness, their uncompromising anti-Phanariot activities, or the complex political situation in Macedonia to recognize and set out the true reasons for their end. Because of this, his narration,

which was probably adapted from another source, acquired certain naively mystical and melodramatic overtones.

Konstantin and Dimitar Miladinov had a major role in the awakening of the Macedonian national consciousness in Macedonia. Their collecting of Macedonian folk art along with their teaching set the stage for modern Macedonian literature.

Hoping to free his brother Dimitar, Konstantin joined him on his trek to Tsari Grad, only to be arrested and jailed by the Ottoman police. Both brothers died within a span of a couple days in the Tsari Grad prison. Konstantin died on January 21, 1862.

References: Pages 30-32, Macedonian Magazine, # 461, January 1992.

Page 5, Macedonian Almanac, 1971.

Pages 24-25, Macedonian Magazine, # 422, June 1988.

Misirkov - Krste Misirkov (1874-1926)

Krste Petkov Misirkov was born on November 18th, 1874 in Postol, half way between Voden and Solun, in Greek occupied Macedonia. After attending Greek elementary school in Solun, Misirkov began to feel resentful towards the unscrupulous methods of Greek propaganda. Being from a poor family he could not afford to continue his education so he went to work with his father raising crops. When the Serbians started to preach their version of "Macedonianism," and began to recruit young Macedonians throughout Ottoman Macedonia, Misirkov left for Belgrade. When Bulgarian, Serbian and Greek nationalistic propaganda clashed violently in Macedonia, and when Macedonian students went from school to school and from church to church, a new ferment began among the students in Belgrade who had fled from Bulgarian and Greek schools in Macedonia. They realized that they had been deceived not only by the Greeks and Bulgarians but also by the Serbians. This was made obvious when they were pressured to declare themselves Serbs and their language Serbian. The students who had only just arrived in Belgrade refused to bend to Serbian pressure and insisted on being recognized as Macedonians. When the Serbs refused, the students left Belgrade en masse, as a

demonstration of protest, and went to Sofia. Misirkov was one of those students.

Dissatisfied with the conditions in Bulgaria, Misirkov went back to Serbia and was admitted in the third grade of a grammar school in Belgrade. There he discovered that Macedonian students were trained to carry out Serbian propaganda campaigns in Macedonia. They were also trained as priests, teachers and military cadres to serve the Serbian cause in the forthcoming subjugation of Macedonia. He did not stay there long.

At the end of the academic year students were taken on a tour inside Serbia, which gave Misirkov an opportunity to study and document the various Serbian dialects which he compared to the Serbian literary language and to the spoken languages in Macedonia and Bulgaria.

The next term during enrollment, a group of Macedonian students, including Misirkov, protested against the Serbian assimilatory policies towards the Macedonians. Their uproar resulted in the Serbian Foreign Minister closing the schools. After that, Misirkov continued his studies at Shabats, a small town not far from Belgrade. Not long afterwards he went back to the Serbian capital.

In 1892 Misirkov and associates founded a literary society and began to publish the magazine *Loza* (Vine) which immediately prompted the Bulgarian press to criticize the national ideology of its founders and editors.

In 1893 Misirkov founded the student society "Vardar". Vardar's aim, among other things, was to spread geographic, ethnographic and historical information about Macedonia and to promote the idea that Macedonia belongs to the Macedonians. The Serbs were totally against Vardar and in 1895 forced it to disband.

When they discovered Macedonians could not be trusted to do their dirty work, the Serbs began to send Serbian priests and teachers to Macedonia and the Macedonians were sent elsewhere. Even though Misirkov was a top student in his class, the Serbs refused to send

him to Macedonia. Scheduled to go to Prishtina, he secretly slipped out and fled to Odessa with hopes of continuing his studies. Russia, however, would not recognize his Serbian academic qualifications, so he had to upgrade his education by studying for two years in the Seminary at Poltava before entering the Faculty of Philological and Historical Studies at the University of St. Petersburg.

In 1897, during his enrolment at this Russian University, Misirkov did not declare himself Bulgarian, Greek, or Serbian, as other Macedonian intellectuals of that time usually did. He said he was Macedonian and thanks to the ethnographic and historical research he did of the Balkan Peninsula during his stay in Serbia, Misirkov was able to give his first scholarly lecture before the members of the Russian Imperial Geographical Society.

This showed a keen interest in what he wanted to learn and set the stage for the studies he would specialize in during the next thirty years.

As a student, Misirkov gave lectures on a variety of subjects including Marko Krale (a Macedonian national hero), ethnic patterns of the populations living in Macedonia and others.

One of Misirkov's more important contributions to the Macedonian cause was the founding of the secret Macedonian Society at St. Petersburg, which was a branch of the Macedonian Secret Revolutionary Organization. This society, with Misirkov as its president, was responsible for providing moral and material aid to the Macedonian cause. Besides exchanging information with various organizations at home, the Society kept track of events in Macedonia and maintained contact with Macedonian emigrants abroad. As president of this society, Misirkov made contact with eminent men in Russian political, cultural and scientific circles and was able to obtain adequate aid from the various Charitable Societies for the Macedonian refugees.

When the newly founded Macedonian Society in Belgrade began to publish "Balkanski Glasnik" (Voice of the Balkans), in which fundamental principles of the Macedonian literary language and

orthography were employed, Misirkov happily made his own contributions. Unfortunately when the Society was closed the journal was suppressed and the editors were disbanded.

Expecting to find some freedom in Macedonia, Misirkov abandoned his studies in Russia and took a job in Bitola, where he was appointed assistant master in the academy of classics. Through his job, as tutor of his children, he met and became friends with the Russian Consul Rostkovski. Through Rostovski, Misirkov was able to enter into friendly relations with the various representatives of the diplomatic corps and closely follow Balkan and European politics with regard to Macedonia.

Misirkov's dream, with help from Rostovski and his contacts, was to open Macedonian schools and publish textbooks in the Macedonian language. Unfortunately the Russian Consul was assassinated during the 1903, Ilinden Uprising. This not only killed Misirkov's dream but it also changed his situation at home for the worse.

Life in Macedonia became so unbearable that he felt obliged to leave. After returning to Russia he published a number of articles on the causes of the Ilinden Uprising and the reasons why the Russian Consul was assassinated.

In 1905, when Misirkov was transferred to Berdiansk, Southern Russia and made assistant master in a grammar school, he resumed publication of the Macedonian journal "Vardar". Unfortunately he began receiving threats to give up his struggle for Macedonia. But of course he ignored them and placed his life in jeopardy.

At the outbreak of the first Balkan War, Macedonians from everywhere flocked home to participate in the struggle to liberate their homeland. Misirkov came to Macedonia as a Russian war correspondent to report on military operations. He unfortunately suffered another disappointment when his worst fears were realized and the "liberators," actually became Macedonia's occupiers. He published a number of articles in the Russian press highlighting the cruel destiny of the Macedonian people as a result of Macedonia's partition.

In 1913 Misirkov founded and started publishing the journal “Makedonski Glas” (Macedonian Voice) in Petersburg, Russia both in Macedonian and Russian. This journal dealt openly with the Macedonian question and prompted the Macedonian community in Moscow to send a series of memoranda to the London Conference and the Balkan Governments.

In an article which appeared in the journal “Slavianskia izvestia” in 1914, Misirkov cleared up misunderstandings of whether or not Macedonians participated in the struggle to drive Turkey out of Macedonia in 1912. He stated four armies (Serbian, Greek, Macedonian and Montenegrin), fought in Macedonia and two (Bulgarian and Macedonian) fought in Thrace. While the other armies were subsidized, the Macedonians fought unpaid, as volunteers for the freedom of their country.

To keep himself from harm, Misirkov wrote many of his articles under the pseudonym K. Rilski.

Upon his return from the Balkan front, Misirkov was appointed assistant master of the grammar school at Kishinev. When Bessarabia became a republic, he was elected a member of its Parliament. Then as Bessarabia capitulated to Romania in November 1918, Misirkov was expelled and, unable to return to Macedonia, went to Bulgaria.

Misirkov arrived in Sofia just after the end of the First World War in the midst of a controversy over the Macedonian question. At the time all Macedonian immigrants were pressured to sign resolutions and petitions in favour of the Bulgarian cause in Macedonia, which greatly disturbed Misirkov.

A year later he was appointed assistant master of the grammar school at Karlovo.

In 1921, in a letter to the Serbian Minister in Sofia, Misirkov applied for a teaching position in Macedonia, or failing that in Belgrade or Zagreb. Two years later he was informed that his application was rejected. He then realized he would have to stay in Bulgaria indefinitely. He resumed his writing and continued to publish

articles on the Macedonian question in the Bulgarian press. In all he wrote some thirty articles, which will remain a testament of his work for future Macedonian generations.

Misirkov's assertion of the existence of a separate Macedonian culture aroused a storm of angry comments from Bulgarians, Serbs and Greeks. In September 1925 he was removed from Karlovo and sent to Koprivchitsa, threatened with death if he continued to write articles of this kind. Furthermore, the publishers and editors of the papers Mir and Ilinden, in which his articles appeared, were formally warned to cease publishing them. This was the end of the public life of a great Macedonian patriot.

Soon afterwards Misirkov became ill and on July 26th, 1926 died in a hospital in Sofia.

References: <http://www.macedon.org/misirkov/misirkov.html>
Pages 178-180, Macedonian Almanac, 1988.
Pages 2-4, Macedonian Magazine, # 259, November 1974.
Page 38, Macedonian Magazine, # 488, November 1993.

Naumov - Stevo Naumov (Steve) (1920-1945)

Stevo Naumov was born somewhere in Lerin Region in 1920. He studied at the Bitola Gymnasium and later at the University of Belgrade. From youth he was involved in the Macedonian cause and as a result was imprisoned for six months before WW II broke out. He was released as a result of the occupation and immediately renewed his activities, this time even more vigorously, until he was again jailed. After his second release he went to Bitola as a seasonal worker and again began his clandestine activities organizing the workers.

After the occupation was over, together with Kuzman Josifovski, he organized the Ilinden demonstrations in Bitola.

In the spring of 1942 Stevo became a member of the Operational Headquarters of Macedonia and, together with Mirche Atsev, initiated the Partisan detachment for the region.

Stevo was also responsible for the execution of the Bulgarian Political leader Kiuchiev who tried to expose him and his activities. For his deeds, Stevo was tried in absentia and sentenced to death. He was also fined 200,000 leva.

Stevo Naumov, together with Mite Bogoevski, died on July 29th, 1945 near the village Bolno.

He was forced to take his own life to avoid being captured by the Bulgarian police.

Reference: Page 19, Macedonian Almanac, 1984.

Parapunov - Nikola Parapunov (1909-1943)

Nikola Parapunov was born on July 1st, 1909 in Razlog. Since he was a young boy he was involved with the worker's movement and eventually became leader and organizer of the Partisan movement in the Pirin Region.

Nikola completed middle technical school in Sofia and was sent to work in the Gornodzhumaja Region building bridges, roads and water systems. While on the job there he secretly began to organize the regional committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party.

In the spring of 1931 he founded a youth organization in Razlog and worked hard to promote Marxist ideologies until he was discovered by the police, in the winter of 1933, and thrown in jail for eight years.

In the summer of 1941 Nikola organized the first Partisan group in Pirin Macedonia and was later appointed head of the fourth operative zone. In 1943 he formed and led the Razlov Partisan Detachment "Jane Sandanski".

Nikola Parapunov lost his life during a police ambush on December 9th, 1943 near the village Barakovo, Gornodzhumaja Region.

References: Page 23, Macedonian Almanac, 1984.
Page 26, Macedonian Magazine # 424, August 1988.

Petrov - Giorche Petrov (1864-1921)

Giorche Petrov was born in 1864 in the village Varosh, Prilep Region. He started his education in Prilep and continued it in Bitola and later in Solun, from where he and thirteen other students were expelled in 1885 for protesting the use of the Bulgarian language in Macedonian schools. After his expulsion he completed his education in Plovdiv, Bulgaria.

After completing his education, Giorche became a teacher and taught in Shtip from 1885 to 1887, in Skopje from 1887 to 1891, in Bitola from 1891 to 1895 and in Solun from 1895 to 1897.

While teaching in Shtip, during the years 1885 and 1886, he was instrumental in forming a few revolutionary groups that would later fight for the liberation of Macedonia. During his time in Skopje he worked closely with Metropolitan Teodosi to study and preserve Macedonian history and culture. Later he met up with his associate and friend, Pere Toshev in Bitola and together they launched the underground newspaper “Na Oruzhie” (To Arms). The newspaper became an immediate success and the next year it started coming out in Solun.

Giorche Petrov was the founder of the revolutionary committees of the Secret (Tajna) Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (TMRO) in the Shtip, Bitola, Prilep, Resen, Ohrid, Krushevo, Kichevo, Lerin and Kostur Districts. He was well known and popular in all those regions and in 1895 he became member of TMRO’s Central Committee.

In 1896, together with Gotse Delchev, he drafted the new TMRO constitution for the Solun congress. Then from March 1897 until the spring of 1901, again together with Delchev, he was foreign representative in the Central Committee of TMRO in Sofia.

In 1898 he started publishing the newspaper “Buntovnik” (Revolutionary) and various brochures to inform, enlighten and stir the Macedonian population to revolt against the Turks, to oppose foreign interference and to fight for an independent Macedonia.

For his actions, in 1901, the Bulgarian Government sentenced Giorche, along with three hundred other Macedonian Revolutionaries to life imprisonment. He was released early 1903 as a result of a general amnesty.

Even though Giorche believed the 1903 Ilinden rebellion was premature, he actively participated by joining the Prilep and Moriovo District Chetas.

After the rebellion Giorche remained in Macedonia and worked very hard to uproot foreign elements from TMRO.

In May 1904 he took part in the Prilep Congress as a Bitola District delegate and drafted a new statute for TMRO. In August of the same year he took part in the Struma Congress.

In 1905 Giorche wrote a few articles for the Magazine "Makedonski Pregled" (Macedonian Review) expressing his political opinion on the Macedonian National Liberation Movement.

During the Rila Congress he fought to re-organize TMRO and, together with Pere Toshev and Iane Sandanski, greatly contributed to the victory of the left.

From 1905 to 1907, together with Stefanov and Poparsov, he again became a foreign representative in the Central Committee and again was jailed by the Bulgarian Government.

After the 1908 Young Turk Uprising, together with Strashimirov, between the years 1909 to 1910, he published the magazine "Kulturno Edinstvo" (Kultural Unity) in Solun.

From 1914 to 1918 Giorche was president of the permanent Bitola District committee.

In October 1918 he published "The Declaration for Solving the Macedonian Question", which in part sought an autonomous ethnic (geographical) Macedonia within the borders of a Balkan democratic federation. By this Giorche was trying to destroy the

“Greater Bulgarian” illusion and create conditions for an independent Macedonian state under international protection. In 1920 he tried to return to his hometown Prilep but the Yugoslav Government turned down his request.

In 1921 he became chief of the Bureau for the settlement of Macedonian refugees in Bulgaria.

Giorche Petrov died in Sofia in June 28, 1921. He was a victim of a paid assassin hired by the Bulgarian King Boris.

Reference: Pages 22-23, Macedonian Magazine, # 434, June 1989.

Philip II (382-336)

Philip II replaced his brother Perdiccas III as ruler of Macedonia in 360 BC. Philip II was born in 382 BC in Pella, the capital of ancient Macedonia, and ruled Macedonia from 359 to 336 BC. Philip was the youngest son of king Amyntas III and Eurydice.

From what the ancient authors (Diodorus Liculus) tell us, Philip was no ordinary man. When he was taken hostage to Thebes he was only thirteen years old and yet at that young age he was more interested in the affairs of the Theban government and military than playing with his peers. At age fourteen, Philip studied the equipment and tactics of the Theban army including those of the elite Sacred Band. At age eighteen, in 364 BC, he was given a force of Macedonians to command.

After Perdiccas’s death, Philip was recalled to the Macedonian court where he was given the position of leader of the military. “Philip knew the Macedonians as soldiers and they knew him, when they elected him not as king (that office having been given to Amyntas IV, the infant son of Perdiccas) but as guardian and deputy of the king as commander-in-chief.” (Page 58, Nikolas G.L. Hammond, *The Miracle that was Macedonia*)

There is some disagreement between Hammond and Borza with regard to Philip’s appointment. Borza (and others) believe that Philip may have been appointed king, not guardian of Amyntas.

In any case, it was Philip who took over the reign from Perdiccas and who prepared his army to defend his kingdom. With the Illyrians, Paeonians, Thracians and Athenians poised to invade, no one would have predicted what was going to happen. But as Diodorus tells us, Philip dealt with all issues directly. Philip's first act as ruler was to buy off the Paeonians and Thracians. To deal with the Athenians, however, Philip had to learn to use his famous diplomatic charm. Athens had a long-standing ambition to possess Amphipolis; its motives were made very clear. By reassuring that he would not interfere in its affairs, Philip bought himself some time to continue reorganizing his military and building his power base.

After some success in his reorganization, Philip got the chance to test his troops in action. During the spring of 358 BC the Paeonian king died and an opportunity to secure the northern frontier presented itself. A short campaign gave Philip a decisive victory and a secure northern frontier.

The invading Illyrians were next on his list as he approached them with a warning to vacate western Macedonia or else. Perched atop the western mountains of Lynceus, the fierce Illyrians were confident they could hold their own and ignored Philip's warnings. In fact they were so confident of a victory that they made Philip a counteroffer "peace for status quo". Philip was not amused and a battle ensued. Equally matched, the Macedonians fought bravely and decimated the Illyrian army giving Philip another victory. "The antagonists were equally matched, each side fielding about 10,000 foot, with the Macedonians maintaining a slight edge in cavalry, 600 to 500. More than 7,000 Illyrians lay dead on the field, according to our source, Diodorus." (Page 202, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon*, New Jersey, 1990)

Was this overwhelming victory a result of Philip's superior military training, his tactics, or simply Illyrian overconfidence? In my estimation, at this point in time, it was a combination of all three. This victory against a feared opponent not only saved Macedonia but also gave Philip and his military the needed confidence to take on more formidable foes.

Philip wasted no time and began his reorganization the day he took over running his kingdom. Despite what historians may claim, I believe Philip's main motivation for rebuilding his military was to create a formidable and lasting defense barrier around his kingdom. The Macedonia Philip inherited was surrounded by warlike, aggressive tribes who desired conflict. Philip's vision was to achieve peace through strong defense. To do that he had to subdue the aggressive elements all around his kingdom and ensure that they were kept down. There was also the matter of the greater powers who would not agree to a strong and large Macedonia and would challenge him just to safeguard their own interests and survival.

From what Diodorus Siculus tells us, while the Thebans held him hostage between 368 and 365 BC, Philip showed extraordinary interest in studying their military techniques and weapons. Philip was especially interested in understanding the fighting style of the elite Theban Sacred Band, which would become important to him later in his career while reforming his own military. After Philip was released from Thebes, at his brother's (Perdiccas III) request, he immediately began to implement his reforms and reorganize the Macedonian military.

Unfortunately before Philip was finished, he lost his brother. While fighting the Illyrians in northwestern Macedonia, Perdiccas III was mortally wounded and died in battle. Worse yet, during the same battle, the Macedonians suffered a demoralizing defeat losing about 4,000 soldiers, which constituted most of the Macedonian army.

As problems presented themselves, Philip used his extraordinary talents to seek solutions. To fight a mightier opponent, Philip had to invent better military strategies and superior weapons. To keep a lasting peace Philip needed a well-trained, professional, full time army. To keep his opponents down, he needed to crush their military abilities and hinder them from rebuilding. All these factors were combined to produce the greatest military might the ancient world had even seen.

Up to Philip's time, soldiers were selected from the nobility and usually lived and trained at home only to be called to duty before battle. Philip, on the other hand, raised and rigorously trained a full

time professional army. Additionally, Philip combined the use of infantry and cavalry in coordinated tactics in ways never before applied. In terms of weapons, Philip used his experience from Thebes to enhance his military techniques and created modern weapons for his army. The most effective weapon was the Macedonian Phalanx which employed sixteen to twenty foot spears or pikes known as sarissas. The body of the pike was made of dogwood (Dren) while the tip was made of a foot long, sharp metal blade. The Phalanx was employed in a rectangular or oblique battle array of soldiers each holding a pike underhand tipped at an angle. The first row held the pikes parallel to the ground while succeeding rows elevated them slightly. The twenty-foot long sarissas extended five rows beyond the first row of soldiers making the Phalanx an impenetrable fortress of very sharp pikes. The front and rear rows of soldiers wore body armour and heavy shields while all inside rows wore no armour and carried only light shields.

Despite popular beliefs otherwise, it took Philip a long time to transform his army into an efficient fighting machine. Much time was needed to recruit men, develop the administration, build up finances, train soldiers and gain field experience before his army would be ready for serious engagements.

“The new Macedonian army was marked by its great speed in movement, by versatility in tactics and weapons, and by the coordination of cavalry with infantry. Finally, there can be no doubt that unusual skills in personal and military leadership created, reflected, and depended upon excellence in the Macedonian army, as kings and men complemented one another”. (Page 205, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon*, New Jersey, 1990)

Determined to free northwestern Macedonia, in 358 BC Philip put his reformed army to the test and fought the Illyrians face to face in a fierce battle. Setting aside all fears from the previous battle, the mighty Macedonian army faced the legendary Illyrians and won an overwhelming victory. The Illyrians fled in panic leaving behind 7,000 dead, almost three-quarters of their entire army.

Northwestern Macedonia was now free, all the Upper Macedonia cantons, including Lyncestia, the birthplace of Philip's mother, were now firmly under Macedonian control and loyal to their liberator Philip II.

Philip was aware that with a small army of 10,000 he could not defend his kingdom, not even against the defeated Illyrian chief who had even more reserve troops at his disposal. To secure his kingdom and create a pool of new recruits, Philip convinced the chiefs of the smaller kingdoms to join him. To those who did, he offered honourable positions in his court.

With his western frontier secure, Philip moved on to the east to secure the Struma basin north of Chalcidice. His presence there alarmed the colonies, especially Amphipolis, and sent them in panic complaining to Athens. But Athens, having problems of its own, was powerless to act and allowed Philip to conduct his operations unabated.

After unsuccessfully trying to secure an alliance by peaceful means, Philip amassed a larger army and attacked Amphipolis. By using his improved siege-train he was able to quickly break through the city's heavily fortified barriers. "In 357, after breaking through the walls with his siege engines (Diod. 16.8.2), he took Amphipolis, thereby accomplishing in a few weeks what the Athenians failed to achieve in more than sixty years." (Page 213, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon*)

As promised before the siege and true to his word, Philip, after occupying it, gave Amphipolis its independence under the supervision of Macedonian overseers.

During the same year (357 BC), Philip, in spite of Athenian opposition, acquired the city of Potidaea in Chalcidice. Turning northward Philip also conquered Pydna, another City State colony on the Macedonian coast.

With his army reorganized, full of confidence and equipped with modern weapons, Philip turned his attention south. He first went to Thessaly where he won an easy victory. By 352 BC he was in firm

control of a region extending as far south as the pass of Thermopylae. As part of the peace treaty with the Thesalians, Philip married Nicesipolis, a local woman of prominence. Nicesipolis bore Philip a daughter whom he named Thessalonika to commemorate his victory over Thessaly.

With Thessaly on his side Philip was now staring down at the northern gate of the City States, which at the time, was well guarded by powerful Athenian, Spartan and Achaean forces.

Up until 348 BC, even though Philip controlled virtually everything north of the Lamian Gulf, he was never a real threat to the powerful City States in the south. He may have annexed their colonies and cut off access to some of their markets but he was never a threat to their way of life or existence.

In 348 BC, however, things started to change. It began with Philip's intervention, on Thessaly's behalf, to free Delphi from rebel elements.

Philip was more than willing to oblige his Thessalian allies but at the same time he had to be cautious not to upset the Athenians and Thebans who opposed each other but also had vested interests in Delphi. At this stage, an Athenian-Theban alliance would have been catastrophic for Macedonia and had to be avoided at all costs.

Being already allied with Thebes, Philip considered a diplomatic move with Athens by offering the Athenians joint participation in removing the rebels that had occupied Delphi. Unfortunately, the Athenians in Athens, being suspicious of Philip's motives, declined and among themselves proposed to take countermeasures to stop Philip from intervening altogether, even by force if necessary. Fortunately, before any damage was done, wisdom prevailed and the Athenians decided to talk to Philip before attacking him. Being a master of diplomacy, the wily Philip convinced his elder Athenians that he meant no harm and only wished to see this matter solved peacefully. To appease the Athenians he went a step further and personally offered guarantees of Athenian hegemony over several regions near Attica, something the Athenians had desired for a long time. Philip's latest proposal was a success and gained full Athenian

acceptance. It even gained support from Demosthenes, Philip's staunchest critic.

Unfortunately, what was viewed as fair by Athens was obviously viewed as unfair by Thebes and problems began to arise. To get himself out of this, Philip turned to the Amphictyonic Council and asked the council members to disbar the rebel group by vote and replace it with the Macedonian king. In a stroke of genius Philip evaded an impending war with Athens, ended the rebellion at Delphi, saved the Amphictyony, averted a war with Thebes, made an alliance with Athens and made himself a voting member of the Amphictyonic League. This indeed was a diplomatic victory, worthy of the Macedonian king himself.

Peace held, at least for now, and having an equal seat in the council of power, Philip was free to return to Macedonia. Most of 345 BC, Philip spent leading his army against the Illyrians, Dardanians and the Thracians and generally quelling rebellions. In 344 BC the Thessalians rebelled but were put down swiftly. In 342 BC, Philip marched into Epirus and replaced King Arybbas with his young protégé and brother-in-law Alexander (Amaxis).

Sensing growing discontentment in the Athenians, Philip estimated that it would be a matter of time before war would break out between Macedonia and Athens, especially since Athens amended the Macedonian-Athenian peace agreement hoping it would be unacceptable to Philip.

Determined to attract as many City States as possible to his side, Philip continued to make alliances with the smaller cities. He was determined to attract the cities that were hostile to the more powerful states in hopes of dividing and weakening them.

By 340 BC, a point of no return was reached with Athens when Philip could no longer accommodate Athenian demands to sustain the peace treaty, especially after Athens sponsored anti-Macedonian uprisings in the northern Aegean. In retaliation for this latest Athenian treachery, in 340 BC while campaigning against internal rebellions in the east, Philip captured the Athenian grain fleet. This was the last straw for Athens and under the personal leadership of

Demosthenes, the Athenians persuaded the Thebans to jointly declare war on Macedonia. The weaker states, having little choice in the matter, also joined the declaration. What Philip tried to avoid at all costs was now unavoidable.

Before Philip could accommodate his neighbours to the south, he had some unfinished business to take care of in the north. He quickly assembled a large army and marched deep into Thracian territory and by 339 BC conquered most of Thrace. Unfortunately, he was unable to subdue the eastern coastal cities of Byzantium and Perinthus, which withstood even his most severe sieges. It was certain that neither city would have survived had it not been for the assistance received from the southern City States and the Persians. Ironically, even though Persia, for more than a century, had been the most hated nation, still the City States sided with the Persians against the Macedonians.

Responding to a Scythian challenge Philip abandoned the eastern city sieges and, in the spring of 339 BC, led his Macedonians beyond Thrace. There, near the Danube River, he clashed with the Scythians and won a stunning victory crowned only by the death of Areas, the Scythian king. Unfortunately, on his return trip home Philip's convoy was attacked and his booty was lost to Thracian Triballians. During the skirmish, Philip suffered a severe leg injury, which left him lame for life. After returning home he spent several months recovering.

While Philip was recovering, the City States to the south were making alliances and amassing a great army to invade Macedonia. On hearing this, Philip decided it was time to meet this aggression head on and end the treachery once and for all. On August 2nd, 338 BC, in the shallow Cephissus River valley near the village of Chaeronea on the road to Thebes, the two opposing armies met face to face. On the north side stood Philip's Macedonians with 30,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry, the largest Macedonian army ever assembled. Among Philip's commanding generals was his 18 year-old son, Alexander, in charge of the cavalry. On the south side, stood the allied Athenians, Thebans and Achaeans who assembled 35,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry, the largest army ever assembled since the Persian invasion.

Closely matched, the armies clashed and while the battle ensued the Macedonian right flank fell back and began to retreat. Seeing the Macedonians weakening, the allied general gave orders to push on and drive the Macedonians back to Macedonia. As the Macedonians retreated, the allied flanks broke rank and began the pursuit. Not realizing it was a trick, the allies found themselves surrounded and slaughtered by Alexander's cavalry. When it was over, the majority of the allied army, including the elite Theban Sacred Band lay dead in the fields of Chaeronea. Philip erected a statue of a lion to commemorate the sacrifice of the Theban Sacred Band which upheld their tradition and fought to the last man.

Ancient City State and Roman historians consider the battle of Chaeronea as the end of City State liberty, history and civilization.

Victorious, soon after the battle, Philip proceeded to secure his newest conquests by strategically placing Macedonian garrisons in Thebes, Chalcis, Ambracia, Corinth and the Peloponnesus. He then summoned the representatives of all City States to a grand peace conference at Corinth where he made peace with each one. Sparta was the only one that abstained. Being no threat to him, Philip decided to leave Sparta alone.

Philip organized the City States into an alliance known as the "League of Corinth". It was an alliance among the City States and an alliance between the City States and the king of Macedonia. The league formed a separate alliance with Macedonia, but Macedonia itself was not a member of the City State league. This was an alliance that treated all nations, great and small, as equals. Conversely, the lesser states looked up to Macedonia, as a great power, to guarantee their rights and existence among the greater states.

Having secured peace with the City States, Philip was now looking at neutralizing the next major threat, Persia

It has been said that if Philip ever made a mistake, it was in "marrying for love", a rare luxury for any monarch let alone one that had been married not once but six times before. The woman of his

desire was Cleopatra, a Macedonian girl of nobility. Blinded by his love for young Cleopatra, Philip neglected to see that his marriage to her would lead to his break-up with Olympias and the estrangement of his son Alexander. Olympias was a proud woman and very protective of her son. Philip's marriage to a younger woman and a Macedonian at that, made her feel both unwanted and an outsider in her own home. To her, Philip's latest marriage was a dishonour to her reputation as a wife and a threat to her son's legitimacy as heir to the Macedonian throne.

Not knowing what else to do, Olympias and Alexander left for Epirus. Immediately after taking his mother home, Alexander left Epirus and went to the Illyrians. From there he negotiated his way back to Pella where his father forgave him for his misdeeds. Unfortunately for Olympias, Philip's marriage to Cleopatra lasted longer than expected and she bore him a child.

During the following spring (336 BC), in preparation for the Persian offensive, Philip decided to send ahead an advance force. Commanded by generals Attalus and Parmenio, 10,000 Macedonian soldiers were prepared and sent across to Asia Minor to pave the way for the next spring's offensive. While the soldiers were making their way across the Hellespont, the Macedonians in Aegae were preparing for a grand celebration. Philip's daughter Cleopatra was about to be wed to Prince Alexander (Amasis) of Epirus. It was indeed going to be a lavish festival with much entertainment and games. Philip had invited various guests from all over his kingdom to partake in the festivities and witness the marriage of his daughter. Among the invited was Olympias. Being the sister of the groom, Olympias was obliged to attend. At first, she was apprehensive, but after being assured that Philip would welcome her, she accepted the invitation. True to his word, Philip was courteous and made up with her the same day she arrived.

It has been said that after the first day's festivities, Philip visited with Olympias and among other things discussed Olympias's concern about Alexander's chances for the throne. Philip promised her that she had nothing to fear and reassured her that Alexander was his first choice to replace him, when the time came. The first day's festivities concluded without incident but disaster struck on

the second day. During a procession in the theater at Aegae, while standing between his son Alexander and his new son-in-law Alexander, a member of the royal guard named Pausanias, stabbed Philip with a dagger and killed him. Pausanias then ran to escape, towards some waiting horses, but tripped and fell down. His pursuers caught up to him and speared him to death.

The “Greatest of the Kings of Europe” who liberated Macedonia from foreign occupation, brought it back from the edge of extinction and made it into a world power, now lay dead in his own palace, killed by his own body guard. Philip II king of Macedonia from 360 BC to 336 BC died a senseless death and was succeeded by his son Alexander.

Philip’s plans for Persia now lay in the hands of his successor. He did whatever he could to make Macedonia great but even he couldn’t have imagined how great it would become.

Philip V (221–179)

About one hundred years later in Macedonia young Philip V, anxious to prove himself, became entangled in all kinds of Balkan intrigues. He was involved with an Illyrian pirate called Demetrius of Pharos who, at the moment, was seeking refuge in his court. Demetrius was expelled from Sicily by the Romans in 219 BC for raiding and being a nuisance to the Rhodians and Romans in both the Aegean and Adriatic Seas. Demetrius, however, was welcomed in Philip’s court because he contributed troops to Antigonus Doso’s Sellasian campaign. Philip also valued his so-called “sound advice”.

When Rome was defeated by Hannibal in 217 BC, at Lake Trasimene, Demetrius convinced Philip to reinstall him on the Adriatic coast. Philip took his advice, moved into southern Illyria, drove out Scerdilaidas, his rival pirate, and enabled Demetrius to recover his former place. Unfortunately, Scerdilaidas was not happy about being pushed out and quickly appealed to Rome for help. Rome lost no time in sending a patrol to investigate. Anxious to avoid a showdown Philip retreated at once. He burned 120 of his own ships to avoid capture and fled with his army over the

mountains. Although nothing came of this, suspicions were raised in Rome about Philip's real motives. After reaching its destination, the Roman patrol remained in Illyria to safeguard against any future raids.

Another mistake young Philip made, again acting on the advice of Demetrius, was to sign a treaty with Hannibal the Carthaginian. Drafted by the Carthaginians, this treaty required Philip to become an ally of Carthage in the event of a war with Rome. In return, should Carthage win the war, it would ensure that the Romans would be forced to abandon their sphere of influence in Illyria. The only reason I believe Philip agreed to this was to humour his confidant, Demetrius. Philip at the time did not believe that Rome would risk going to war with a powerful Macedonia over a trivial document. Rome also, at the time, had no plans for any serious eastward interventions. What Philip failed to realize, however, is that his trivial actions would have serious consequences for Macedonia in the future. For the moment, however, Rome remained content and Philip continued to look for ways to gain influence in Illyria.

Still under Demetrius's influence, Philip began to look southward for adventure, always keeping one eye open for conquest. Unfortunately he continued to make mistakes. By inciting various factions in the Peloponnesus to fight against one another he caused torment and senseless bloodshed. His bad influence came to an abrupt end when Demetrius of Pharos was killed in 215 BC during an unsuccessful assault on Ithome. Unfortunately, by now Philip's conquered subjects didn't see him as a reasonable ruler but as a somewhat wild, cruel and politically motivated adventurer. His ravaging of Messenia ended with Demetrius's death.

For the next two years, 213 to 212 BC, Philip turned his attention to Illyria. He replaced the ships he lost during his last contact with the Romans and, being careful not to be detected, marched his army north into Scerdilaidas's territory. When the time was right he descended upon Lissos on the Adriatic and established his western base of power.

It is not known why Philip turned his attention westward at this time. His rationale may have been to put a barrier between himself and Rome or perhaps, as some believe, to gain control of the lucrative western maritime markets and trade routes in the Adriatic. In any event, his appearance in the Adriatic caused panic and hysteria in Rome. Fearing an invasion of Italy, Rome was determined to stop him and quickly sought allies among his enemies. As it turned out, the Aetolians were having problems with Philip and were also looking for allies among Philip's enemies. A Roman-Aetolian coalition not only distracted Philip from his western campaigns but also caused him to strengthen his alliance with the Achaean League. The Aetolians and Romans proved to be brutal in their habits and wreaked havoc in Illyria, Thrace, Thessaly and Acarnania. To make matters worse, Attalus of Pergamon joined the Roman-Aetolian coalition and in 209 BC was appointed general of the Aetolians.

Philip, with his disciplined Macedonian army, quickly retaliated and did well against the Aetolians on land but hesitated to challenge the Romans at sea. The Achaeans also had some success and were able to crush the Spartans at Mantinea. Before things could be settled, however, both Philip and Attalus were recalled to their homeland to deal with yet another large Dardanian invasion.

After Philip left for home and was no longer a threat, the Romans lost interest in the Aetolians and abandoned them altogether. Without Rome's support, the Aetolians were no match for Philip and they quickly capitulated after his return. In 206 BC they broke their treaty with Rome and made peace with Philip, giving him back all that they had previously taken. The Romans unfortunately did not take this breakup well and were anxious for a renewed alliance.

Their chance came when Rhodes and Chios started accusing the locals of disrupting international commerce with their petty wars. In the spring of 205 BC the Romans came back with thirty-five ships and eleven thousand troops. They landed in Epidamnus where Philip met them and offered them battle but the Romans refused to fight. Their real objective was to break up the Macedonian-Aetolian treaty. They figured that with their massive support they could spur the Aetolians back into action, break off relations with Macedonia and

wage war on Philip. When the Aetolians refused, the Romans reconsidered and negotiated separate peace agreements with the various parties involved. The result was the treaty of Phoenice which was concluded in the summer of 205 BC, thus ending the First Macedonian War.

On the surface it appeared that Macedonia was the biggest winner. Philip was allowed to keep his gains in inland Illyria. Even though the status of Lissos remained uncertain, Lissos was still under Macedonian control. Rome, on the other hand, appeared to be the loser because all it received were words of assurance that Macedonia would not interfere in Adriatic affairs. Beneath the surface, however, Rome was the real winner because it managed to prevent an active alliance between Macedonia and Carthage.

The conclusion of the First Macedonian War was a crossroad for both Macedonia and Rome. Philip was content with his treaty with Rome, reassured that his problems with the Romans were over. He no longer had reason to fear the west. Similarly, Philip's word of non-interference in Roman affairs was good enough for the hysterical Roman Senators who now felt they could freely devote their full attention to dealing with Carthage. Had Philip paid heed to the growing menace west of him, he would have sided with Carthage just to maintain a balance of power. Unfortunately he allowed Rome to grow powerful. Instead of striking a crippling blow, while he still could, Philip closed his eyes and for the next five years left Rome to ravage Carthage unabated.

After the treaty of Phoenice, Philip decided it was time to strengthen his navy and went to work building a powerful fleet. By 201 BC his fleet was ready and operational. After his secret pact with Antiochus, Philip captured the island of Thasos, a strategic post for keeping an eye on the Bosphorus and Black Sea trade routes. In 201 BC he captured Ptolemy's naval base at Samos and added the large number of ships there to his own fleet. He later attacked and defeated the Rhodian fleet and invaded Ionia and Pergamon.

Unfortunately, the Macedonians were never good at fighting at sea but still it took the combination of Rhodes, Chios, Pergamon and Byzantium to stop the Macedonian navy. At a naval engagement

near Chios, the Macedonian fleet suffered a crippling defeat, losing almost half the ships in the navy. What was most alarming about this battle was that more Macedonians were lost here than in any previous engagement on land or at sea.

Philip's troubles started with the arrival of the young Roman consul, Flaminius, who was sent by the Roman Senate to meet with him and deliver Rome's conditions for peace. Philip agreed to a meeting, which took place at the Aoos River in Illyria, but disagreed with the Roman terms. According to Roman demands, Macedonia was to evacuate and remove all its garrisons from the cities in Thessaly, Euboea and Corinth and give the cities autonomy. In other words, Macedonia was expected to surrender its most important defensive positions and for what? Philip was insulted by the offer and quickly stormed out of the meeting. Flaminius wasted no time and immediately ordered his forces to invade the City States and start driving the Macedonians out.

By late summer 198 BC, the Roman legions had reached the Gulf of Corinth and a battle with Philip seemed imminent. Roman presence in the region convinced all but a few Achaean League members to abandon Macedonia and ally themselves with Rome. Philip weighed the situation carefully and, in November of 198 BC, returned to the negotiating table with a counter offer. He was willing to evacuate the City States voluntarily provided that he retain control of a few defensive positions and if the Romans guaranteed him that they would not invade Macedonia. The offer was neither accepted nor rejected as the Romans kept stalling for time. It was an election year and Flaminius had to leave for Rome. Philip was told that if he wanted to continue the negotiations he would have to send an embassy to Rome.

While in Rome, negotiations went from bad to worse. The main points of contention were Philip's insistence on retaining control of Demetrias, Chalcis and Corinth, better known as the shackles of the City States. When Flaminius was re-elected the negotiations came to an abrupt end and the legions were ordered to resume their campaign.

Philip was now desperate and turned to the Spartans for help. He offered them Argos, one of the Achaean allies who remained loyal to Macedonia, and the marriage of Philip's daughter to the Spartan king's son. The treasonous Spartans unfortunately were not trustworthy. They took Philip's offer and then stabbed him in the back by making a separate deal with Flamininus. What was worse, there was now an armistice between Sparta and the Achaean league and the Spartans were obliged to provide Flamininus with troops to fight against Macedonia.

While the Romans and their allies were gaining strength, fighting had reduced Macedonia's army to about twenty-five thousand troops. Philip realized that his strength was slowly eroding and action was needed now. Like many of his predecessors he decided to stake everything on a single battle.

In June 197 BC, at Cynoscephalae in Thessaly, the unbeaten Macedonian army came face to face with the Roman legions. With a massed charge the Macedonian phalanx gave the Romans a terrifying battle which they would never forget. During the first charge the Macedonians were successful and won. It was a horrific spectacle for the battle hardened Romans who for the first time had made serious contact with the Macedonian phalanx. During the second charge, unfortunately, the phalanx overreached the Roman battle line and lost formation. The Romans quickly took advantage by outflanking the phalanx and cutting it to pieces. Each individual Roman soldier was equipped with tools to fight in formation and in single-handed combat, something the Macedonians had never experienced before. Unable to regroup, the phalanx fell back and was destroyed. Without the phalanx, the Romans made short work of the rest of the Macedonian army. The Romans were not only more disciplined than Philip had anticipated, but they were also fast learners and able to quickly adapt to their opponent's fighting techniques. Even though the armies were equally disciplined, the Romans proved to be more flexible, giving them the advantage they needed to win.

Victorious, Rome took control of the region, restricting Philip to Macedonia. The terms of the agreement were far stiffer than those proposed earlier. Now Philip was required to evacuate all previously

held regions in Asia and Europe, with the exception of Macedonia. In addition, Macedonia was required to pay Rome a one thousand talent war indemnity. It was a hard pill to swallow for Philip but what other choice did he have?

In the spring of 183 BC, another Senatorial commission was sent and Philip was evicted from the neutral towns. But Roman treachery did not end there. Soon afterwards, Demetrius was sent home decorated with diplomatic laurels and promises to the Macedonian throne. It was a ploy to create trouble for Philip and it worked like a charm sending Perseus, Demetrius's half brother and heir to the Macedonian throne, into a jealous fit. Rivalry between the two brothers continued for some time until Perseus produced a Roman letter, perhaps a forgery, proving that Demetrius had treasonable aspirations to the throne. Having no other choice, Philip was forced to exercise judgment against his own son and enforce the full extent of the law. Demetrius was executed in 180 BC. No sooner had the deed been done than Philip discovered that Perseus's testimony was a fabrication. Being unable to accept the tragedy, Philip died of remorse. Philip V died in 179 BC and was succeeded by his eldest son Perseus.

Perseus was not a popular king, especially with the Romans, who had discovered that he was responsible for Demetrius's execution. Perseus, well aware of his weak popularity outside Macedonia, tried to improve his position by making alliances with his neighbours. He first tried to convince the Roman Senate to ratify him as king with all the privileges granted to his father. He then married Seleucus IV's sister Laodice while he married off his own half-sister to Prusias II of Bithynia.

His attempt at forming mass alliances with his neighbours, unfortunately, did not bolster his popularity as expected. In fact it did the opposite, raising the suspicions of his enemy Eumenes who kept a vigilant eye on him, reporting his every move to the Romans, interpreting it as an anti Roman act.

After the catastrophic battle at Cynoscephalae, Philip had rebuilt his military and replenished his losses but Perseus was still unwilling to go to war. From 171 to 168 BC he remained on the defensive and

committed only to minor engagements, all the while hoping that a peaceful settlement could be reached.

The four year war (Third Macedonian War) came to a climax on June 22nd, 168 BC when the Romans marched en masse northward and met the Macedonian army at Pydna in southern Macedonia.

In the style of his predecessors, Perseus struck first by unleashing the full might of the Macedonian phalanx. This was not the usual phalanx. It was reinforced with spears all round like a hedgehog, especially at the flanks. "Aemilius Paullus, a veteran commander, declared afterwards that this advance was the most terrifying thing he had ever witnessed." (Page 430, Peter Green, *Alexander to Actium The Historical Evolution of the Hellenistic Age*)

The Macedonians did their best and fought bravely to the last soldier but the disciplined Roman military machine and its fighting style, once again, proved to be superior and the battle was lost. It was the end of Macedonia and Macedonian independence. Perseus was taken to Rome as a prisoner of war, or as Peter Green puts it, "to adorn Paullus's treasure rich triumph". The Macedonian monarchy was abolished and Macedonia was demilitarized and partitioned into cantons so that it would never again be able to fight back. As further insurance of its passivity, Macedonian leaders were rounded up and taken to Rome.

The real horror of the Macedonian defeat was not Pydna but what the Roman army did afterwards. Before leaving Macedonia, the Roman army was unleashed on the civilian population and allowed to loot, pillage and rape uncontrollably. It has been said that an unimaginable amount of treasure, including gold, jewels and art, was carried off to Rome. A large segment of the population was taken into slavery. Severe restrictions were placed on trading commodities including lumber, and most of the state taxes were now diverted to Rome. According to Livy, Macedonia was divided into four regions, each with its own Roman council, and was forced to pay half the tribute to Rome. This would have otherwise been paid to the Macedonian king. If that was not enough, Paullus lent the Aetolians five hundred soldiers so that they too could exact their own brand of revenge on the Macedonians. What happened next is a

tragedy of great proportion that not even the old authors dare describe. The Romans indeed proved themselves to be ruthless, the “true barbarians” that they were, but this was only the beginning.

Athens participated in the anti-Macedonian campaign by supplying the Romans with grain and by fighting side by side with the Romans at Pydna. To the end the Athenians remained anti-Macedonian

Roman rule was harsh and much tension developed between the Macedonians and their new masters. The economic situation was particularly distressful and at times unbearable. Relief, however, did arrive in the form of a pretender named Andriscus. Andriscus claimed to be Philip VI, son of Perseus by Laodice, Seleucus IV’s daughter who was also Demetrius I’s sister. In 153 BC, with Demetrius I’s help, Andriscus went to Rome to plead his case for the Macedonians but the Senate was not interested in a hearing. Frustrated, Andriscus returned and sought help from the Macedonian people who gave him what he needed including royal robes, a diadem, recognition and troops. He received recognition from Byzantium and troops from various Thracian chieftains.

Given the circumstances in Macedonia, rule by a pretender was preferable to being divided and ruled by Romans. When he was ready Andriscus advanced on Macedonia from Thrace and, after two battles in 149 BC, took control of Macedonia. Unfortunately, Macedonia’s freedom was short lived. Two Roman legions, under the leadership of Quintus Macedonicus, were dispatched and ironically ended Andriscus’s career at Pydna in 148 BC.

After this unsuccessful revolt, Macedonia lost its independence entirely and became a Roman province. Macedonia’s total demise and the witness of Roman brutality brought fear into the hearts of the leaders of the Achaean League. Roman atrocities in Macedonia turned the Achaeans from Roman allies to Roman enemies. In 146 BC, in a desperate last ditch effort, the Achaeans engaged the Romans and lost. Roman reprisal was decisive and brutal, involving looting, burning, raping and taking civilians into slavery. Corinth was reduced to rubble and remained a heap of ruins until 44 BC when it was again rebuilt by Caesar.

Pindzhur - Strasho Pindzhur (1915-1943)

Strasho Pindzhur was born in 1915 in the village Vatasha, Kavadar Region. He became orphaned, a casualty of war, and was taken to the government operated boarding school in Kraguevets. While in the Gymnasium he came into contact with the progressive workers movement.

He studied at the faculty of Law in Belgrade and became secretary of the underground Students' Organization "Vardar". He was a close associate and friend of the peoples' hero Ivo Lola Ribar and participated in Party demonstrations. He tried to volunteer in the Spanish Civil War but was unsuccessful. He was jailed several times for his revolutionary activities, and during the WW II occupation he ran into the then secretary of the Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia for Macedonia, Metodi Shatorov Sharlo. He became a member of the first headquarters of the newly formed regional committee in Macedonia.

In December 1942 he was captured by the Bulgarian police and was executed in January 1943.

Reference: Page 25, Macedonian Almanac, 1984.

Piperkata - Jordan Piperkata (1870-1903)

Jordan Silianov-Piperkata was born on June 23rd, 1860 in the village Kozitsa, Kichevo Region. Piperkata was born into a very poor family which could not afford to give him even the most basic education. On top of its impoverished condition, the Turkish tyrants constantly harassed the family. No wonder Piperkata became disillusioned with normal life and turned to outlawry at such an early age.

When the Macedonian revolutionary network expanded to the Kichevo District, Piperkata became one of its most ardent and active supporters. He immediately became a member of the Kichevo revolutionary district and vojvoda (leader) in the Krushevo and Bitola Districts. Piperkata was described as a "people person" who was in constant contact with the Macedonian communities which he

frequented. He was well liked by the common folk who, through their songs and poetry, made him into a legendary hero.

During his short life Piperkata experienced much action and distinguished himself as a fighter and a leader.

He participated in the Smilevo Congress and fought in the August 2nd, 1903 Ilinden uprising.

Piperkata was killed on August 10th, 1903 on his way to the burning village Tser. Piperkata's Cheta was ambushed by Bahtiar-Pasha's numerically superior Turkish army.

Reference: Pages 38-39, Macedonian Magazine, # 518, June 1996.

Pop Trajkov - Lazar Pop Trajkov (1878 – 1903)

Lazar Pop Trajkov was born in 1878 in the village D'mbeni, in Kostur Region. As a young man Lazar was always interested in joining the revolutionary movement but his real break came in 1895 when he went to Solun to further his education. While in Solun he met Damian Gruev and through him was able to join the Movement. Since then Lazar was dedicated to the Macedonian cause and fought for freedom and human rights for all Macedonians.

During the Smilevo Congress in 1903 Lazar was appointed chairman of the Kostur District Revolutionary Committee and during the Ilinden Uprising he was part of the General Staff.

In mid-May 1903, Lazar, with only ninety-seven rebels, fought a sixteen-hour battle against more than one thousand Turkish soldiers on Mounts Lokvata and Vinjari.

During the Uprising, Lazar Pop Trajkov, Manol Rozov, Mihail Nikolov and six hundred and fifty insurgents from Kostur went to General Headquarters in central Macedonia to fight against the Turks. During a fierce battle in the village Chanishte, Mariovo Region, on October 15th, 1903 Pop Trajkov received a serious wound to the head. The battle continued until sunset when the Turkish soldiers withdrew.

When the soldiers withdrew the rebels left for Kostur. On their way they met Sarafov and his band in the Nidzhe Mountains. It was a cold day and snow had blanketed the terrain. The men were tired and hungry but in good spirits.

At the sight of Pop Trajkov's condition, Sarafov ordered the men to go to Kostur headquarters, surrender their arms and go home. He ordered Pop Trajkov to go to Bulgaria and have his wound treated. Being wounded near the mouth, Pop Trajkov could not speak so he wrote and told Sarafov that he did not want to abandon his men. He preferred to go home and share his pain and suffering with his own people. Sarafov was pro-Bulgarian, a Vrhovist and Pop Trajkov did not want anything to do with him.

As the rebels continued on their way, Pop Trajkov took a detour near Oshchima and ran into his former comrade in arms and friend, Kote Hristov from Rula. He asked Kote to treat his wound and give him temporary shelter. Kote did what he was asked and left for Zhelevo.

Lazar Pop Trajkov trusted Kote. He was an usher at Kote's wedding and had twice saved his life. Unfortunately, Kote worked for the notorious Karavangelis and Pop Trajkov was on Karavangelis's hit list.

When he arrived in Zhelevo, Kote informed on Pop Trajkov and sent Pavle Kirov and another man to track him down. When they did catch up to him, they cut off his head and took it to Karavangelis to collect the reward of 50 Turkish liras. Pop Trajkov's headless body was found by Oshchimians and was buried behind the altar of Sveti Nikola Church in Oshchima.

Without wasting time Karavangelis took Pop Trajkov's head to the Turkish vice vizier, who in turn exhibited it at the Kostur center square for everyone to see.

After this repugnant episode the head was delivered to the Aposkep village council, who had it buried in the local cemetery.

Lazar Pop Trajkov, a Macedonian poet, strategist and revolutionary tragically lost his life at age 26. He died when his Macedonians of Kostur needed him the most.

He will be remembered for his dedication to the Macedonian cause and for his fight to free the oppressed and tormented Macedonian people.

Reference: Page 24, Macedonian Magazine, number 416, December 1987.

Prlichev - Grigor Prlichev (1830-1893)

Grigor Prlichev was born in Ohrid on January 30th, 1830 to a very poor family. Grigor's father died when Grigor was only six months old, leaving him and his three siblings in the care of their grandfather.

Grigor's first education came from his grandfather who taught him how to read. He later went to Ohrid and became a student of Dimitar Miladinov, who at the time was well known and gave Grigor a solid education.

After finishing school Grigor became a teacher and taught for a while before going to Athens to study medicine.

Grigor had a passion for writing and soon abandoned medicine for writing.

He wrote the poem "O Armatolos" in Greek with which he entered a literary competition for the best poem in the Greek language and won. He was awarded the highest award "The Lovorov Wreath" in Athens, which earned him the nickname "second Homer". "O Armatolos", or the "The Bandit" in English or "Serdarot" in Macedonian, was based on a folk poem which dealt with the exploits and heroic death of Kuzman Kapitan, a famous hero and protector of his people in their struggle against marauding Gypsies. He later translated the poem in Macedonian.

When Greek officials offered him a scholarship to study in western Europe he turned it down. He realized that even though he loved to write in Greek, he was not Greek.

When Grigor found out that the Greeks were responsible for the tragic deaths of the Miladinov brothers he quickly disassociated himself with the Greeks and went back to Macedonia. He took part in the Macedonian cultural revival and fought against Greek influence in the schools and church. He never wrote in Greek again. After spending five months in Tsari Grad, brushing up on his skills in the Slav language, Grigor returned to Ohrid and resumed his teaching job. Unfortunately he found himself unwelcome and the Greek bishop had him arrested and sent to prison in Debar for opposing the use of the Greek language in the schools and churches in Macedonia.

Later in life Grigor continued to work as a teacher in Bitola, Ohrid and Solun. When he went teaching in Tirana he wrote the poem "Skenderbeg", the exploits of the rebellious Macedonian Georgi Kastriot.

In 1871 Grigor translated Homer's Iliad into Macedonian and was heavily criticized by the Bulgarian writer Hristo Botev for refusing to translate it into Bulgarian.

Before his death Grigor spent his last years in Solun where, among other things, he wrote his own biography. He died in his native city Ohrid in 1893.

References: Page 7, Macedonian Almanac, 1971.
Page 29, Macedonian Magazine, # 420, April 1988.

Puleski - Giorgi Puleski (1818-1894)

Giorgi Puleski was born in 1818 in the village Galichnik. Since a young age he believed in the idea of Christian brotherhood among the various Christian Balkan nations. That is why in 1862, while on pechalba (migrant work) as a bricklayer in Belgrade, Giorgi volunteered in the Serbian army and fought the Turks for two years. During the Russian-Turkish war of 1877 to 1878, while he was in

pechalba in Vlashko (Romania), again determined to help out his Christian brothers he voluntarily took up arms and helped the Bulgarian people, all the while hoping that the Russian army would help liberate the Macedonian people. Puleski along with about four hundred Macedonian volunteers enlisted in the Russian army and fought the Turks, distinguishing themselves in the battles of Sheepka and Stara Zagora.

Sometime later Puleski formed his own cheta and fought in the Raslog and Krushevo uprisings. Because of his personal beliefs and sacrifices, for the betterment of all Balkan peoples, he was joined by Serbian, Greek, Vlah and Albanian volunteers.

Even though Puleski believed in the idea of Christian brotherhood among the Balkan nations, he distinctly believed that the Macedonian people were a unique nation who ought to have their own literary language, which was distinctly different from the other south-Slavic languages. He believed that the Macedonian literary language ought to be created from Macedonian words by the Macedonian people.

Puleski was self taught and while still in Belgrade he published two books, both written in Macedonian dialects.

In one of his books Pulevski wrote: "The Macedonians are people and their place is Macedonia and we call ourselves Macedonians". Regarding the Macedonian language he wrote: "It is related to the Church-Slavonic".

In 1888, while in Sofia, Puleski started the Macedonian Literary Group, "to revive the popular Macedonian literature". Unfortunately his movement was inhibited by the Bulgarian authorities.

Giorgi Puleski, the well-known Macedonian educator, poet, historian, linguist and revolutionary, died in Bulgaria in 1894.

Reference: Page 13, Macedonian Almanac, 1972.

Samoil - Tsar Samoil (- 1014)

In the meantime a new force of power was emerging in Macedonia. In 976 AD, the year emperor John (Tsimisce) died, the four brothers, David, Moses, Aaron and Samoil raised a rebellion. With the collapse of Bulgar rule and in the absence of Pravoslav forces, the rebellion was successful and the brothers decided to rule their newly established state jointly. Unfortunately, the joint rule did not last too long. Vlach shepherds killed David, somewhere between Castra and Prespa, and Moses died during a siege in Serres.

In the absence of David and Moses a struggle for the throne ensued between Aaron and Samoil. Samoil, being a much more talented leader and statesman, was victorious. To prevent further problems Samoil had Aaron and his family executed, with the exception of Aaron's son Ivan.

After consolidating his power Samoil started a westerly campaign penetrating Thrace, Macedonia and Thessaly right down to the Peloponnesus. Just recovering from its last sacking, Solun was about to be sacked again but Samoil decided to continue south and in so doing he took a large number of towns, including Larissa. Samoil resettled the inhabitants of Larissa in the interior of his state and incorporated the Larissan soldiers into his own army.

From Larissa he removed the remains of St. Achilles and brought them to Prespa, to the island of Ail. Protected by the waters of Lake Mala Prespa, Samoil made Ail his capital and built a magnificent palace on it.

It was no accident that Samoil received his strongest support from the territory defined by the triangle of the Vardar River, Ohrid and Mt. Shar. Samoil's success was fueled by the Bogomil movement and its distaste for foreign rule. In Macedonia the Bogomil movement was particularly influential in the creation of favourable conditions for a liberation uprising and the formation of an independent state. Samoil took full advantage of the situation and established a Macedonian state.

Although Samoil may not have been a Bogomil himself, he accepted Bogomilism and its right to exist in his new kingdom. In turn, the Bogomils ceased to verbally attack Samoil, his upper classes, royal

officials and high ranking clergy. If anyone was not pleased with Samoilo's successes it was the Pravoslavs. Samoilo, in combination with the Bogomil movement, was perceived as a powerful force and the Pravoslavs wanted it checked.

For the last ten years or so Basil II was attempting to put down insurrections in Asia, ignoring what was happening in his own backyard. But when the threat became too great to ignore, he gathered an army together and crossed over the frontier regions of the Rhodopes and the River Maritsa. There in August 986 AD, at the hands of Samoilo, Basil suffered a crushing defeat. Basil lost nearly his entire cavalry, a large section of his infantry and narrowly escaped death himself. A peace treaty was concluded giving Samoilo free control of his new territory.

Basil's defeat caused even more internal strife among the Pravoslavs, especially in Asia. The Pravoslav quarrels took attention away from Samoilo and opened opportunities to extend his rule to new territories.

In the summer of 989 AD Samoilo resumed his campaign and took Berroea (Ber). After that he invaded Dalmatia and declared war on young king Vladimir. When Samoilo reached Diocleia, Vladimir fled to the mountains but was persuaded by one of his tribal chieftains to surrender. Samoilo took him prisoner and banished him to Prespa. In much need of resources, Samoilo plundered the whole of Dalmatia and took whatever he could find. He then burned the cities of Kotor and Dubrovnik and razed many villages as far away as Zadar. Samoilo had no navy and was not able to take any of the coastal towns.

Back in Prespa meanwhile, Samoilo's daughter Kossara fell in love with the young captive king Vladimir and wanted to marry him. Not to disappoint her, Samoilo gave in and gave her his blessings. Now that he was his son-in-law he gave Vladimir his former kingdom back. As a wedding gift he also gave the newlyweds Dyrrachium and all its territories. He even returned Trebinje to Vladimir's uncle, Dragomir. Samoilo's good deeds not only earned him the respect of his son-in-law but Vladimir also became his ally and loyal vassal.

When the Pravoslav civil war ended Basil decided it was time to terminate his three year treaty with Samoilo, which lasted from 987 to 990 AD. War broke out in 990 AD and lasted until 994 AD during which time Basil captured and destroyed a number of Samoilo's strongholds. In retaliation, in late 994 AD, Samoilo prepared a siege against Solun during which Gregory Taronites, the city's Governor, was killed. Gregory died while attempting to rescue his son, Ashot, who had been ambushed during a reconnaissance mission. When Basil found out, he was furious and sent Uranus, his Supreme Commander from the west, to investigate. Uranus discovered that not only had Samoilo besieged Solun, but he had been plundering the surrounding countryside. He had also been campaigning in Thessaly, Boeotia, Attica and the Peloponnesus. Upset by the situation, Basil ordered Uranus to attack Samoilo and put an end to his free reign.

Uranus immediately went in pursuit of Samoilo but found the River Spercheios swollen from a flash flood. Unable to cross he camped on the river's bank. As it happened, Samoilo's army had also made camp nearby but on the opposite side of the river. Upon his discovery that Samoilo was close by, Uranus went in search of and found a safe place to cross. During the night he made the crossing and attacked his sleeping adversary. Being unprepared, Samoilo's army was devastated and both Samoilo and his son were badly wounded and barely managed to escape.

Victorious, Basil demanded that Samoilo surrender. Instead of surrendering Samoilo fled to his capital. To convince Basil not to pursue him, Samoilo agreed to sign a peace treaty and offered his surrender in writing. But instead of surrendering Samoilo had himself proclaimed King. What Samoilo really wanted was the crown of an emperor but the Pope of Rome, Gregory V, had no intention of creating another Emperor. Samoilo could have taken the Bulgar crown, but unfortunately that crown was also in Tsari Grad and out of reach. So, all that Samoilo could legally hope for was a mere king's crown. Even though Samoilo's crown was not recognized by Tsari Grad, his coronation gave him international recognition. For the Pope of Rome, this was another chance to erode and weaken Pravoslav rule.

When Basil found out that Samoil was crowned king he became furious and once again dispatched Uranus to destroy him. Unable to engage Samoil in battle, Uranus went on a looting spree burning everything in his path. After three months of mayhem and destruction Uranus failed his mission and returned to Tsari Grad empty handed.

Safe, at least for now, Samoil took the opportunity to marry another daughter, Miroslava, to Ashot, Gregory's son from Solun whom he had previously captured. As a wedding gift he gave the newlyweds Governorship of Dyrrachium with king Vladimir's full approval. The ungrateful Ashot, however, fled to Tsari Grad and for his loyalty was awarded the title of Magistrate, by the Pravoslavs. In the meantime his wife, Miroslava, became a lady-in-waiting at the Tsari Grad court. Soon after Ashot fled, the city leaders of Dyrrachium broke off relations with Vladimir and surrendered their city to the Pravoslavs.

In retaliation and hoping to stir trouble for Basil in Tsari Grad, Samoil began a propaganda campaign promoting Vatatz, a family member from the Basil Glavas family as his ally. The Basil Glavas family and a number of other nobles had taken refuge with Samoil to avoid persecution from Basil.

Instead of creating trouble, Samoil's actions further infuriated Basil prompting him to initiate a new military offensive. Taking a route via Philippopolis, Basil destroyed most cities in the region of Serdica. In the year 1000 he dispatched a large army and attacked all fortified cities, capturing Great and Little Preslav and Pliska, near the River Maritsa. In 1001 Basil himself joined the offensive and marched his army by Solun in the direction of Berroea, where he captured Dobromir. Basil then captured Kolidron, near Berroea, and put Servia under siege. In spite of Servia's brave resistance, the city fell into Basil's hands anyway. Nikolitsa, Servia's Governor, was taken captive to Tsari Grad but instead of being thrown in jail, Basil conferred upon him the honour of a patrician. Nikolitsa, however, was not satisfied and fled to Samoil and together they attacked Servia. Basil retaliated and again captured Nikolitsa but this time he conferred upon him the honour of serving in chains in exile in his jail in Tsari Grad.

After subduing Serbia, Basil took his campaign to Thessaly. He took back and made repairs to the damaged fortresses which Samoil's troops had held. He then refortified the fortresses with fresh Pravoslav garrisons. After that he turned his attention to Voden and took the city by force from the aggressive Governor Drazhan. Drazhan was captured and sent to Solun as Basil's prisoner. Upon his arrival in Solun, Basil dispatched Uranus to Antioch to deal with the Arabs. Uranus was replaced with the patrician David Arijant as Solun's new military commander.

In 1002 Basil made his way to Vidin and after an eight-month siege he broke through the defenses and captured the town. On the same day Samoil forced marched his troops through Thrace, looting and trashing Endrene (Adrianople). If Samoil's intent was to get Basil's attention by trashing Endrene, he succeeded. Basil now moved his campaign to Skopje, where he caught up with Samoil. Unexpectedly Samoil fled without a fight and Skopje's governor surrendered the city to Basil. From Skopje, Basil took his campaign to the fortress of Pernik where he encountered heavy resistance from the great warrior Krakras. Basil failed to take the town and incurred great losses in the process and was forced to return to Tsari Grad.

As if Samoil did not have enough problems with the Pravoslavs he now made the Hungarians angry. His son, who was married to a Hungarian princess, decided to leave her thus bringing disgrace to his family and an end to the cordial relations between Samoil and King Stephen I. After the embarrassing incident, King Stephen abandoned his alliance with Samoil and joined Basil who had offered him an alliance of his own.

In the recent past, Pravoslav attacks and plundering of Samoil's territory were more frequent and of greater intensity. Samoil felt it was time do something and soon. His chance came in 1014 when Basil's forces were about to enter a gorge in the Rhodope Mountains. Samoil surrounded the gorge with a strong force in what was going to be a surprise attack. Unfortunately Basil must have anticipated Samoil's move and ordered one of David Arijant's generals to force march his troops around Samoil's forces. When a fierce battle broke out between Basil and Samoil, Samoil's army was

attacked from the rear and trapped. Unable to withdraw, many of Samoil's soldiers were slain and even more were captured. Samoil himself was saved by his son who aided his escape to the fortress of Prilep.

After his victory Basil rounded up all his prisoners and had his soldiers gouge their eyes out. According to accounts there were fifteen thousand Macedonian soldiers captured that day. To lead the blind soldiers back to Samoil, Basil ordered that one out of every hundred men be left with one eye intact. This was indeed a gruesome act, a real tragedy not only for Samoil but for Macedonia as well. Shaken by the sight of this tragedy Samoil died of shock two days later. Samoil's son Gabriel Radomir succeeded him.

When Samoil died in 1014, his kingdom was vast and included the whole of Macedonia (except for Solun), Thessaly, Epirus, the coastal sclavenes of Oioacleia, Travunya and Zachlumia, the Neretva region (excluding the islands) as far as Cetina, Serbia, Bosnia and a considerable part of Bulgaria. For the most part, the majority of the population living in Samoil's empire was Macedonian with large Slav pockets south of Olympus down to the Peloponnesus. To a lesser extent there lived Bulgars, Serbs, Croats, Romani, Albanians and Vlachs. Additionally there lived migrants such as Vardariot Turks and Armenians who were recently settled there by former Pravoslav emperors and some by Samoil. While many Armenians existed in Thrace, Samoil had also settled some in Pelagonia, Prespa and Ohrid. The Romani were known to exist mostly in coastal regions.

Samoil's kingdom was a newly created state with a completely different nucleus of people and with completely different domestic and foreign policies than any of his neighbours. The center of Samoil's state was in the far south of the Balkans, inside today's Republic of Macedonia. Samoil had a number of capitals, which he used from time to time. During his reign Samoil moved his capital to several places including Prespa, Ohrid, Prilep, Bitola, Pronishte and Setin, all of which were inside Macedonia.

Sandanski - Iane Sandanski (1872-1915)

Iane Ivanov Sandanski was born on May 28th, 1872 in the village Vlahi near Melnik. After finishing primary school Sandanski went to work as a shoemaker's apprentice.

In 1892 he was drafted in the 13th infantry regiment in Kiustendil and became a soldier.

After his release he became an apprentice in his Uncle Spas Harizanov's law firm. He then became warden of the Dupnitsa prison where he worked for a couple of years. He was also a member of the local educational society and subsequently became its librarian and president.

Even though Sandanski was active all his life and held the position of president of the Revolutionary Committee in the Seres District and fought in the Ilinden 1903 uprising, he actually became famous much later. He was not one of the initial founders of IMRO. He was however loyal to the Macedonian cause and came from a family of revolutionaries. His father Ivan was a participant of the Kresna Uprising.

Before his initiation into IMRO, Sandanski came into contact with several of its members including Dimo Hadjidimov, Giorche Petrov and later Gotse Delchev, who enlisted him in its ranks.

Sandanski was a patriotic Macedonian and in addition to fighting against the Turks he fiercely fought against the Greeks and Bulgarians. He particularly detested the Bulgarian Vrhovists who several times made attempts to assassinate him. Since the early 1890's the Vrhovists sought out Sandanski and in September 1902 they fought him in battle and lost. Victorious, Sandanski pushed them back and allowed the Turkish army to finish them off. By his victorious exploits of the Vrhovist detachments, he became known as the "Tsar of Pirin".

The Central Committee's betrayal in Solun, by the Vrhovists, took a toll on IMRO's leadership. While most of the central leadership was arrested and sent into exile in Asia Minor, Sandanski managed to avoid capture and remained active.

Unfortunately the collapse of the Central Committee robbed Sandanski and his Cheta of the necessary funds to remain active and forced him to look for funds elsewhere.

Sandanski became world famous when he kidnapped and ransomed Miss Ellen Stone, the American missionary. Initially Miss Stone was uncooperative and detested her condition but as she became acquainted with the plight of her captors she voluntarily and personally made sure the ransom was paid in full.

After the Miss Stone affair, Sandanski's popularity rose and he became head of the Seres Revolutionary District.

After the 1903 Ilinden rebellion the Turkish army was determined to destroy IMRO, but Sandanski escaped and remained active in the Pirin Region. Many of the revolutionary fighters and Chetas who lost their own leaders joined up with Sandanski and remained active for a long time.

By 1905 Sandanski's forces had repelled Vrhovist incursions and were in control of the Pirin District.

After the death of Dame Gruev and Nikola Karev, Sandanski became a leading factor in the IMRO leadership, a natural successor to Delchev, and began negotiations with the Young Turks for agrarian reforms in Macedonia.

By 1908 the Young Turks had taken control of Macedonia and had released all political prisoners. Then, with support from Sandanski's Cheta, they attacked and successfully took Tsari Grad, the Ottoman capital.

For Sandanski's help, the Young Turks promised to implement reforms that would redistribute lands in favour of the poor Macedonian peasants. To make sure the Young Turks would deliver on their promises, Sandanski had devised a plan of his own termed the "Nevrokop Programme".

To ensure the land reforms were put in place according to agreements, Sandanski requested that he personally be given the

task of organizing a peasant militia to supervise the implementation. Unfortunately, while Sandanski's proposals were widely accepted by the Macedonian peasants, they attracted negative attention abroad. The first to complain were the Greeks; "The consequences of Sandanski's plan, as unfortunately confirmed by events, would be terrible (for us). Unless something else, like a war, or an agreement between the European Powers, settles the Macedonian question in our favour, it is my opinion that there can be no doubt that settlement of the agrarian question would create possibilities for the final settlement of the Macedonian question".

Sandanski's move for cooperation with the Young Turks was a radical departure from IMRO's policies (seizure of power by revolutionary means). To take advantage of the new situation and stay on course, IMRO created an offshoot branch dubbed the "National (or Peoples') Federative Party" (NFP). The NFP was officially launched in early 1909 and worked with (pressured) the Young Turk regime to develop a quasi-parliamentary system and to preserve the national and territorial integrity of Macedonia within an Ottoman Federation.

By the time the NFP was organized and ready to deal with the issues at hand, the Young Turk regime was losing momentum and stagnating. By then it was obvious to IMRO that without "grass roots" support from the Turkish establishment, the Young Turk regime was fighting a losing battle. Its rise to power resulted from a coup and the regime itself was no more than a "dictatorship". The Young Turk regime could no longer maintain a hold on power and on July 13, 1912 capitulated to the Sultan.

After the Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian invasions of Macedonia and for his help in evicting the Turks, on December 12th, 1912 Sandanski called on the so called liberators to give Macedonia its promised autonomy. The Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian occupying armies, however, instead of granting autonomy began to pursue Sandanski and his men at gunpoint. Sandanski resisted and stayed active in the Pirin Region until his assassination in 1915 by Bulgarian agents. On April 22nd, 1915, while traveling from Melnik to Nevrokop, near the Rozhen Monastery, armed assassins sent by King Ferdinand of

Bulgaria attacked and killed Sandanski, ending his illustrious career as a Macedonian revolutionary.

References: Page 273, Michael Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question.

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Shapkarev - Kuzman Shapkarev (1834-1909)

Kuzman Shapkarev was born into a poor family of craftsmen in Ohrid on February 1st, 1834. After finishing primary school he went to secondary school but even though he was a bright and capable student, he had to quit because his family could no longer afford to pay for his education. His career, however, took off when he was offered a teaching job to replace his uncle. From then on he spent the next thirty years or so teaching in various Macedonian towns including the cities of Bitola, Ohrid, Struga, Prilep and Kukush. While teaching, Kuzman became acquainted with the Miladinov brothers and shared his love and passion for Macedonian folk art with them. Through his dealings with them Kuzman met and married Dimitar Miladinov's daughter.

Kuzman was an avid student of Macedonian folk art and through his thirty-year career he collected a great number of folksongs, folk poetry, Macedonian customs, old tales, sayings etc., enough to write and publish eight textbooks.

Kuzman was an excellent ethnographer and the most prolific collector and publisher of Macedonian folk literature. He used the Ohrid dialect to compose his works.

He was often the subject of attack by Bulgarian philologists and social scientists.

Kuzman Shapkarev died in Sofia in 1909.

References: Pages 148-150, Macedonian Almanac, 1988.

Page 25, Macedonian Magazine, # 453, January 1991.

Shiperkov - Pando Shiperkov (1921-1948)

Pando Shiperkov was born on January 10th, 1921 in the village Smrdesh, Kostur, Region. After finishing primary school he went to work as a tailor's apprentice in Hristo Kalea's tailor shop in Smrdesh. Here Shiperkov was given an opportunity to meet with people from all walks of life and learn more about progressive ideas which were popular in those days.

During the German, Italian and Bulgarian occupation of Greek occupied Macedonia, Shiperkov was determined to join the fight for liberation. In June 1941 he attended an anniversary gathering in Lokva Region, which was held to commemorate a great battle that took place in 1903 between the Turkish army and the Macedonian Cheti. During this battle thirteen revolutionaries heroically lost their lives, some were from Smrdesh. Here Shiperkov met with others like himself who shared his ideas.

On July 1st during an annual traditional gathering in the local Smrdesh Church, Sveti Vrach, Shiperkov and a group of antifascists openly challenged the Bulgarian lies and propaganda that were being spread in Kostur Region. The religious gathering turned into a brawl when the Bulgarian emissaries ordered their Italian carabinieri to open fire on the protesters. Shiperkov and his antifascists, however, bravely stood their ground and refused to be intimidated.

In early 1943 a number of Partisans from Smrdesh initiated the formation of a Partisan organization inside Smrdesh and by mid-1943 they began to recruit fighters in what came to be known as the "Lazo Trpovski" detachment. Its first commander was Naum Peiov and its first political emissary was Dimitar Shiskovski.

In the spring of 1943 the Lazo Trpovski detachment became part of the second Cheta, in the second battalion of the 28th regiment of the National Peoples' Liberation Army (ELAS).

Shiperkov fought in every battle in which the 28th regiment was engaged, under the command of Aristotelis Huturas-Arianos. Some of the most important fights Shiperkov took part in included; disarming the armed brigadiers, breaking the German positions at Bigla and Vicho and capturing and disarming German agents who had been armed and spread throughout the Lerin, Kostur and Korcha Regions.

Even though Macedonian fighters voluntarily contributed immensely in the drive to oust the occupiers from Greece, the Greek Communist and ELAS leaderships in Kostur still treated the Macedonians as subordinates and with suspicion. As a sign of protest, a group of thirty Macedonian fighters from the second battalion of the 28th regiment broke off from ELAS and in May 1944 crossed over the border and joined the Macedonian Partisans in Yugoslavia.

On May 20th, 1944 in the village Seltse, just below Karaorman, Macedonians from Kostur region formed the first all Macedonian political party. Shiperkov was one of the first to join.

On June 8th, 1944 in the village Lokovo, the first Macedonian assault brigade was formed under the command of Vangel Shukalovski and Nikola Todorovski-Kaninski (political commissar) and was joined by fighters from Lerin and Kostur Regions. During the second half of June, 1944 another group of forty-five Macedonians abandoned ELAS and joined the first Macedonian assault brigade. Towards the end of June the fighters from Kostur region formed a separate all Macedonian battalion. This was the first and largest Macedonian Partisan unit consisting solely of fighters from Greek occupied Macedonia. Atanas Koroveshov led the unit with Pando Shiperkov as the political commissar of the second Cheta within the battalion.

During the first half of July 1944, under agreement between the Macedonian and Greek Communist Party leaderships, the well armed Kostur battalion returned to Kostur Region to drive out the occupiers. Shiperkov and his associates demonstrated willingness and determination in the fight to liberate their homeland and in the fight for freedom, democracy and equal rights.

On August 2nd, 1944 in the liberated village Pozdivishcha, Kostur Region, a separate Macedonian battalion was formed and named “Gotse” in honor of Gotse Delchev. The founding nucleus of this fighting force came from the battle hardened fighters from Karaorman. The Gotse battalion became part of the 18th regiment in the 9th division of ELAS. Shiperkov retained his position as political commissar of Gotse and fought in every battle in which the battalion was engaged. During one battle, in the village Zelenich, he received a wound in the leg.

Towards the end of September 1944 new misunderstandings began to develop between the Macedonian Partisans and the Greek leadership (Greek Communist Party and ELAS). In early October ELAS ordered Gotse to disband but found stiff opposition among the Macedonian fighters who again chose to cross over into Yugoslavia instead of surrendering to the Greeks. There they joined the Macedonian forces as part of the 49th division of the Peoples’ Liberation Army of Macedonia.

With the arrival of the newly acquired fighters from Kostur and Lerin Regions in Graezhnitsa, Bitola Region, a separate battalion was formed under the command of Atanas Koroveshov and political commissar Pando Shiperkov. After regrouping the battalion again returned to Kostur Region and continued the fight against the occupier and the ELAS leadership. Unfortunately the Macedonian battalion’s presence in Greek occupied Macedonia was unwelcome and short-lived. After finding itself at odds with the Greek ELAS leadership, it again left Greece for Yugoslavia. This was Shiperkov’s third departure from his homeland due to Greek aggression.

By now the Bitola Region had been freed from the occupiers and Macedonians from Greece were regrouping under a new brigade. The First Peoples’ Liberation Shock Brigade was exclusively formed with fighters from Greek occupied Macedonia. Shiperkov, in the role of political commissar, was dispatched to put down remnants of the occupier’s allies, the Balist bands, which at the time were roaming Gostivar, Tetovo and Kichevo Regions.

In May 1945 after the First Brigade was disbanded, Shiperkov was given a job in the Yugoslav army in Gevgelija, as Captain first class. In the spring of 1946 Shiperkov, at his own request, was discharged from the Yugoslav army and in July he joined the People's Liberation Front in Greek occupied Macedonia, at Mount Vicho. This time he was fighting a new enemy, the Greek rightist Monarchists and their British interventionists.

In November 1946 after the re-unification of Macedonian and Greek Partisan forces, Shiperkov was appointed commander of the joint Democratic Army of Greece (DAG) headquarters in Vicho. Towards the end of 1947 when the DAG headquarters was reorganized, Shiperkov was given command of a battalion which subsequently experienced much action around Vicho and Gramos and fought in the battles of Neveska, Lerin, Lundzer, Preseka, Sorovich, Embore and others.

During the first Peoples' Liberation Front congress, Shiperkov walked in as a delegate but left as an elected member of its general staff.

Unfortunately, while leading his battalion into battle near the Church Sveti Ilija, between the villages Grashe and Papratsko in Kostur Region, a piece of artillery from nearby enemy cannon fire exploded near him and ended his life.

Pando Shiperkov died on March 8th, 1948.

Reference: Pages 80-89, Tasko Mamurovski, Svetli Likovi od Egeiska Makedonija (1945-1949).

Sugarev - Giorgi Sugarev (1876-1906)

Giorgi Sugarev was born in 1876 in the village Paralovo, Bitola Region. While attending the Bitola Gymnasium he came into contact with many teachers who were also Macedonian revolutionaries and joined the Macedonian Secret Revolutionary Organization (TMRO). After completing his education Giorgi went to teach in the Strezhevo and Radobor villages and later in the larger schools in Bitola.

Giorgi used his occupation as cover for his covert revolutionary activities which he considered of primary importance.

In 1899 he was sent to the village Ehlovets near Kichevo and the following year he taught in the village Sveti Vrach, also located near Kichevo. Although his post in these villages was not long, it was of importance. After the destruction of the Organization in Kichevo, Sugarev became the sole contact with leaders of the Bitola revolutionary district.

After the establishment of the district Cheta, Sugarev joined voluntarily and stayed with it until the summer of 1901. During his stay the Cheta patrolled the villages around Bitola, Demir Hisar, Kichevo and Krushevo. The experience, along with Rusinski's expertise (Rusinski was educated in military tactics at the University of Sofia), taught Sugarev a great deal about warfare and military tactics.

After his short stay with the Cheta, Sugarev returned to Bitola and resumed his teaching duties and covert revolutionary activities. His return was coincidental with the expansion of the Organization to which he offered his services as a talented agitator and a capable organizer. His reputation caught Damian Gruev's attention, who at the time was serving a prison sentence in the Katiljane prison in Bitola. Gruev requested that the local leadership of the Bitola District fall to Giorgi Pop Hristov and Giorgi Sugarev. Sugarev was appointed leader of the Bitola group.

On November 20th, 1901 Sugarev was placed in charge of security while Gotse Delchev spent a couple of weeks meeting with delegates and the people of Bitola District.

With Delchev's departure, the Organization set out to work with renewed vigour and began to expand and arm its Cheta. Unfortunately its activities did not go unnoticed and one day its headquarters were raided and a number of men were captured. In February 1902 a local informer named Josif, from the village Zhabiani, revealed the Organization's activities and as a result a great number of the fighters were imprisoned. The Turks went after

Sugarev but he shot his way through them and escaped. Others also managed to escape and with them Sugarev formed a new Cheta. Using his prior experience and the military tactics he learned from Rusinski, Sugarev, together with Atse Trajkov, successfully rebuilt the Cheta.

Not long afterwards the Cheta was betrayed again. In Sugarev's absence, while patrolling the village Charlia, the entire Cheta was surrounded by the Turkish army and annihilated. Only Petre Mogilcheto managed to escape. Sugarev at the time was ill and was not with the Cheta.

This was the second time this happened and the TMRO leadership decided it was time to teach the traitors a lesson. Sugarev was given the task of finding and executing them, which he promptly did. TMRO was not just a local organization that could be toyed with and by his actions Sugarev silenced the traitors and brought law and order to the villages.

In 1903, during the Smilevo congress, Sugarev was one of the delegates to represent the Bitola District. After the congress the Bitola District was divided into three units. Sugarev was appointed leader of one of the units and began preparations for the rebellion.

The rebellion started as planned on August 2, 1903 in Pelister Region. Sugarev, in Botola, did his part and liberated the villages Dolentsi, Srptisi and Tsapari. The next day he took the Derven Pass between Bitola and Resen and attacked a Turkish convoy carrying food and munitions.

Unfortunately as the days progressed, the Turks brought reinforcements, artillery and began to bomb the liberated villages, killing and displacing civilians. For some time Sugarev and his Cheta were busy making plans to take care of the refugees. After they were done Sugarev took his Cheta to the defense of Smilevo, where he was confronted by Nazaer Pasha and his troop of 1,200 soldiers. Overwhelmed, Sugarev's Cheta fought gallantly but was unable to turn the tide and was forced to withdraw. As a result the

villages were set on fire and the innocent population suffered extensive reprisals.

When the rebellion was put down, Sugarev stayed in Macedonia and remained true to his beliefs and ideals for which he was again betrayed and paid with his life.

On his way from Stranshte to the village Grumazi, while passing through the Chukarite Pass, Sugarev and his Cheta were expected and surrounded by a superior force of Bashibuzuks (armed Muslim civilians). The battle lasted from eight to eleven in the morning and the entire Cheta was annihilated.

Sugarev was betrayed to the Turkish authorities by foreign agents who could not tolerate his ideals of a free and independent Macedonia. Giorgi Sugarev died in April 1906.

References: Pages 96-103, Macedonian Almanac, 1988.
Page 113-115, Macedonian Almanac, 1976.

Toshev - Pere Toshev (1865-1912)

Pere Toshev was born in 1865 in the town Prilep. He received his primary and lower grades of education in his hometown Prilep and his higher education in Bitola, Solun and Plodvid.

As a young man Pere's greatest wish was to meet some of the old revolutionaries. His wish came true in 1883 when he was attending school in Solun.

Pere could not complete his education in Solun so he had to go to Plodvid. He was expelled from Solun because he, together with some classmates and his friend Giorche Petrov, took part in a protest against the use of the Bulgarian language in the Macedonian schools. For that they were all expelled. After finishing his education in Plodvid, Pere went to Bitola to pursue a teaching career.

During the years 1889 to 1891, while Giorche was still teaching in Skopje, Pere proposed that they work together and plan the

liberation of Macedonia. Pere had already made plans with his other colleagues in 1894/95 to form the nucleus of a future organization that would take charge of the Prilep, Bitola, Ohrid, Resen and Kichevo districts.

Pere was the first president of the Bitola district committee.

Together with Giorche, Pere published the newspaper “Na Oruzhje” (To Arms), which helped to promote the organization’s aims towards the liberation of Macedonia.

Pere was a member of the Solun Central Committee and, together with Ordan Piperkata, formed the first Bitola district Cheta.

In his role as Area School Inspector, Pere was influential and very effective in stirring national sentiments in the Macedonian people. This caught the attention of the Bulgarian sponsored Vrhovists, who did not want Macedonia to become independent, and they informed on him to the Turkish authorities. Pere, as well as all those associated with the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization’s Central Committee, became a target of the well-known Vrhovist Garvanov and his henchmen of the Bulgarian Brotherhood.

In what became known as “The Solun Affair” in 1901, Pere Toshev, along with about three-hundred of his revolutionary associates, were arrested, jailed and sentenced to 101 years imprisonment. This notorious Turkish sentence would keep Pere Toshev locked-up in the Podrum Kale in Asia Minor for eighteen months until he was released as a result of the general amnesty issued as part of the “Padar Reforms” in February 1903.

After his release, at the request of Giorche, Pere went to Sofia but did not find the welcome he expected. During a meeting in Sofia he protested the Solun decision to have an early uprising because he believed it was too soon and the Macedonians were not ready.

He left Bulgaria and illegally arrived in Prilep just before the Smilevo congress was over. Unable to change the situation he accepted the leadership’s decision to start the rebellion.

During the August 2nd, 1903 Ilinden rebellion, Pere Toshev joined forces with Atsev and Rusinski and together held the mountainous region in the Prilep District.

After the Ilinden rebellion Pere stayed in Macedonia and faced the Turkish consequences together with his fellow Macedonians. After the November 1905 Rila Congress, Pere again became a member of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization's central committee. He was a supporter of the left.

Pere was in Solun during the start of the Young Turk uprising but later had to go to Sofia to treat a stomach ailment.

In 1912, at the outbreak of the first Balkan War, he returned to Macedonia only to witness his beloved country, to which he dedicated his life to liberate, become again subjugated and divided. He was a wanted man in Macedonia so he came with a fake passport but the Vrhovists who kept track of his movements, tipped off the Turkish authorities and they were expecting him.

Pere suspected treachery when he was warned by his associates not to go home but he was tired of running and hiding. In response he said, "For me there is no greater happiness than to leave my bones in my own homeland."

Turkish soldiers killed Pere Toshev at Drenovska Klisura, in Prilep Region, on May 4th, 1912 during an ambush. His body was buried in the cemetery of the village Farish.

Reference: Pages 16-17, Macedonian Magazine, # 506, June 1995.

Trajkovski - Boris Trajkovski (1956-2004)

Boris Trajkovski was born on June 25, 1956 in Monospitovo, Strumitsa, SR Macedonia, Yugoslavia, and died on February 26, 2004 at age 47 in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina. He was a Macedonian associated with the political party VMRO-DPMNE and was married to Vilma Trajkovska. He was a Methodist by religion.

Boris Trajkovski was the president and Supreme Commander of the Republic of Macedonia from 1999 to 2004.

Trajkovski was born into a Methodist family. His father, Kiro, who died in September 2008, was a land worker who had served in the Bulgarian Army and had been imprisoned for two years for feeding prisoners of war. Trajkovski graduated in 1980 with a degree in law from the St. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje. He subsequently specialized in commercial and employment law and made several visits to the United States, where he studied theology to become a Methodist lay minister.

After he finished his studies, the Communist government confined him for a time to a remote village owing to his religious activities. There he took care of an impoverished Roma parish of the Evangelical Methodist Church of Macedonia, connected to the United Methodist Church. Following political liberalization in the 1980s, he went on to head the legal department of the Sloboda construction company in Skopje. He served as Methodist youth secretary in the former Yugoslavia for over 12 years. Later he was President of the Church Council of the Macedonian Evangelical Methodist Church. From 1988 he took part in the ongoing Youth Exchange programme between the Methodist Church of Macedonia and the Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead Methodist Circuit in England. In 1991 he studied English at a Christian Language College in Bournemouth, England.

Trajkovski became active in politics following Macedonia's declaration of independence from Yugoslavia in November 1991, when he joined the VMRO-DPMNE party. He played an important role in developing the party's relations with other European political parties and was appointed Chairman of the party's Foreign Relations Commission. In 1997, he became the Chief of Staff of the Mayor of Kisela Voda, a municipality in Skopje. He was appointed Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs on December 21, 1998 but served in this post for less than a year.

Largely because of his reputation as a moderate reformist, Trajkovski was selected as VMRO-DPMNE's candidate for president in the November 1999 election held to replace the

outgoing president, Kiro Gligorov. In the presidential election held on November 14, 1999, Trajkovski defeated Tito Petkovski by 52% to 45%. He was scheduled to take office just five days later, on November 19, but because the results were disputed, parliamentary chairman Savo Klimovski became acting president until Petkovski's supporters lost their last appeal a month later.

Trajkovski's term was marked by tensions between ethnic Macedonians and the republic's ethnic Albanian minority. The aftermath of the Kosovo War led to months of violent armed clashes between Macedonian security forces and Albanian rebels seeking improvements on their status as a legitimate minority and generally better economical, administrative and legal conditions. Although his powers were limited and his role largely ceremonial, he presided over a NATO-brokered peace deal in 2001 that ended the violence and prevented a full-blown civil war in Macedonia. He was seen as a moderate in the ethnic dialogue, arguing for greater inclusion of ethnic Albanians, and has been credited with being a key figure in resolving the conflict. Boris Trajkovski's close friend and advisor was his chief of staff Zoran Jolevski, who later took the role of Macedonian Ambassador in the United States of America and the negotiator of the Macedonia name dispute.

In 2002, Trajkovski was awarded the World Methodist Peace Award by the World Methodist Council for his role in promoting peace and political stability.

Trajkovski died on February 26, 2004 in a plane crash en route to an economic conference in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The aircraft crashed in thick fog and heavy rain on a mountainside in southeastern Herzegovina, near the villages of Huskovići and Rotimlja some eight miles (15 km) south-south-east of Mostar. Eight other people were also aboard but none survived the impact, which broke the aircraft into three pieces. It came down in an area that had been heavily mined during the Bosnian War of the 1990s, which significantly hampered the rescue and recovery efforts.

Although the cause of the crash is not known, it seems likely that it was the result of a controlled flight into terrain, possibly exacerbated by alleged mistakes made by the SFOR air traffic controllers at

Mostar Ortiješ International Airport. The approach to the airport's Runway 34 has been criticized by pilots for being difficult to handle, and as the runway is not equipped with precision landing systems, it is especially challenging in bad weather. The crash is not the first major air accident to kill a politician in southern Herzegovina: on April 3, 1996, the United States Secretary of Commerce Ronald Brown was killed while en route from Bosnia to Croatia.

After his death there was a State Funeral in his honour and on his gravestone is the verse from the Bible "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the sons of God."

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Trpovski - Lazo Trpovski (1900-1943)

Lazo Trpovski was born in 1900 in the revolutionary village D'mbeni, Kostur Region. In 1928 he went to Canada and fought hard to expose the Vancho-Mihailovists, pro-Bulgarian agents among the Macedonian immigrants.

In 1932 he was deported from Canada by the Canadian Government and found himself in Moscow where he enrolled and finished a course in political science.

He returned to Greece in 1935 just in time for the parliamentary elections and became an active campaigner for the Communist Party of Greece.

In 1939, during the Metaxa dictatorship, he was terrorized, persecuted and jailed in the Akronavplia prison for being a communist. During the WW II occupation of Greece he was freed and immediately joined the fight against the occupiers.

Lazo Trpovski became one of the most important organizers of the anti-fascist, anti-monarchist movements in central and south Macedonia.

As a fighter for Macedonian human rights he became very popular in Kostur, Lerin, Voden and even in Kozheni Regions.

On April 11, 1943, an instructor in the Macedonian wing of the Communist Party of Greece, Lazo Trpovski, together with a number associates, was visiting the village Imera, Kozheni Region where he fell into enemy hands and was killed.

Reference: Page 29, Macedonian Almanac, 1984.

Tsepenkov - Marko Tsepenkov (1829-1920)

Marko Tsepenkov was born in Prilep in 1829. He was the son of a traveler who moved a great deal. By the time Marko was fifteen he had traveled to Ohrid, Struga and other places in the country.

In 1844 Marko moved back to Prilep, where he attended the private school of Hadji Pop Konstantin Dimkov and father Aleksa, for two years. After he graduated he became a tailor and through his work he met various people with intriguing stories. Marko was an excellent narrator and became interested in collecting and telling stories.

In 1857 Marko took on a teaching job in Prilep and after meeting Dimitar Miladinov, another fellow Macedonian folk artist, he started collecting even more stories as well as songs, riddles, folk tales, beliefs, curses, proverbs, dreams and much more. At that time he knew more than 150 stories and wrote one to two stories per week. He also wrote the play Tsane Vojvoda and about a dozen or so songs with patriotic themes. He even wrote his own biography. His collected folk works were published in ten books in Skopje in 1972. All in all Marko wrote 269 folk tales, 85 songs, 389 beliefs and curses, 3,827 proverbs, sayings and riddles, 590 beliefs and dreams and their interpretations as well as customs, rituals, white magic and children's games.

Marko Tsepenkov died on December 29, 1920.

Marko Tsepenkov was one of the more important literary artists from the first generation of the Macedonian literary writers.

Reference: Pages 172-184, Macedonian Almanac, 1997.

Tsrnorizets Hrabar

Slavonic education and religious worship developed with considerable success in the empire within the boundaries in which Macedonia was situated. The Koine language was gradually ousted in the Slavic Churches and replaced by the Macedonia language. The Koine speaking clergy lost their positions they had held up to now.

The non-Slavic speaking population, particularly the Koine speaking clergy, naturally reacted to the new situation which put Slavonic literacy in the defensive. Evidence of this can be found in the works "O Pismeneh" by a lesser known defender of Slavonic literacy known as Tsrnorizets Hrabar. Hrabar's work, which has been preserved in a large number of copies, lays out the development of Slavonic literacy, from the use of "lines and incisions" employed by earlier Slavic and Macedonian speakers through the use of the Latin and Koine alphabets to the invention of the Macedonian Cyrillic script and alphabet introduced by Kiril the Philosopher. As far as we know, Hrabar's work was one of the first polemical works devoted to Slavonic education. Details of Tsrnorizets Hrabar's life have yet to be verified. It is assumed that he was acquainted with Kiril and Metodi's pupils and that he may have lived during Kliment, Naum, and Konstantin of Bregalnitsa's time. Popular opinion puts him as working in places where the Ohrid Literary School was active.

Reference: Page 36, A History of the Macedonian People, 1979.

Tsrvenkovski - Branko Tsrvenkovski (1962-

Branko Tsrvenkovski was born on October 12, 1962 in Sarajevo, Yugoslavia (now Bosnia and Herzegovina) and belongs to the

political party Social Democratic Union. He is married to Jasna Tsrvenkovska. He is an Atheist.

Branko Tsrvenkovski lead the Republic of Macedonia's largest opposition party, the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia. He was Prime Minister of the Republic of Macedonia from 1992 to 1998 and again from 2002 to 2004, then President of the Republic of Macedonia from 2004 to 2009.

In 1986 he obtained a bachelor's degree in Computer Science and Automation from the School of Electrical Engineering at the St. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje.

He was elected member of the Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia at the first multi-party elections in Yugoslavia in 1990 after serving for several years as head of department at the Semos Company in Skopje. A former communist, Tsrvenkovski has been at the head of the Social Democratic Union of Macedonia since April 1991.

On September 5, 1992 he became Macedonia's second prime minister after its secession from Yugoslavia and continued in the post for another four years following the December 1994 elections.

He served as Prime Minister from 1992 to 1998 and from 2002 until 2004. He was most recently elected in 2002 after his Social Democratic Union of Macedonia party won parliamentary elections.

In July 1996 he ordered that Albanian flags in front of government buildings in western part of the Republic of Macedonia be removed. The situation escalated with one person dead and many injured. In 2005, on his initiative, the Albanian flag was legalized.

He won the April 2004 presidential election against Sashko Kedev, and took office on May 12, 2004. He then resigned as prime minister.

Tsrvenkovski did not run for a second term in the presidential elections in March 2009. Instead, he returned to his party and was elected to be the head of the party on May 24, 2009.

Branko Tsrvenkovski is an Honorary Member of Raoul Wallenberg Foundation.

In Albania he received a copy of the key to the city Tirana on the occasion of his state visit to Albania.

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Tupurkovski - Dimitar Tupurkovski (1912-?)

Dimitar Mito Tupurkovski was born in the village Oshchima in 1912. He was only five weeks old when his father Vasil was brutally murdered by the retreating Turkish army. He was fortunate to have two older brothers who looked after him and financially helped him to get an education. From an early age, while studying in college, Mito found himself among progressive students and teachers. His experience shaped his life to endeavour on behalf of the oppressed and fight for justice, freedom, human rights and independence for all people everywhere.

Mito completed his education as a teacher, but with the fascist occupation of Macedonia he left his teacher's position and joined the People's Army of Liberation as a Partisan in the Aegean Brigade in which he achieved the rank of Captain. Later in 1944 he joined the Macedonian Army in Yugoslavia and in a short time reached the rank of Major.

After the war Mito remained in the Peoples' Republic of Macedonia.

Reference: Benefit Society Oshchima, 75th Anniversary 1907-1982.

Uzunov - Hristo Uzunov (1878-1905)

Hristo Uzunov was the ideological leader of the revolutionary movement in the Ohrid Region. His father was a teacher actively involved in the revolutionary movement and his mother came from the family of revival activist Giorgi Chakalov from Struga.

Hristo Uzunov was born on October 22nd, 1878 to a poor family in Ohrid. After finishing level four in the pre-gymnasium school in Ohrid, during the period 1894-1896, Uzunov continued his education in the gymnasium in Solun, where he completed a teaching course, becoming a teacher. In Solun, which happened to be the centre of Macedonian revolutionary activities at the time, he joined the revolutionary movement and became President of the revolutionary centre in the gymnasium.

The revolutionary circle, as Giorche Petrov characterized it “the first step to activism”, with Uzunov at the helm, was responsible for the student protests in 1896 in Solun against the authorities and especially against the Exarchists. The student protesters in solidarity with the teachers, who were also revolutionaries, went on strike for twenty days. Among them was Damian Gruev who, as a result of his activities, made Uzunov a member of the revolutionary organization.

After Uzunov graduated from the Solun gymnasium he returned to Ohrid and took on a teaching job as well as the responsibility of organizing the revolutionary movement, not only in the city of Ohrid but also in the rural surroundings and outlying villages. As a result he became one of the first and most important organizers especially of the Macedonian villages which in time became the backbone of the rebellion. His activities earned him the title “soul of the uprising” and, for his leadership abilities, in 1901 he was made head of the revolutionary movement in the entire Ohrid Region. A few months later he became a member of the first revolutionary cheta and began work on building an army.

In January 1902 Hristo Uzunov, suspected of being involved in the revolutionary movement, was arrested by the Turks and put in jail in Bitola. He was released in March 1903 due the general amnesty given as part of the “Padar’s Reforms”. He immediately returned to Ohrid and in a few days took command of the Ohrid Revolutionary

Cheta. A little later he became the unofficial regional chief of the entire Ohrid and Drim Regions. He then resumed where he had left off rebuilding the armed forces and prepared for the immanent general uprising. He attended the May 3rd, 1903 Smilevo Congress under the title, leader of the Ohrid delegation.

In spite of objections that they were not yet ready for a general uprising, a decision was made at the Smilevo Congress to begin the rebellion on Ilinden, August 2nd, 1903. Uzunov immediately began preparations by establishing regional headquarters, arming his fighters, appointing the leadership and administration and drafting his war plans.

During the rebellion Uzunov's cheta fared well and scored more victories than losses.

After the Ilinden rebellion, many of the Ohrid regional leaders left Ohrid and went to Sofia. Their departure left a bad feeling amongst the Macedonian people. A few leaders however, including Hristo Uzunov, remained and spent their time in the Smilevo mountains until December 1903 at which time they returned to their own regions and made attempts to reestablish the abolished Committees of the Macedonian Revolutionary Organization.

Uzunov returned to Ohrid and was successful in re-establishing contact between village organizations and the regional committee. During 1904 and 1905 Uzunov focused mainly on resisting foreign influence and resolving internal problems that the revolutionary organization was facing.

In March 1905 Uzunov went off on an inspection tour to Bitola and Krushevo. As he made his way to Czer, in Kichevo Region, on April 24th he and Krushevo commander, Vancho Srbakov, and eleven fighters found themselves surrounded by Turkish troops.

Unable to call for help or to escape the rebels were left with two options, surrender or die fighting. They made a decision to die fighting.

Before it was all over Uzunov wrote a note which in part said: "My last piece of advice to all my companions is to be sincere to our cause and to everyone who serves that cause, because only chastity and pure sincerity can raise the Internal Organization, and only they will save it from the abnormal situation in which it has been placed by our companions who have a distorted awareness. Please do your best to destroy, as soon as possible, those people within the present leadership of the Organization that have harmed the cause, those like Sarafov, and do not punish mere workers. Our idea will be accomplished..."

After handing over his note and his archival papers to the villagers, the two commanders and their eleven companions used their last bullets on themselves.

Hristo Uzunov's revolutionary days ended with his death on April 24, 1905.

Reference: Pages 128-130 Macedonian Almanac 1985.

Vlahov - Dimitar Vlahov (1878-1953)

Dimitar Vlahov was born in 1878 in Kukush, Ottoman Empire (now Greek occupied Macedonia) and died in 1953 in Belgrad, SFRY (now Serbia).

Vlahov was a member of the Ottoman Parliament from the fall of 1908 to January 1910 (when he resigned from the Federative Party). He was a member of People's Federative Party. He was a Christian Orthodox by religion.

Dimitar Ianakiev Vlahov was a Macedonian revolutionary and a member of the left wing Macedonian-Adrianople revolutionary movement (also known as Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO)). As with many other IMRO members of the time, historians from the Republic of Macedonia consider him to be an ethnic Macedonian.

He was born in Kukus and attended the Bulgarian Men's High School in Solun. After that he immigrated to the Kingdom of

Bulgaria and graduated from secondary school in Belogradtchik. Vlahov also studied chemistry in Germany and Switzerland, where he took part in socialist circles. However, he graduated in these subjects from Sofia University. Here he enrolled in the Bulgarian Social Democratic Workers' Party.

In 1903, Vlahov entered military service in an officer's school in Sofia. Then he worked as a teacher in the Bulgarian Men's High School in Solun where he was active in IMRO. During this period, he was arrested by the Ottoman authorities. In 1905, Vlahov was released and went back to Bulgaria where he worked as a teacher in Kazanlak. In 1908, after the Young Turks revolution he resumed working in the Bulgarian secondary school in Solun.

In the next few years, Vlahov was politically active as a member of the Ottoman Parliament as a representative from the People's Federative Party (Bulgarian Section). After the dissolution of the PFP in 1911, he became a member the Ottoman Socialist Party and in 1912 was elected again as a deputy in the Ottoman Parliament. After the Balkan Wars, Vlahov was a representative of the Kingdom of Bulgaria in high diplomatic and administrative positions in Odessa, Kiev, Pristina and Vienna. After World War I and the reestablishment of IMRO in 1920, Vlahov was elected as alternate member of its Central Committee, representing the left wing. At that time he was sent in Varna by Todor Alexandrov to establish contact between IMRO and Soviet Russia. Krastio Rakovski, his best man and prominent figure of the Comintern, served as his messenger. On behalf of IMRO, Vlahov departed for Moscow in July 1923.

In Vienna, in 1924, IMRO entered negotiations with the Comintern about collaboration between the communists and the Macedonian movement and the creation of a united Macedonian movement. Vlahov helped the subscription of the so-called May Manifesto about forming a Balkan Communist Federation and cooperating with the Soviet Union. After the subsequent rift between the organization and the Communists, the new leadership, headed by Ivan Mihailov, excluded him from the organization and he was sentenced to death but was not captured.

In 1925, he was one of the founders of the IMRO (United) in Vienna. He also became a member of the Bulgarian Communist Party. During the late 1920s, he worked in France, Germany and Austria as a Comintern publicist. During this period he was pursued by IMRO with several failed assassination attempts.

In 1932 as a member of IMRO (United), for the first time, Vlahov put the issue of recognizing Macedonia as separate nation in a lecture in Moscow. The question was also studied in the highest institutions of the Comintern and in the autumn of 1933, Dimitar Vlahov arrived in Moscow and took part in a number of meetings.

On January 11, 1934, the Political Secretariat of the Comintern adopted a special Resolution on the Macedonian Question. From 1936 to 1944, Vlahov lived in the Soviet Union and in 1944 he went to the new Yugoslavia to work for the Socialist Republic of Macedonia. However Macedonian activists like him, who came from the IMRO (United) and from the BCP, never managed to get rid of their pro-Bulgarian bias.

In 1948, during a meeting of the Central committee of the Macedonian Communist Party, he said that IMRO (United)'s in 1932 made a political mistake when it decided to form a separate Macedonian identity. Later, he was gradually pushed out of power by the pro-Yugoslav circles of Lazar Kolishevski. Vlahov died in Belgrade in 1953.

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Vlaot - Mitre Vlaot (?-1907)

Mitre Pandorov-Vlaot was born in Kolomnati (Konomladi), Kostur Region. It is unknown when he was born or what education he may have had. He was Vojvoda in Kostur Region, trained in the art of war by the military expert Markov.

When Kliashev and Chakalarov formed two new Cheti during the winter of 1901-1902, Mitre Vlaot was made Cheta Chief of one of them.

Before the 1903 Ilinden Uprising Vlaot was involved in a number of intrigues, removing informants and pursuing Kote Hristov from Rula. On the night of October 1st, 1902 he and his associates killed the priest Vasilli, in Zhelevo, who acted on behalf of Karavangelis and paid his paid assassins.

During the Ilinden Uprising he took part in the liberation of Klisura, Neveska and a number of other villages in the Kostur and Lerin Regions.

After the Ilinden Uprising he remained active in pursuit of more intrigues.

In August 1906 Vlaot set a trap for Karavangelis, who was scheduled to visit Nestrami for the feast of Transfiguration, but instead killed his student Fotios, bishop of Koritsa. Karavangelis was too clever to travel with his entourage and took a different route to avoid ambush.

One notable deed that can be attributed to Mitre Vlaot was the killing of the Greek armed propagandist and brigand leader, Pavlos Melas. As the story goes, Melas had grown complacent around the Turks and as long as his band was doing the dirty work of attacking

the Macedonian Cheti, Melas had nothing to fear from the Turks. This, however, posed a serious problem for the Macedonians.

On the afternoon of October 13th, 1904, while Melas was headed for Statitsa, word came that a Turkish force was on the move in Kolomnati. As they neared Statitsa in the pelting rain, Melas insisted on entering the village against the advice of his associates. "Turkish soldiers always take this route from Kolomnati to Zhelevo." he exclaimed showing no concern. Just to be safe he ordered his men to move up to the higher part of the village and refrain from making themselves conspicuous. What Melas did not know is that Mitre Vlaot had been tracking his movements and had sent a letter written in Greek to the Turkish captain saying that Mitre Vlaot was in Statitsa. With a huge price on Vlaot's head, how could the Turkish captain resist? The Turks surrounded the house which had been clearly pointed out in the letter and attacked and killed Melas and some of his associates. The Turks did not know it was Melas until the news came out of Athens.

Being unable to kill him, in 1906, Karavangelis attempted to buy off Vlaot but he found out he was not for sale. He offered him a residence in Greece, an income of 10 pounds a month and free education for his sons, with prospects of becoming officers in the Greek army. At Vlaot's refusal, Karavangelis provided the Turks with intelligence information and two guides to take them to his whereabouts and had him and most of his Cheta killed.

Mitre Vlaot, the scourge of the Greeks, died on March 5th, 1907 in Slivenik, Kostur Region.

Reference: Douglas Dakin, The Greek Struggle in Macedonia 1897-1913.

Women in the Macedonian Uprisings

-- **Rumena Vojvoda**

-- **Srebra Apostolova**

-- **Kostadinka Vojvoda**

It is estimated that about three-hundred women participated in the Ilinden Uprising in Ohrid Region alone. Their roles ranged from

cooks to fighters. They were the tailors, nurses, messengers, weapons' smugglers and the early warning systems of the revolution. A great number of them were teachers, employed by foreign schools, who taught young Macedonians about freedom and justice. Women were least suspected of being revolutionaries. When it came to transporting arms and ammunition, women were very reliable and counted on to do the job. Women never cracked under pressure, never informed on their comrades and never betrayed the cause.

Before there was a revolution or an organized cause to fight for, women joined outlaw bands and fought for justice. Some even rose to the ranks of chiefs and started their own bands of outlaws.

Rumena Vojvoda, also known as "Gorska Tsaritsa" (Queen of Gorska) was such an outlaw who roamed the mountains of Kriva Palanka with her band of outlaws. She evoked fear and trepidation in her enemies whenever her name was mentioned. She used the St. Joakim Osogovski cemetery as a hideout where "in the name of freedom" she swore the loyalty of her new recruits.

Srebra Apostolova from Lerin Region, **Kostadinka Vojvoda** from Izvor, Magda Gonova and others were some of the most notorious and best known Macedonian women fighters of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Reference: Pages 34-35, Macedonian Magazine, # 515, March 1996.

Zhinzifov - Raiko Zhinzifov (1839-1877)

Raiko Zhinzifov was born in 1839 in the town Veles. He received his education in Veles after which he became a teacher and took on a teaching job in Prilep where he met and got to know Dimitar Miladinov. Through Dimitar's influence Raiko began to study and collect Macedonian folklore and to wage war against the Phanariot politics.

In 1856, together with Miladinov, he transferred to Kukush and actively began to advocate the use of the Macedonian language in Macedonian schools.

In 1857 he left for Moscow to further his education. He was a brilliant student and, with Konstantin Miladinov's help, was able to obtain a scholarship.

He studied Slavian Philology and wrote poetry, articles and dissertations and submitted them for publication in the periodical "Bratski Trud" (Brotherly Labour). He also collaborated with various newspapers in Moscow.

He is well known for his work as a journalist in Russia, where he strove to spread the truth about Macedonia and its liberation. His work places him among the greatest Macedonian journalists. Raiko was a great poet known for his masterpieces "The Bloody Shirt", and the "The Fiddle Player at the Gathering of the People", true depictions of life in Macedonia.

Unable to return to his homeland after completing his studies in Moscow, he remained in Russia and spent the rest of his life teaching as a professor in the Moscow gymnasiums.

Raiko was a great poet and strived to inspire all Macedonians, especially the intellectuals to fight on for their freedom and for their national revival.

Raiko Zhinzifov, a teacher, publicist, translator and collector of folk works died in Moscow on February 17th, 1877.

References: Page 21, Macedonian Almanac, 1971.
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Historic Macedonian Organizations

Archbishopric of Ohrid – Creation of

The Archbishopric of Ohrid was established during Tsar Samoil's reign, sometime after 976 AD. The Seat of the Archbishopric initially was set in Prespa and later, when Samoil moved to Oghrid he moved his capital and head of the Church there. Ohrid became both the capital and the head of the Church in Samoil's empire.

But because the Byzantine Court refused to recognize Samoil as an Emperor and the Archbishopric as his legitimate Church, Samoil received his recognition by Rome. In other words Samoil was invested and crowned by the Roman curia, with which he remained in good terms.

The new Archbishop of Ohrid had authority over all the bishops in Samoil's Empire. The most prominent among them being Serditsa (Sofia), Dristra, Moglen, vetbuzhd, Glavin, Belgrade, Naissus (Nish), Prizren, Liplyan, Rashka, Morozvizd, Bitola, Voden, Drama, Srbich, Verria, Strumitsa and Kostur.

The Archbishopric of Dyrrachium and the newly-founded Archbishopric of Ragusha (Dubrovnik), to the foundation of which Samoil had given his consent, were not dependent on the central Ohrid Archbishopric.

The Macedonian church was especially favoured in Samoil's empire. The clergy and the archbishops in particular, enjoyed their privileged positions.

Reference: Page 47, A History of the Macedonian People, 1979.

The Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO)

The industrial revolution in England and the social revolution in France were two of the most significant factors in the inducement of rapid economic growth and social changes in western Europe. By the early 19th century, western capitalists were making their way into

the Balkans looking for investment opportunities and market expansion, just as the Ottoman Empire was experiencing decline.

Penetration of western capital into the underdeveloped Balkans commenced around the 1870's in the form of financial loans, mostly for military and infrastructure projects. Infrastructure upgrades such as road, bridge and rail construction were important but were geared more to Western Powers strategic needs and less to domestic economic development. Army maintenance and government bureaucracies were also important sectors to upgrade but they hardly produced any returns.

With virtually no returns on its investments, the Ottoman State quickly became bankrupt.

To overcome the problem, Western Powers imposed spending restrictions and through the International Finance Commission imposed budgetary controls on the Ottoman State's budget. The Commission was made up of very influential western European capitalists whose first priority in managing the budget was to pay interest on the loans.

The brunt of the ensuing crisis was naturally felt by the rural producing class, which was about 80% of the Macedonian population. Being the main producers of goods, Macedonian villages were the most suppressed and exploited social stratum of the Ottoman population.

The encroaching European markets, able to produce goods cheaper, disrupted the way of life and put much of the Macedonian agrarian sector out of business. Social reform and welfare to aid the unemployed was not there since most of the state budget was redirected to pay returns on foreign loans. As a result, the new economic stratification virtually destroyed the traditional village economy, creating considerable economic and psychological distress among the rural population.

The problem was compounded when higher taxes were introduced. The economically strapped peasant, who could hardly afford to

survive on his meager income, was now expected to pay even higher taxes.

The majority of the rural population worked the land as tenants and were subjected to a land tax of no less than 10% of the plot's value, payable to the state. An additional 25% income tax (tithe) was payable on productive labour. Of his total produce, the peasant was entitled to only one half. Out of his half, further taxes were paid to the state, the tax collector, the landlord and the local gendarme. By the time all taxes were paid there was hardly anything left for the peasant for survival. So the incentive for him to work the land was no longer there.

As the Ottoman Empire continued to suffer economically, it could no longer decisively respond to external threats and adequately defend its territories, so it began to slowly lose its integrity.

Since none of the Great Powers desired a new large state to replace the existing Ottoman territories, they allowed the Ottoman Empire to slowly degrade. As it crumbled they did everything possible to encourage new and smaller states to take its place.

Caught in a power struggle and mistrusting one another, the Great Powers could not, without consequences, militarily intervene in the Balkans. So next best thing to do was influence each newly created state by any other means possible and sway them in their direction.

Russia, the most powerful of the Great Powers, often attacked the Turkish State but it never made any real gains. The Western Powers intervened on Turkey's behalf and almost always reversed Russia's actions in Turkey's favour. There were however some exceptions. Russian intervention, for example, was responsible for Serbia gaining its autonomy from the Ottomans and for turning Serbia into a Slavic State.

The Western Powers were afraid of Russia, especially of Pan-Slavism, and often joined forces to keep Russia at bay. Britain took extraordinary measures to keep Russia from gaining access to the Mediterranean waters. Britain strived to keep the modern Balkan States, resulting from the Ottoman breakup, from becoming Russian

allies. The creation of modern Greece, with a totally alien national character, is a good example of British intervention.

Frustrated with the Western Powers, Russia in 1878 attacked and overran the Ottoman State creating a Greater Bulgaria (which included all of Macedonia). Again the Western Powers intervened and Russia's actions were reversed. The Western Powers did however agree to allow a smaller autonomous Bulgaria to be created. Macedonia was given back to the Ottomans.

Even though Macedonia was given back, it was now only a matter of time before it was taken away again. Unbeknownst to the Macedonian people, the Great Powers had promised to divide Macedonia between Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia. Since no agreement was made as to how and when the division was going to take place and which territory was going to which state, Macedonia became the "apple of discord". The only stipulation made by the Great Powers was that Macedonia be divided along national (Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian) lines. In other words, Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian nationalities had to exist in Macedonia before a state could make territorial claims. Since there were no Greek, Bulgarian, or Serbian nationalities living in Macedonia, the competing states sought ways to invent them, which in time escalated the competition between them and propagated the Church Wars.

To get inside Macedonia, Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia made use of an old Ottoman legal provision which allowed Ottoman citizens to pray in a church of their choice. Being Orthodox Christians, the same as the Macedonians, each competing state established its own churches and subsequently its own schools inside Macedonia. Each state then used them to promote its propaganda and carry out denationalization and assimilation campaigns.

For obvious reasons, the Great Powers wanted Macedonia to remain under Ottoman control for as long as possible (so that they could continue to collect interest on their loans). Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia on the other hand, fearful and mistrustful of one other, wanted Macedonia partitioned as soon as possible.

By the 1880's Macedonians were fighting on multiple fronts. Besides fighting the Ottomans and the Great Powers for their economic survival, they now had to fight Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian intervention, which not only threatened the loss of their country but also the erasure of their identity.

These were the conditions under which the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO) emerged.

Macedonians were well aware of the situation in their country and in the surrounding Balkans and followed events as they unfolded. So the thought of liberating their country was not something new or too far from their minds. Macedonians had fought in the first wave of insurrections between 1804 and 1830 during which Serbia, Greece and Romania were liberated. They then fought in the second wave of insurrections between 1876 and 1889 in which Bulgaria, Macedonia and Albania were liberated. Unfortunately, the Western Powers handed Macedonia right back to the Ottomans. Macedonians had also fought during the Razlog Uprising in May 1876 and during the Kreshna Uprising in October 1878.

Unfortunately most Macedonians were poor and totally dependent on their landlords for their livelihood. They possessed no tactical power, nor the potential to overthrow the system. The bourgeoisie operating in Macedonia was weakened by the competitiveness of European capital and the petit-bourgeoisie was underdeveloped and had its own problems with the hostile Patriarchy. The only choice the Macedonians had was to wait for someone else or for some external power to challenge and remove their oppressors. Unfortunately given the mindset of the Great Powers, no such power existed.

Given the economic conditions in Macedonia, a number of leading Macedonian intellectuals came to the conclusion that Macedonia could no longer afford to wait for external intervention and must act on its own. Macedonians must liberate themselves without dependence on outside help. The most effective way to do that was through a united national front. All of Macedonia must be organized, armed and mobilized so that when the time came it could act as one. To organize such an effort, a central organization would

be needed which would have the freedom to operate throughout Macedonia. Naturally it would have to be a secret organization and do its work clandestinely.

The beginnings of such an organization came from a number of Macedonian student groups studying abroad who had fought against the foreign propaganda.

One such student group, stationed in Switzerland, agitated the European bureaucracy by releasing its own virulent propaganda, refuting chauvinist allegations. Another student group, stationed in Sofia, did the same in Bulgaria. This group was organized by Petar Pop Arsov, Kosta Sahov and Hristo Matov in late 1891 and allied itself with the Macedonian pechalbari (migrant workers). An offshoot of this group helped Vasil Glavinov establish the “Macedonian Social-Democratic Party” in Sofia in 1893, which attracted many Macedonians.

Other such Macedonian revolutionary organizations existed in Russia, Greece (the Macedonian Brotherhood in Athens, 1893) and Britain (the Committee for Autonomy of Macedonia and Albania, in London).

The foundation of the first Revolutionary organization inside Macedonia was laid on October 22nd, 1893, when a group of concerned Macedonian intellectuals got together at Ivan Nikolov’s house in Solun, sharing opinions on Macedonian issues and what to do about them. Among the intellectuals present were bookstore owner Ivan Nikolov, high school teacher Damian Gruev, former editor of the journal Loza Petar Pop Arsov, high school teacher Anton Dimitrov and Doctor Hristo Tatarchev.

Over the following months other Macedonians joined the debate and a second meeting was convened on February 9th, 1894 in Solun, during which a Constitution for the organization was drafted with the following resolutions;

- (a) The “Society”, once properly constituted, would be of a secret and revolutionary nature.

- (b) Its revolutionary activities would be confined to within Macedonia's geographic and ethnographic borders.
- (c) Any Macedonian citizen might be allowed membership, irrespective of nationality (Albanian, Turk, Vlah, etc.) or religion (Christian, Muslim, Jew, etc.).

The name chosen for the organization was the Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (MRO).

[It was then changed to TMRO (T for Taina-Secret) and later to VMRO "Vnatrezhno-Makedonska Revolutsionerna Organizatsija". For the purpose of this article we will call it "Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization" or IMRO.]

The group also set the following goals for the organization;

- (i) to destroy the Ottoman system
- (ii) to remain an "independent" organization
- (iii) to seek Macedonian autonomy

These goals were ratified during the organization's first Revolutionary Congress held in Resen in August 1894.

At its onset IMRO had problems recruiting members. But after the Solun congress in 1896 its situation improved dramatically. Initially, due to IMRO's secret nature, it was difficult getting the word out but as interest expanded beyond Solun to regional towns like Ohrid, Bitola and Resen, support became widespread. An early tactic employed successfully by IMRO was the use of teachers in the Exarchate schools, charged with educating the people with revolutionary propaganda. Unfortunately this was not enough. Without mass participation there would be no revolution, so IMRO sought to find a charismatic leader who would attract the attention and capture the imagination of the masses, yet be someone capable of comfortably communicating with them on their own level. Luckily such a charismatic leader was found in Gotse Delchev who had the soul of an anarchist, the convictions of a social democrat and acted like a revolutionary. His induction into the organization enabled IMRO to reshape its image from an organization run by intellectuals to one that would assert itself as a potent revolutionary force and guide Macedonia's destiny.

With Delchev at the helm, IMRO expanded its influence to Shtip, Veles, Kukush and Solun Regions.

Although IMRO had begun life in late 1893 as a secret organization, by 1896 it had developed almost to a point where it acted as a state within a state. In taking part and in leading demonstrations and boycotts against Ottoman State institutions, IMRO became the natural protector of the Macedonian people especially in the many isolated villages. Likewise, it acted as a diplomatic unit informing both Macedonians and outsiders of the injustices of Ottoman rule and the greedy ambitions harboured by the new Balkan States and their benefactors, the Great Powers.

Delchev believed that true revolutions succeed by seizing power by means of institutions established by the revolutionary masses themselves, often spontaneously or at the suggestion of the organization directing the revolutionary fight. Delchev was firmly committed to a long term violent revolution. He believed a frontal battle with the Ottomans would seriously damage the organization. In hindsight, he was correct.

IMRO's success inside Macedonia was becoming a threat to Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian Imperial territorial ambitions towards Macedonia. While each reacted in their own way, the Bulgarian response was unique to say the least. Since Bulgaria became a state it refused to recognize the existence of a separate and distinct Macedonia. It refused to recognize the Macedonian people as ethnically distinct from Bulgarians. Bulgarian policy was and remains to this day, that "Macedonians are Bulgarians". Anything that was Macedonian was Bulgarian, including IMRO. Bulgarians believed that IMRO should be getting its directives directly from Sofia and as such in March 1895 created the "External" Organization, better known as the "Supreme Macedonian Committee in Sofia". Even though this organization's majority membership came from nationalist Macedonian immigrants, its leadership was drawn from the Bulgarian army ranks.

This insidious Organization, better known as the "Vrhovists" (vrhovist means supremacist in Macedonian), through its allegedly "sympathetic" stance sought desperately to undermine and control

IMRO by attempting to subordinate its central committee to its Supremacist directives. When that failed it attempted, by covertness and assassinations, to eliminate the subjective forces within the Organization.

Bulgaria, through armed Vrhovist intervention, was hoping to provoke Ottoman reprisals against the innocent Macedonian population. Pretending to be IMRO, Vrhovist agents would openly challenge Ottoman authorities who, out of revenge, would attack Macedonian villages. This of course would be mistakenly blamed on IMRO by the European press and would tarnish IMRO's reputation. Great Power pressure would then be leveled against the Ottomans, which the Bulgarians hoped might seriously weaken Ottoman control over Macedonia. This would then create ideal conditions for Bulgarian intervention on Macedonia's behalf and Bulgaria would then carry out Macedonia's liberation, or should I say annexation.

The political climate that produced the "Supreme Committee" (the Vrhovists) was created by the Bulgarian State and by Prince Ferdinand himself.

Bulgarian intervention in Macedonian internal affairs was not limited to Vrhovist activities alone. Vrhovist work was supplemented by the policy of the Exarchate Church, which continued in its attempts to rally young Macedonians to the Bulgarian cause. Further, the Bulgarian bourgeoisie dispatched undercover agents to Solun, to spy on IMRO movements and report them to Sofia.

Having achieved limited success with its spies, the Bulgarians changed tactics and began to infiltrate IMRO itself. To this end the "Revolutionary Brotherhood" was created in Solun, under the leadership of Ivan Garvanov. While pretending to believe in Delchev's principles, Garvanov succeeded in penetrating the IMRO Central Committee and paved the way for the Ilinden disaster. By influencing IMRO policy, Garvanov was responsible for the Organization's weakening and eventual split into hostile factions.

During the summer of 1895, the Vrhovists dispatched armed insurgents into Macedonia and Thrace in hopes of recruiting

Macedonian fighters in order to start an early uprising and provoke Ottoman reprisals. Their tactics however backfired and received criticism not only from the Ottoman Grand Pasha himself but also from Britain and Russia. Boris Sarafov, captain of the insurgents, managed to penetrate eastern Macedonia and captured and held Melnik for forty-eight hours. IMRO, at this point, sent the Vrhovists a stern warning to “keep their hands off Macedonia!” realizing that Ottoman reprisals would cost many innocent Macedonians their lives.

In light of these Vrhovist intrusions, IMRO, determined to purify itself of Vrhovist elements, held a congress in Solun during the summer of 1896. Unfortunately, this was only an ideological purification where the basic goals of the organization, mentioned earlier, were reaffirmed. Delchev, among other things, emphasized the need for IMRO’s total independence from outside deceivers who pretended sympathy for the revolution while pledging loyalty to the “Supreme Committee” in Sofia.

The IMRO constitution was also redrafted, with help from Giorche Petrov, to include new provisions for uniting all dissatisfied elements in Macedonia and Endrene (Adrianople). It also added provisions for dividing Macedonia into six revolutionary districts (Solun, Shtip, Bitola, Skopje, Serres and Strumitsa). Subsequently Endrene District was also added.

The Congress also expanded the size of IMRO’s Central Committee, electing Delchev, Gruev, Petrov, Pop Arsov, Toshev, Matov and Tatarchev to its seats of authority. Matov and Toshev designed the Central Committee seal, which consisted of a banner, swords, rifles and a bomb. Inscribed on it was “Macedonian Central Revolutionary Committee”.

The Bulgarian intrusion into Macedonia rang alarm bells in Serbia, prompting King Alexander to conclude an agreement with the Greeks in which Greece and Serbia staked out their future claims over Macedonia. Alexander then did the same with Bulgaria’s Ferdinand and Greece later made similar agreements with Bulgaria. The agreements later were shown to be not worth the paper they

were written on. There was, however, one matter on which all three states agreed and that was the need to paralyze IMRO.

By early 1897 Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia had their own agents inside Macedonia, some as consular officials in Solun and others traveling across the country incognito, all seeking to obstruct IMRO's recruitment progress. The Vrhovists, under the command of army General Nikolaev, fiercely agitated against IMRO by continuously dispatching their anti-IMRO propaganda to diplomatic missions abroad.

IMRO's plans were further frustrated when Bulgaria informed Delchev that they would not sell IMRO arms and that he would have to deal directly with the Vrhovists. To this Delchev did not agree and under no circumstances would he agree to surrender IMRO's sovereignty or obligate his organization to the Vrhovists. Further, Delchev would not even consider enlisting support from Russia, the recent liberator of Bulgaria, especially after he discovered a report tabling the "Goluchowski-Muraviev Agreement. An agreement drawn up in April 1897, by Emperor Franz-Joseph of Austria and Tsar Nikolai II of Russia which called for Macedonia and Thrace to be equally divided by Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia, in some future time.

Direct or indirect attacks on IMRO did not deter the Central Committee's recruitment efforts or its ability to promote itself to the masses. Purchasing arms and ammunition were a problem for the time being, but new means were sought to raise finances and find markets where arms could be purchased and smuggled into Macedonia. A further testament to IMRO's strength was Delchev's resolve to infiltrate and assume control of the "Supreme Committee" in Sofia. Between 1897 and 1901, Delchev and Petrov took several trips to Sofia, attempting to rally Macedonian dissident emigrant forces away from the Vrhovists. They were unsuccessful only because the Supremacists had strong support from the Bulgarian State.

Unfortunately strength alone was not enough to maintain a successful IMRO, finances and arms were also needed. Being unable to align itself with the bourgeoisie in Macedonia, refusing to

accept money from Bulgaria and being isolated by the Patriarchate and to some extent, by the Exarchate Churches in Macedonia was a real impediment for IMRO. As such, for its funding, IMRO relied strictly on token donations, membership dues, small earnings of its teaching staff and extorted donations from the Chiflik estate owners.

Shortage of funds became an impediment in purchasing arms, printing and distributing propaganda, legal fees and bail for interned members and in procuring food and medical supplies. The Central Committee's failure to raise sufficient funds forced some revolutionary districts to fundraise on their own, sometimes by creative methods. Through 1897 and 1898 numerous attempts were made to kidnap wealthy Greeks, Turks and Bulgarians and extract ransoms.

Even if IMRO had the necessary funds it still could not purchase all the arms it needed. Most arms dealers refused to sell arms to IMRO and of those who did, smuggling and transporting became a serious problem.

Desperation forced IMRO to purchase obsolete rifles from the Bulgarian military at a grossly inflated price. But there too they ran into problems when the Bulgarians refused to sell them cartridges. When Petrov complained the War minister said, "We are not idiots to give you cartridges as well; thus we shall keep power in our hands, otherwise you will turn away from us!"

To overcome the arms shortage, Delchev, as the Commander-in-chief of the IMRO forces, recommended a policy of "self arming". In future, new recruits would be required to purchase their own weapons and ammunition.

In late 1897 Delchev took a trip to Odessa, Russia where he learned from Armenian revolutionaries how to manufacture homemade bombs and crude flame-throwers.

Upon his return Delchev enlisted the aid of Kirkov, an explosives expert, and set up a munitions factory in the mountains of eastern Macedonia where six men were employed making bombs full time. The factory operated for eighteen months before it was discovered

and destroyed by Ottoman authorities at the instigation of Stoilov, the Bulgarian Prime Minister.

Whatever weapons the Macedonian insurgents lacked they more than made up for in courage. The Cheti (guerilla bands) were very mobile and used their limited guns and explosives with great efficiency, being prepared to commit suicide rather than face capture and torture. This unique disposition terrified the Ottoman forces.

Weapons manufacturing and smuggling was a risky business, the type that would alarm authorities if discovered. Even with all the caution in the world, someone was bound to get caught. Sure enough this happened to IMRO courier Done Stoyanov. Stoyanov was carrying explosives when the Ottoman militia captured him. After severe torture he told them everything.

With that information Ottoman authorities immediately ordered “search and destroy” missions in rural Macedonia, unleashing a reign of terror on the Macedonian villages. To counter this offensive, IMRO responded by mobilizing its Cheti. Each revolutionary district took charge of defending the villages within its sphere of influence.

By 1899, within a year of their mobilization, the Cheti drew heavily from the ranks of the young villagers who were most eager to fight for their freedom. For rapid reaction, in the more active districts, IMRO assigned one Cheta per village.

In 1899 Delchev, as chief inspector, drew up the famous “Rules of the Cheti” which among other things defined the roles and conduct of the Cheta. Besides being responsible for defending, the Cheti were also responsible for educating the people about the cause.

Predictably, arming of the Cheti proceeded slowly but when Gruev arrived in Bitola the process was streamlined and explosives and guns began to arrive. Gruev appointed the legendary Cheta chief Marko, the “Tsar of Lerin”, in charge of weapons distribution.

As for the actual fighters that made up the Cheti, their experience varied as much as their backgrounds. Some were outlaws and

hardened fighters who lived in the open, slept on the mountains and spent years fighting the Turks, while others were schoolboys barely out of school. Coming as they did from various backgrounds they were a handful for the Central Committee to manage but more than a handful for the Ottoman garrisons. As an American journalist once said, “The Turks fear them with fear that is often comic. They never attack a Cheta except with a vastly overpowering force. As for the Cheti they think nothing of attacking twice their number...”

By 1900 IMRO had formed over thirty Cheti in Bitola, Kostur, Lerin, Ohrid, Krushevo and Prilep Districts, as well as in Thrace. Besides fighting the Turks, the Cheti also proved to be a formidable force against the Vrhovists, especially those who ventured south into Pirin and came face to face with Sandanski.

Unfortunately as the organization’s mobilization program quickened, so did Ottoman awareness of its activities. The Ottomans began to build up forces in Macedonia in expectation of an uprising. More search and destroy missions were carried out and, between 1899 and 1903, thirty IMRO munitions depots were discovered and destroyed. Additionally some of the IMRO leaders, including Gruev and Petrov, were being arrested more frequently, which meant that either the Turks were getting better or someone was supplying them information.

Although never proven, Garvanov, the Vrhovist leader of the “Revolutionary Brotherhood”, was suspected of supplying the Turks with information. Garvanov was also responsible for Vrhovist deeds blamed on IMRO.

After his failed attempt to start a rebellion in Macedonia in 1895, in 1900 Sarafov sent six assassins to kill Delchev and Sandanski. Unable to successfully carry out their mission, with Garvanov’s help, the Vrhovists began a spree of destruction, razing villages and stealing money, while claiming to be an IMRO Cheta. During one such attack, Marko, the Cheta leader from Lerin was killed.

This unsuspecting turn of events with the Vrhovists caught IMRO by surprise, but the next time they tried something similar IMRO was prepared.

When General Tsonched, Sarafov's successor, organized a similar attack in Pirin District in 1902, Iane Sandanski was ready for him and sent him packing. The Turks did the rest and finished him off. Unfortunately the Macedonian villages paid for the Vrhovist meddling. The Turks exacted retribution by razing 15 villages, killing 37 people and torturing 304 men and women. The Vrhovist intrusion was a bitter victory and in future it would prove even more bitter.

To make matters worse the Exarchate Church began dismissing Macedonian teachers suspected of being affiliated with IMRO.

It was no accident that the Ottoman authorities declared IMRO illegal on January 31st, 1903 and had almost all its leaders arrested and given life sentences in the harshest prisons in Asia Minor. The following month witnessed the staging of the Solun Congress during which the IMRO Central Committee truly rested in Garvanov's hands. Delchev, Petrov and Toshev, about the only true IMRO leaders that had not been jailed, refused to attend the Congress knowing full well that Vrhovists dominated it.

Even though Macedonia was not ready for a general uprising, the Solun Congress set a date for one anyway. In the Vrhovist mind, any determined uprising, preferably a failed one, would weaken the Turks, and ultimately create conditions for intervention by the Bulgarian State. August 2nd, 1903 was the date chosen for the uprising, which coincided with Ilinden an important Macedonian holiday.

After Gruev's release from prison in April 1903 (due to a general amnesty), Delchev desperately tried to postpone the rebellion but was killed before he had a chance to address the assembly scheduled to meet in Smilevo in May. Being outnumbered, Gruev went along with the majority and Macedonia indeed witnessed the beginnings of a tragic end.

A failed rebellion was not something that the Macedonian people, especially the IMRO leadership could easily reconcile. But as events unfolded, the Ottomans were not the only ones who wished

Macedonia to fail. There were more sinister forces at work, like the Vrhovists and the Patriarchate and Exarchate Churches, who equally did not want Macedonia to win. The Great Powers too had their own resolve and all they could do was watch Macedonia burn while offering the Macedonian people no more than their sympathies. They did not even offer aid to the sick, homeless and starving.

For the Macedonians it was a great revolution, a glorious revolution. To paraphrase Georgio Nurigiani, “The Ilinden rising is an achievement of great importance for the Macedonian people. There are things in it which stagger the imagination and cause this general insurrection to be ranked as a ‘great historical event’. The whole people rose with a frenzied, irresistible urge for immediate freedom. The Macedonian people’s faith made them believe in their creative possibilities, for only a people strong in spirit is able to pluck up courage and with full confidence venture on an historic undertaking. Through this courageous uprising, unique in its kind for noble daring, the Macedonian people expressed not only their love of freedom and justice, but also of moral power. This rising remains even today an unrepeatable human act of supreme self-sacrifice for a people’s freedom. Ilinden will remain in history a sacred name for every Macedonian. It is written on the tables of the laws of the Macedonian people and will shine for evermore, because it is a magnificent expression of the Macedonian peoples’ limitless love for their native land, their unquenchable thirst for freedom, their inflexible will for a new life, and a real inner essence of their being. It is not possible to speak of the epic of Ilinden without speaking of the man who incarnated it and who set in motion the Macedonian people on the road to revolution, on the road to freedom. That man was Gotse Delchev. He was not only a great revolutionary, he was one of the most upright, noble and idealistic natures born under the Macedonian sky; obedient to every moral principle and self-denying service. These are the characteristic qualities of Gotse Delchev, of a great son of Macedonia.” (pp. 46-47).

As expected, the rebellion was strongest in western Macedonia where the population was most prepared. It started in Bitola Region on August 2nd, 1903 and in a few days spread like wildfire south to Lerin and Kostur and north to Resen, Ohrid and Prilep.

Karev and his Cheti stormed and liberated the town Krushevo and then created the Krushevo Republic, the first of its kind in the Balkans. Karev, after being elected president, constituted a provisional government with its own police force, judiciary and financial and welfare bodies. Through the creation of this Republic, Macedonians expressed their desire to national self determination. The fact that the Republic was constituted upon a multiracial basis also demonstrated the readiness of the Macedonian people to lay a multicultural foundation for their state. Sadly the Republic only lasted couple of weeks before the Turkish army destroyed it.

As for Vrhovist involvements in the general uprising, they did not materialize. Sarafov's boasting that at the first sign of struggle the Bulgarian army would storm in and liberate Macedonia, did not happen. All Vrhovist promises turned out to be lies.

Initial IMRO successes during the Ilinden uprising came as a surprise to the Ottomans. Even though they had a numerically superior force in Macedonia it was still no match for the fierce fighting Cheti. Reinforcements were called in and led by the ruthless and skilled war veteran General Baktiar Pasha. Baktiar's solution to the problem was total annihilation, not only of the fighting Cheti but also of the villages that support them.

By the time he was done there were 4,694 civilians murdered, 3,122 women raped, 12,440 houses burned, 201 villages razed, 75,835 people left homeless and 30,000 people exiled. IMRO was reduced to shambles with most of its leaders dead and almost all of the Cheti demolished. To again paraphrase Giorgio Norigiani, "The tortured slaves, fighting on mass, often without weapons, but on spirit alone, for life and liberty; and the sadistic Pasha and his cohorts, murdering and plundering with rabidity." (p. 47)

Having failed its ambitious rebellion, IMRO was determined to continue the fight for the cause at a diplomatic level.

In September 1903 Pere Toshev was sent to Tsari Grad (Istanbul) to extract certain guarantees from representatives of the Great Powers. Dissatisfied with present conditions, IMRO sought to gain some degree of self-government in Macedonia through the appointment of

a Christian Governor. The Great Powers, however, were not interested and hoped to maintain the status quo. A month later they changed their minds and agreed to send a “peace keeping force” to keep the peace in Macedonia. Unfortunately the only thing the peacekeeping force did was put IMRO out of action. Instead of keeping the Ottomans at bay, the peacekeepers kept IMRO’s from defending the Macedonian people from Turkish and foreign aggression.

By now the Ottomans were out of favour with the Great Powers and decided to minimize their own aggressive behaviour and invite others like Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia to do it for them, by declaring Macedonia a “multi-interest zone”.

What this meant was that Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian terrorist bands, sponsored by their respective churches, were now encouraged to roam Macedonia to murder, rape, pillage and do whatever they felt like without fear of retribution from the Turkish authorities. Greeks and Turks stood side by side as allies while murdering the Macedonian population. The Christian holy man Patriarchate Bishop Karavangelis of Kostur blessed the Muslim owned cannons with Christian words as the Turkish army opened fire on the Christian civilian populated Macedonian villages, killing innocent women and children. The Great Powers, with their military ships docked in the harbours, stood and watched as the mountains were dotted with fires. They watched villages burn and heard cries of suffering and yet did nothing. Such was the fate of the Macedonian people in the aftermath of the Ilinden rebellion.

Expecting no assistance or aid from the Great Powers, remnants of IMRO established temporary centers and distributed urgently needed foodstuffs and medical supplies to the population. While this was taking place, a political struggle for control of IMRO was also beginning to take shape. Bulgaria’s wish for a confrontation between IMRO and the Turkish army was granted. Bulgaria no longer needed IMRO and sought ways to liquidate the rest of its leadership. Bulgarian hopes of fully subordinating IMRO to Vrhovist directives were slim at best, so with that in mind Bulgaria sent a number of assassins to eliminate the rest of the IMRO leaders. For a while Sandanski’s forces succeeded in repealing them, but

their persistence unfortunately paid off as they, in time, succeeded in assassinating all of the important IMRO leaders.

After the rebellion was put down, IMRO still had hopes of better times and perhaps another uprising in the future.

In May 1904 IMRO held a Congress in Prilep and issued “Directives for Future Activity”. Among other things, it was decided to decentralize the Central Committee and give more decision making power to the districts. No future uprising would be allowed without consent from the Revolutionary Districts and from the Cheta chiefs themselves.

Not everyone in the IMRO leadership agreed with this resolution which unfortunately caused the Organization to split into a left and right faction. The right faction insisted on pursuing a policy of renewed confrontation, one no doubt suited to the appetites of its Vrhovist patrons, while the left faction pursued the original policies as outlined by Gotse Delchev. Ironically, both factions operated under the same banner and a showdown was imminent. Fortunately cooler heads prevailed and a negotiated settlement was reached during the Rila Congress in November 1905. The Rila Congress, which took place at the Rila Monastery on the Macedonian-Bulgarian border, was attended by 22 elected delegates and had a single item on its agenda: “What was the appropriate direction for the Organization and how was it to perform its role?” After several recommendations were put to a vote, a resolution was reached and a rule book was issued. Some of the more important recommendations adopted included the following goals;

- (a) to create an autonomous and independent Macedonia,
- (b) to achieve this by a united national front, over a long period of revolutionary activity,
- (c) to resist all foreign interference.

Items put forward during the Prilep Congress were reaffirmed and certain safeguards were enacted to prevent irresponsible repetition of the Ilinden episode.

While IMRO was sorting out its own problems, armed terrorist bands from Greece and Serbia were making their way into

Macedonia. Wreaking their own special brand of terror, the story was the same everywhere; pillaging, murdering and razing entire villages.

The most violent campaign was undoubtedly waged by the Greek terrorists who, aided by the Patriarchate Church and agents provocateur within Macedonia, penetrated far into Macedonia's south-central regions.

In 1905, sanctioned by the Greek government, one-thousand bandits from the Greek Island of Crete, reinforced by Turkish army deserters, roamed unhindered in Macedonia, razing and slaughtering entire villages, wiping them out completely from the view of the unsuspecting world. The violence wreaked upon innocent Macedonians was staggering.

Relief for IMRO and the Macedonian people came in the form of the Young Turk Uprising, which saw IMRO as an ally in the fight against Ottoman injustices and corruption.

After wresting power from the Sultan in mid-summer 1908 in Macedonia, the Young Turk regime outlawed armed propaganda and ordered the various terrorist bands to disband. In exchange for their help and for various other reasons, Sandanski and his Cheta helped the Young Turks take Tsari Grad, the Ottoman capital.

With the passing of Gruev and Karev, Sandanski was the natural successor to Delchev and a leading figure in the IMRO leadership. His cooperation with the Young Turk regime earned him the privilege of making recommendations and proposals for reforms.

In July 1908 he proposed the "Nevrokop Programme", a land redistribution program in favour of the poor landless peasants. To manage the Programme, an offshoot of IMRO called the National (or Peoples') Federative Party (NFP) was formed. Unfortunately the Young Turk regime turned out to be another Great Power ploy in their manipulation of the Balkans and soon began its decline until its final collapse on July 13, 1912.

With the return of the Sultan, Macedonia witnessed the resurgence of the armed bands, this time with renewed vigour.

Frustrated by the repressive stand of the Young Turk regime, Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia made a last ditch stand to impose their sovereignty over Macedonian territory and, in the guise of “liberation”, occupied Macedonia.

The 1st Balkan war was precipitated by Montenegro’s declaration of war against Turkey on October 18th, 1912. It was almost entirely fought on Macedonian soil, where again innocent Macedonians were forced to suffer in someone else’s war.

The 2nd Balkan war, a vicious war between Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia over the spoils of Macedonia, was also fought on Macedonian soil, delivering even more pain, suffering and death to an even larger Macedonian population.

Worst of all was Macedonia’s partition. August 10th, 1913, the day Macedonia’s partition was signed in Bucharest, became the darkest day in history for the Macedonian people.

With the sanctioning of Macedonia’s partition by the Great Powers in the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, so died IMRO hopes of liberating Macedonia. IMRO, however, did not disappear and subsequently the Serres branch of the Organization, comprising a great number of late Sandanski followers, merged with remnants of the IMRO Provisional Mission of western Macedonia to constitute IMRO (United) under the leadership of Gjortse Petrov and Dimo Hadzi Dimov.

Since IMRO was declared illegal by the occupying states and it was no longer allowed to function on its native soil, from time to time it operated in various countries abroad.

In 1923, under the leadership of Dimitar Vlahov, IMRO (United) was centered in Vienna, Austria.

The legendary IMRO did not liberate Macedonia and the Macedonian people from the clutches of its enemies but it did teach

Macedonians not to lose hope for there would be another, a better day.

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