

**Short History
of the
Macedonian People**



By

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Published by:

Risto Stefov Publications

Toronto, Canada

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Introduction

Ever since their beginning the Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian States and to a lesser extent the Albanian State, have systematically used every means possible, including waging propaganda campaigns, to negate the existence of the Macedonian nation.

This book is a chronological outline of historical events involving Macedonia and the Macedonian people from ancient times to the present. It is not complete in detail by any means but will give the reader a general analysis of Macedonia's history. For a more comprehensive analysis the reader is encouraged to read the book "History of the Macedonian People from Ancient Times to the Present" by the same author. For more information on Macedonian history and Macedonian issues click on www.maknews.com and www.oshchima.com

This book is written for an audience that wants to learn Macedonian history but does not necessarily have the time or resources to do long and extensive research. Besides providing a comprehensive historical analysis, this book contains valuable information collected from interviews and personal experiences that cannot be found anywhere else. Also, since this book represents the Macedonian point of view, on occasion it will use Macedonian words to describe some of the more familiar place names like Solun (Salonica), Tsari Grad (Constantinople), Lerin, Kostur, Voden, etc.

The First Macedonians

It is unknown who the first tribal kings of Macedonia were and how far back their line extended. Mainstream history places the birth of Aegae (the Argead Macedonian Royal House) around the start of the 7th century BC, with Perdiccas I as its first ruler.

Before the Macedonians expanded their territory beyond their original homeland, the central Emathian plain, their first ruler was Caranus (Karan). He is believed to have been the first king to rule the Macedonian kingdom from approximately 808 BC to 778 BC which, although there are varying opinions on this, is in agreement with Eusebius of Caesarea who said Caranus lived before the formation of the first Olympics which took place in 776 BC.

We know from Herodotus that Perdiccas and his brothers moved the Macedonian center but no date for the move was given. “Herodotus (8.183) wrote that ‘[Perdiccas] came to another part of Macedonia and settled near the gardens named after Midas, son of Gordias...above the garden rises the mountain called Bermion, unassailable in winter’.” (Page 65, Eugene Borza, In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon, New Jersey, 1990) I believe this other part of Macedonia, to which Herodotus is referring, is located near the city of present day Voden. Being capable of living in mountainous terrain, I believe the Macedonians descended to present day Voden via a more direct route over the mountains rather than following the present day Bistritsa River, as some historians have argued. The center Aegae was established near Voden during the 7th century BC and became the second Macedonian capital. Hammond estimates that Perdiccas came to the throne around 650 BC. (Page 11, Hammond, The Miracle that was Macedonia)

Herodotus continues “From the Perdiccas of whom we have here spoken, Alexander was descended in the following way Alexander was the son of Amyntas, Amyntas of Alcetas; the father of Alcetas was Aeropus; of Aeropus, Philip; of Philip, Argaeus; of Argaeus, Perdiccas, the first sovereign”. In other words, the known kings of Macedonia before Herodotus’s time reigned as follows: Perdiccas I, Argaeus, Philip I, Aeropus I, Alcetas, Amyntas I and Alexander I.

Again, I have not been able to find much information about the Macedonian Royal lineage and the accomplishments of the reigning kings up to Alexander I’s reign (498-454).

Borza, in the beginning of chapter 5, in his book, “In the Shadow of Olympus, The Emergence of Macedon” describes the Macedonian kingdom during the reign of Amyntas I as weak, thinly populated and surviving in the absence of external threat. Amyntas’s territory of control during his reign included the central Macedonian plain and peripheral foothills, the Pierian coastal plain (present day Katerini) beneath Mt. Olympus, and perhaps the fertile, mountain-encircled plain of Almopia (present day Meglen). To the south lay the people of Thessaly and on the western mountains were the Molossians or people of western Epirus, tribes of non-Argaed Macedonians. Beyond lay the fierce Illyrians and east of the river present day Bistritsa lay the Paeonian and Thracian tribes.

As the Macedonian kingdom expanded and made its way to the lowlands and to the shores of the Aegean Sea, it was no longer isolated and began to enjoy the economic and cultural currents of the Aegean world as well as tangling in its politics.

After moving their capital to Aegae the Macedonians were no longer seen as tribal but rather as a monarchic kingdom. Then, just as Alexander I was about to be crowned, the Macedonian kingdom was seen as a power of influence. Unfortunately, it was still too weak to hold its own, militarily, against its powerful neighbours.

Unlike his father, Alexander I was born into a world of social turbulence and political change. With the rise of the Persian Empire and its westward movement, new conflicts were about to take place that would forever alter the balance of power in the Balkans.

It is believed that Amyntas died in 498 or 497 BC and was succeeded by Alexander I the same year.

Macedonia's Rise to Power

Life in Macedonia was relatively peaceful until 492 BC when a Persian expeditionary force, under the command of Mardonius, crossed over into Europe with orders to attack Athens. But before marching into Athens and with total disregard for the Macedonian-Persian alliance, Mardonius decided to attack local towns, captured Thracian and Macedonian civilians and made them slaves. The Persian action provoked the local people and prompted a counter attack. The Persian fleet was attacked and sunk by the Phrygians of Thrace as it attempted to navigate around Athos (present day Sv. Gora). Weakened by the attack, Mardonius could not fulfill his mission so he returned to Persia.

Seeing his people enslaved by an ally did not sit well with Alexander.

Herodotus seems to be silent on the last years of Alexander's reign, perhaps nothing happened which was of significance or worthy of reporting.

It is believed that Alexander I died of old age in 454 BC, at age 80. Alexander's reign lasted 43 years from 497 to 454 BC. Alexander fathered at least six children. Three were male and legitimate heirs to the Macedonian throne but it was his son Perdicas who rose above all and became ruler and king.

Perdicas died in 413 BC and was succeeded by his son Archelaus in 413 BC. Archelaus's reign, which lasted approximately fourteen years from 413 BC to 399 BC, was a little more stable than that of his father. Unlike his father, Archelaus remained loyal to Athens, which gave him a firm market for his timber industry and the security he needed to take care of business at home. Archelaus maintained his father's policy with regard to the Lyncestians and Illyrians along the western frontier and managed to keep them at bay. Along the eastern frontier, the absence of Athenian influence and the decline of Thracian power granted Archelaus an opportunity to gain control of Basaltia and its valuable mines.

As for internal changes, Archelaus made improvements to roads, built fortresses in the countryside, fortified entry points into Macedonia and modernized his army. But most importantly, Archelaus is credited for moving the Macedonian principal city from Aegae to Pella. Aegae still remained a royal city but Pella became a royal residence for Archelaus and an administrative and military centre for his kingdom.

The main reason for making Pella the principle city was its strategic location within the Macedonian kingdom. "The largest of the Macedonian

towns in classical times, Pella, was constructed on a low plateau where Mt. Paiko merges with the marshland of the central plain, and where the route of the Via Egnatia hugged the northern edge of the swamps. Pella might have been (or had) a seaport, as the head of the Thermaic Gulf extended some distance into the plain in those days. Pella's strategic position lying across the main east-west route near the west bank of the Axios (Vardar) gave it an importance surpassed only by Salonica (Solun) at a later time." (Pages 41-42, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon*, New Jersey, 1990)

Archelaus chose Pella to be his principle city because it gave him easy access to the many waterways which would provide him passage to a wider area than just the central Macedonian plain. Pella was built by design, laid out on a grid plan using blocks approximately 100 meters by 50 meters. Archeological excavations of the site have revealed "a series of elaborate private houses, in which were discovered the well-wrought floor mosaics... These large pebble mosaics, which formed the floors of rooms and passageways of Pella's villas, depict a variety of scenes, including Dionysus riding a panther, a lion hunt, an Amazonomachy, and a magnificent stag hunt..." (Page 170, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon*, New Jersey, 1990)

The move to Pella was the first step on the road to greatness for Macedonia. Pella was becoming an impressive Macedonian political, military and cultural showcase, which in time would become the birthplace of Alexander III, the greatest conqueror that ever lived to earn the title "Great".

I would like to mention at this point that Archelaus is also credited with establishing the uniquely Macedonian Olympic festival that took place at Dion in honour of Zeus and the muses. Dion was an important place where Macedonians participated in their own Olympic games, dramatic contests and celebrated many of their religious rites.

Archelaus was accidentally shot during a hunt in 399 BC and died of his wounds. His premature death cast the Argaed house into chaos for almost six years after which Amyntas III surfaced as the leading figure who would rule Macedonia next. Amyntas III was the great grandson of Alexander I.

Having left his kingdom's affairs unsettled, Amyntas III died in 370 BC leaving his throne to his eldest son Alexander II. "The decade of the 360s plunged the kingdom of Macedon into a new dynastic crisis, intensified by continuing external threats. Early in his reign, Alexander

was forced to buy off the Illyrians, although it is problematic whether he also gave his younger brother, Philip (the future Philip II), over as a hostage.” (Page 189, Eugene Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus The Emergence of Macedon*, New Jersey, 1990)

Young Alexander II did not have enough experience to maintain a strong and stable kingdom or to secure any permanent alliances. He was given a chance in Thessaly but he couldn't make it work.

Dissatisfied with his inability to rule, Alexander's position as ruler was challenged at home by Ptolemy. Being unable to resolve the challenge, Alexander agreed to bring in an outside arbitrator. At Ptolemy's request, the arbitrator chosen was a Theban commander.

The dispute was eventually resolved in Alexander's favour but not without a price. To ensure Alexander would not take action against his rivals, prominent members of his family, including his younger brother Philip II, were taken to Thebes to be held hostage. Philip at the time was only thirteen years old.

Even though he was secure back on his throne, Alexander's problems unfortunately were not yet over. He was assassinated while taking part in a festival. Ptolemy of course was suspected since he had the most to gain. Alexander II died in the spring of 367 BC and the rule of Macedonia was passed on to Ptolemy.

A woman named Eurydice, it is believed, was allegedly involved in plotting Alexander's assassination. During the investigation it was noted that before Alexander's death, Ptolemy and Eurydice closely collaborated and may have planned Alexander's deposition. When that failed, they conspired to have him assassinated.

Alexander's death seemed like an easy victory for Ptolemy but in actual fact it was not. Ptolemy's relations with Eurydice, a known troublemaker and a suspect in the plotting of her own husband's assassination, landed him in hot water. Even though Ptolemy was a legitimate heir to the throne, the way he achieved his appointment upset many Macedonians.

Ptolemy died in 365 BC, probably assassinated by Perdikkas, Amyntas III's second son who became the next ruler of Macedonia. Soon after Perdikkas III was installed ruler of Macedonia, he brought back his younger brother Philip from Thebes. Philip was sixteen years old at the time.

Just as the war started to stabilize in the southern frontier, a serious Illyrian attack materialized from the north drawing Perdikkas's army into a

second conflict. With his forces divided Perdiccas bore the full brunt of two fronts. His army, well trained and equipped, could have met the challenge. Unfortunately, Perdiccas's luck ran out and he was killed in one of the battles. Perdiccas III died in 360 BC defending his homeland. Like his father before him he left his kingdom in disarray. It was now up to his younger brother Philip to make things right.

Philip II

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, Nicholas 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 that would not agree to a strong and large Macedonia and would challenge him just to safeguard their own interests and survival.

From what Diodorus 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. By City States I mean the cities south of Mt. Olympus such as Athens, Thebes, Sparta, Corinth and others, which at the time existed as independent States.

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 Thessalians, 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 who 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 (Amaxis) 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.

Alexander III (The Great)

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 were 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 none-the-less 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 lightening 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 judgment 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 judgment 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 boyhood 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 to the Tigris River, while he and his light armed units sailed down the Eulaeus 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 was 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 reconciliation between himself and his troops but, in the interest of the empire, it was 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 reinforces 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.

Philip V

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 Antigonos Doso's Sellasian campaign. Philip also valued his so-called "sound advice".

When Rome was defeated by Hannibal in 217 BC, at Lake Trisamene, 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 Flaminius. What was worse, there was now an armistice

between Sparta and the Achaean league and the Spartans were obliged to provide Flaminius 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 reasonable 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.

Roman Macedonia

Macedonia, after the last large rebellion in 142 BC continued to exist as part of the Roman domain until antiquity. During this long period Macedonia's boundaries were changed several times. The northern frontier was most vulnerable and prone to invasions. At one point, after an attack against a barbarian tribe, the northern boundary was extended to the Danube. In 27 BC Augustus declared Macedonia a Senatorial province and had its territory significantly reduced. With time, in the decades that followed, Macedonia was partitioned into territories. After Diocletian's reforms Macedonia became part of the Diocese of Moisia and at the time of Constantine it became part of the Illyrian Prefecture. At the end of the 4th century AD Macedonia was split into two provinces, Macedonia Prima with Solun (Salonika) as its capital and Macedonia Salutaris. Later during the 5th and 6th centuries another name appeared: Macedonia Secunda with Stobi as its capital.

When Macedonia came under Roman rule the number of Italian colonists increased and a variety of barbarian tribes penetrated the region. As a Roman province, Macedonia was heavily exploited and the population was plundered by heavy taxes. The support of the Roman administration, garrisons and military campaigns fell upon the shoulders of the local population. Macedonia, in addition to being enslaved, was also obliged to provide large numbers of soldiers for the Roman auxiliary brigades.

Urban life in Macedonia, during Roman rule, existed under three distinct settings, the free cities, the colonies and the municipalities. Included among the free cities were Aegae, Pella, Beroea, Philippi, Heraclea, Salonika, Heraclea Lyncaestis and Stobi. During the Roman period both Heraclea Lyncaestis and Stobi were important large centers situated on well-traveled roads.

Another important fact is that most major stormy events in the history of the Roman period had their echoes in Macedonia. The Roman civil wars, the struggle between Caesar and Pompey and the war between Brutus and Cassius all took place on Macedonian soil. Similarly, the 3rd and 4th century Roman Empire crisis, colonial relations with Christianity and barbarian penetrations, also had their roots in Macedonia.

As mentioned earlier, after Perseus's defeat at Pydna in 168 BC Macedonia was partitioned into four regions and became Roman territory. It was particularly during this period that Macedonia was robbed of its

cultural treasures including the many monuments of art located in Solun, Pella and other culturally rich cities. Macedonia's treasures were transferred to Rome and paraded as trophies of Roman victories on Roman streets during triumph festivals. After 148 BC the four regions of Macedonia were united again but made into a Roman province with Solun as its capital. What is also interesting is that all city states and jurisdictions south of Macedonia, including Athens and Sparta, were also annexed and added to this large Roman province called Macedonia. This merger lasted for about one hundred and twenty years until 27 BC. In 27 BC Augustus separated the region to form the province of Macedonia and the province of Achaia. For one hundred and twenty years Solun, not Athens, was the capital or "mother city" of this vast province called Macedonia.

Rise of Christianity

It cannot be said that Paul created Gentile Christianity but he was responsible for giving it impetus. Paul became an important factor in the spread of Christianity to Macedonia when he had a vision of a man, a Macedonian, urging him to “come to Macedonia and help us”. Paul interpreted this vision as God’s will to take the “Good News” of Jesus into Macedonia. “And when they had come opposite My’sia, they attempted to go into Bithyn’ia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them; so, passing by My’sia, they went down to Tro’as. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedo’nia was standing beseeching him and saying, ‘Come over to Macedo’nia and help us.’ And when he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedo’nia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.” (Page 1044, The Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version, Holman, Philadelphia, 1952)

There are some who believe that the man in Paul’s vision was the Apostle Luke. Luke was a Macedonian, a physician by trade, who Paul met for the first time in Troas. Luke may have had some connection to Philippi to have Paul sent there. It is unknown whether Luke was a Christian or not before he met Paul but he was certainly one afterwards. Luke was a great writer and composer of one of the gospels.

It was around 50 AD when Paul set foot on European soil for the first time. That was in the Macedonian towns of Philippi, Solun (Thessalonica) and Berroea where he preached the word of Jesus (Acta apos., XVI, id. XVII). Around 52 and 53 AD he sent epistles to the people of Solun (Epist. Thess); then in 57 AD he came back to Macedonia to follow up on his progress. In 63 AD he again sent epistles to Macedonia but this time to the people of Philippi (Epist. Philipp).

Even before Paul went to Macedonia legend has it that Macedonia was visited by Jesus’ mother Mary. “The Blessed Virgin excluded all other women from Holy Mountain, when she claimed it as ‘Her Garden’ after she was driven ashore by storms near the site of the present monastery of ‘Ivion’ USPENIE.” (Page 41, Vasil Bogov, Macedonian Revelation, Historical Documents Rock and Shatter Modern Political Ideology, Western Australia, 1998) Holy Mountain, or Sveta Gora as it is known in Macedonia, is the holiest place in Europe and one of the greatest monastic centers of Christendom.

Paul’s first mission to Macedonia took him to Philippi where he met a woman named Lydia, a fabric dealer. Lydia was a widow who sold cloth

and textiles and was a rare example of a free woman who lived and worked in Macedonia. For some time, although Lydia was pagan, she was exposed to Jewish religious practices which she had observed at a colony of Jews who had settled near her home in Thyatira. Lydia, along with her household, is believed to be the first Christian in Macedonia to be baptized by Paul. After Philippi, Paul's missionary journey took him to the beautiful Macedonian city of Solun where, in 50 BC, he established what later came to be known as the "Golden Gate" church, the first Christian church in Europe. According to the Bible, Paul, along with his friend Silas, spent about three weeks in Solun in a synagogue debating the "Good News" of Jesus with the Solun Jews. But much to his disappointment he could not sway them to see things his way. He persuaded some to join but the majority would not join and became hostile towards him. The real surprise, however, was that many non-Jewish Macedonians accepted the "Good News" of Jesus and embraced Christianity as their new faith.

The start of the new millennium witnessed the death of the Roman Republic and the birth of Imperial Rome. The Augustan emperors may have brought peace to the empire but with it they also brought neglect, decline and decay. As mentioned earlier, by 180 AD there were unmistakable signs of decay. Besides the agricultural and economic decline, the empire opened its doors to anarchy when the adoptive system of choosing emperors was abandoned in favour of personal appointments.

Byzantine Macedonia

During the year 313 AD, from the great imperial city of Milan, Emperor Constantine, together with his co-Emperor Licinius, dispatched a series of letters informing all provincial governors to stop persecuting the Christians, thus revoking all previous anti-Christian decrees. All properties, including Christian places of worship, seized from them in the past were to be restored. This so called “Edict of Milan”, by which the Roman Empire reversed its policy of hostility towards Christians, was one of the most decisive events in human history. What brought on this sudden reversal?

Rational thinkers believed that Constantine had the foresight to realize that Christianity was a growing power and could be harnessed to work for the good of the empire. Christianity was a result of changing times and harnessing its power was of far greater benefit than following the current policy of attempting to destroy it.

Christianity at that time was disorganized and existed in cult form in sporadic pockets spread throughout the empire. Yet Constantine still had the foresight to see potential in it.

Christianity was a peripheral issue in Constantine’s mind when he and his co-Emperor Licinius were about to face Maxentius and Maximin Daita in the greatest battle of their careers. It was at this decisive moment that Constantine experienced a vision which, not only changed his life but, was the turning point for Christianity.

Immediately after his victory over Licinius in 324 AD, Constantine began the construction of his new capital, the “City of Constantine”. This would be a Christian city fit for Kings that would not only rival, but would surpass the glory of Rome.

Power was where the Emperor was, and the Emperor was now in his own city in the hub of activity just at the edge of Macedonia. Although this was not purely a Macedonian city, it had the elements of Macedonian culture and tradition. It was a very un-Roman city in language and culture and not only imitated the Macedonian cities of Alexandria and Antioch but with time surpassed their cultural and academic achievements.

Constantinople or Constantinople (“City of Kings”), as it was known to the Macedonians, was going to be the power base of a new empire, a revival of Alexander the Great’s old empire with a Christian twist. “This ‘Eastern’ or Byzantine empire is generally spoken of as if it were a continuation of the Roman tradition. It is really far more like a resumption of

Alexander's." (Page 414, H.G. Wells, The Outline of History, Garden City Books, New York, 1961).

While Constantine was building his new city, his mother Helena undertook a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and was instrumental in the building of the Churches of the Nativity at Bethlehem and Eleona on Jerusalem's Mount of Olives.

On November 8th, 324 AD Constantine formally laid out the boundaries of his new city, roughly quadrupling the territory of old Byzantium. While his architects were designing his new city, Constantine and his army, numbering about 120,000 troops, were established in Solun. Even before moving to Solun in 324 AD, Constantine had the old Solun harbour renovated and expanded to fit his fleet of 200 triakondores galleons and about 2,000 merchant ships.

By 328 AD the walls of Constantinople were completed and the new city was formally ready for dedication in May 330 AD. Soon after the city was opened, Constantine ordered the construction of two major churches, Sveta Sophia (Holy Wisdom) and Sveta Eirena (Holy Peace) and began laying the foundation of a third church, the Church of the Holy Apostles.

Before they were known as the Byzantines or were called the Eastern Orthodox and even before they were barely a separate empire, they were known to the Macedonians as the Christians; an ancient people unified by a common (Eastern Christian) faith which has survived to this day and carries a strong meaning for the faithful

By 500 AD Christianity had become the standard religion in Macedonia and the Macedonian language and culture re-emerged with it. As mentioned earlier, the Latin language began its decline about four hundred years earlier and the Koine language was the language of administration and commerce, far from the reach of the common Macedonian.

Christianity's humble beginnings may have begun with the Koine language but in order for Jesus' message to be understood by the masses it had to be spoken in the language they used. It is well known today that the language of Christianity in Macedonia was the Macedonian language, the language of enlightenment made world famous by Kiril and Metodi.

Kiril and Metodi

It was during the reign of the Byzantine 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.

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 Eastern Europe and the fathers of Macedonian literary culture. Kiril, the younger of the two, was given the name Constantine when he was baptized and carried that name until a few weeks before he died at which time he received the name Kiril.

Kiril was very fortunate to have studied in Constantinople 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 Constantinople, 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 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 Leo (Lav) was a prominent Macedonian who served as assistant to the Solun military commander of the Byzantine 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 Constantinople 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

Byzantines to counter-balance the German missionary influence in his kingdom. Rostislav preferred the ecclesiastical politics of Photius, now patriarch of Constantinople, 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 Macedonian speakers themselves, knew the Solunian language dialect well and accepted the task.

The old-Macedonian dialect was quite well understood by all Eastern European countries. Unfortunately, teaching the illiterate to read and write was easier said than done. Even though the old Easter Europeans 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. Macedonian 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 [Macedonian]...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 [Macedonian]...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 Macedonian 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 Byzantine missionaries continued their work for a while, with much success, but were soon handicapped by the lack of Byzantine 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 Byzantine priests refused to do so out of contempt. Unable to continue their work the missionaries were forced to return to Constantinople. On their way back the Macedonian brothers took a detour through Venice where they learned that the Pope had excommunicated Photius, the Byzantine Patriarch in Constantinople. Byzantine 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 Byzantine 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 Byzantines. In his judgment he permitted Kiril and Metodi to receive Episcopal consecration and allowed their newly converted priests to be ordained. He also approved Macedonian 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 Macedonian, 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 Macedonian 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 Macedonian liturgy. Even though Pope John was in agreement with Metodi on most matters, he had certain reservations about the use of the Macedonian language. It seems that some of the western missionaries perceived the Macedonian 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 Macedonian 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 Macedonian. Metodi died in 885 AD, probably from exhaustion. His funeral service was carried out in Koine, Macedonian 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.

Kliment and Naum

The most famous of the Byzantine 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 Macedonian 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 Macedonian.

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 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 Macedonian which he himself created.

During Leo VI's rule the peace treaty between the Byzantines 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 Macedonian 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

Constantinople and had developed ambitions to take over the Byzantine Empire and become Emperor of a Byzantine-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 people 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 Macedonian. 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.

Tsar Samoil

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 Byzantine 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 Samoil's successes it was the Byzantines. Samoil, in combination with the Bogomil movement, was perceived as a powerful force and the Byzantines wanted it checked.

For the last ten years or so the Byzantine Emperor Basil II, who was also of Macedonian descent, 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 Samoil, 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 Samoil free control of his new territory.

Basil's defeat caused even more internal strife among the Byzantines, especially in Asia. The Byzantine quarrels took attention away from Samoil and opened opportunities to extend his rule to new territories.

In the summer of 989 AD Samoil resumed his campaign and took Berroea (Ber). After that he invaded Dalmatia and declared war on young king Vladimir. When Samoil reached Diocleia, Vladimir fled to the mountains but was persuaded by one of his tribal chieftains to surrender. Samoil took him prisoner and banished him to Prespa. In much need of resources, Samoil 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. Samoil had no navy and was not able to take any of the coastal towns.

Back in Prespa meanwhile, Samoil's daughter Kossara fell in love with the young captive king Vladimir and wanted to marry him. Not to disappoint her, Samoil 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 Trebinye to Vladimir's uncle, Dragomir. Samoil'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 Byzantine civil war ended Basil decided it was time to terminate his three year treaty with Samoil, 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 Samoil's strongholds. In retaliation, in late 994 AD, Samoil 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 Samoil 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 Constantinople 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 Constantinople, his coronation gave him international recognition. For the Pope of Rome, this was another chance to erode and weaken Byzantine rule.

When Basil found out that Samoilo was crowned king he became furious and once again dispatched Uranus to destroy him. Unable to engage Samoilo 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 Constantinople empty handed.

Safe, at least for now, Samoilo 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 Constantinople and for his loyalty was awarded the title of Magistrate, by the Byzantines. In the meantime his wife, Miroslava, became a lady-in-waiting at the Constantinople court. Soon after Ashot fled, the city leaders of Dyrrachium broke off relations with Vladimir and surrendered their city to the Byzantines.

In retaliation and hoping to stir trouble for Basil in Constantinople, Samoilo 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 Constantinople 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 Constantinople.

After subduing Servia, 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 Byzantine 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 Edrene (Adrianople). If Samoil's intent was to get Basil's attention by trashing Edrene, 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 Constantinople.

As if Samoil did not have enough problems with the Byzantines 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, Byzantine 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 slavenes of Oioleia, 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. To a lesser extent there lived Bulgars, Serbs, Croats, Romani, Albanians and Vlachs. Additionally there lived migrants such as Vardariot Ottomans and Armenians who were recently settled there by former Byzantine 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.

Ottoman Macedonia

When Murad II became sultan of the Ottoman Empire in 1421 the days of Constantinople were numbered. In 1422 Murad revoked all the privileges accorded to the Byzantines by his father and laid siege to Constantinople. His armies invaded Macedonia and blockaded Solun. The city at the time was ruled by Manuel II's son Andronicus, who in 1423 handed it over to the Venetians. For seven years Solun was a Venetian colony. Then in March 1430 the Sultan assaulted and captured it.

The Byzantine collapse and the Ottoman triumph followed swiftly. Mehmed II laid siege to the walls of Constantinople in April 1453. His ships were obstructed by a chain that the Byzantines had thrown across the mouth of the Golden Horn but the Ottomans dragged their ships overland to the harbour from the seaward side, bypassing the defenses. The Sultan's heavy artillery continually bombarded the land walls until, on May 29, some of his soldiers forced their way in.

As a final note, in the glory of the Byzantine Empire, I want to add that had it not been for the advent of the cannon the Byzantine Empire might still exist to this day. It was not the might of the Ottoman but the might of his new cannon that brought the walls of Constantinople tumbling down.

Marko Krале

King Marko, affectionately known to Macedonians as Marko Krале was a legendary folk hero in western Macedonia who was surrounded by tales and superhero stories. Marko was the son of the feudal lord Volkashin who was the head of a tribal state in Prilep and later became a high courtier and a despot. In about 1365 Volkashin proclaimed himself king (tsar) and became co-ruler with king Urosh. His brother, the despot Uglesha, ruled over the Struma region.

Both brothers were killed in 1371 at Chernomen, Thrace during the Marica battle against the Ottomans as mentioned earlier. This unsuccessful battle was one of several attempts by local rulers, to prevent further penetration of the Ottomans into the Balkan Peninsula and to forestall the Ottoman occupation of their territories.

After Volkashin's death, his eldest son Marko inherited his throne and title. Unfortunately, as part of the treaty with the Ottomans he had to recognize Ottoman authority and pay tribute to the Ottoman Sultan. It is believed that Marko was born in 1335. His name was discovered in a document establishing him as one of Volkashin's delegates to Dubrovnik. His name was also discovered in some chronicles of his time establishing him as the son of Volkashin and later as Marko the king. In another document dated 1370 Volkashin makes mention of his sons Marko and Andrew and of his wife Elena.

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" on them. Marko Krале 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 Ottomans as part of his treaty agreement with Sultan Bayazit. Marko Krале, it appears, left no heir. After his death his state reverted to the Ottomans.

Even though Marko Krале had been an Ottoman 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 Krале, 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.

The Karposh Uprising

The chaotic situation inside the Ottoman Empire again created suitable conditions for widespread outlawry in all parts of Macedonia, especially in the Moriovo, Bitola, Tikvesh, Veles, Shtip and Mt. Dospat regions which led up to many uprisings including the famous Karposh Uprising.

Sometime in the middle of October 1689 the famous outlaw Arambasha Karposh led an uprising which broke out in the region between Kustendil and Skopje. Immediately after declaring a revolt, Karposh attacked and captured Kriva Palanka. Kriva Palanka was an Ottoman stronghold built in 1636 to house Ottoman soldiers. After capturing the stronghold, Karposh declared it liberated rebel territory and made it his center of resistance. Among the items captured at the stronghold were six cannons, a real prize for the rebels. After securing Kriva Palanka the rebels built and secured a new stronghold near Kumanovo.

It is not known whether or not the rebels were assisted by the Austrians but it is possible. According to contemporary Ottoman chronicles and local legends, Karposh was known as the "King of Kumanovo". This could have been a title conferred upon him by the Austrian emperor Leopold I who sent him a Busby (a tall fur hat worn by hussars and guardsmen) as a gift and a sign of recognition.

Unfortunately for the rebels, the current situation did not last long and a reversal in military and political events played a decisive role in the fate of the uprising. The Ottomans had by now had enough time to take countermeasures to stop the economic and military decline of their state.

The first step taken in Macedonia was to put down the rebellion and drive the Austrian army out of Macedonian territory. To do that the Ottomans employed the services of the Crimean Khan, Selim Giray, along with his fierce detachment of Tartar warriors.

The council of war which met in Sofia on November 14, 1689 decided to attack the Karposh uprising through Kustendil. But before they could do that they had to secure Kriva Palanka. Upon finding that they were about to be attacked, the rebels set fire to Kriva Palanka and concentrated their forces in the new fortress in Kumanovo. No sooner had they prepared their defenses than the Ottoman and Tartar detachments arrived. The rebels stood their ground and fought gallantly but were quickly overwhelmed by the numerically superior Ottoman force. A large number of rebels, including Karposh, were captured at the outset. When the battle was over, all rebels who resisted to the end were slaughtered. Karposh and the

others were taken prisoner. After subduing Kumanovo, the Ottomans left for Skopje where they executed Karposh and the others.

Karposh was brought before Selim Giray who at the time was standing on the Stone Bridge over the River Vardar. Selim used him for target practice and impaled him with his Tartar lances. He then had his body hurled into the Vardar River. Karposh died early in December of 1689 and with him died the Karposh uprising.

For the rebels who survived the battles there was no salvation from the Ottoman backlash except to leave Macedonia. Many fled north beyond the Sava and Danube Rivers. Some even went as far north as Russia and joined the Russian military. There they formed the "Macedonian regiment" which became part of the regular Russian army. The failed Karposh uprising depleted the local population of northwestern Macedonia, opening the way for large scale Albanian immigration.

Just as the Karposh revolt was winding down in Macedonia, on April 6, 1690, Leopold I issued a manifesto inviting "all peoples of Albania, Serbia, Mysia, Bulgaria, Silistria, Illyria, Macedonia and Rashka to join the Austrians in taking up arms against the Ottomans" Then on April 26, 1690 he issued a letter making Macedonia and her people his protectorate. It has been said that Leopold acted on the advice of Macedonians Marko Krajda of Kozhani and Dimitri Georgija Popovich of Solun. Among other things the letter stated that "we graciously accept the Macedonian people, in its entirety in every respect, under our imperial and regal protection." Another letter was issued on May 31, 1690 extending Austria's protection to Bulgaria, Serbia and Albania. Unfortunately, all these good gestures were too little too late for Macedonia which by 1690 was back under tight Ottoman control.

19th Century Macedonia and Developments in the Balkans

For the oppressed peoples of the Balkans, the dawn of the nineteenth century marked the beginning of national struggles for liberation from the centuries-long domination of the Ottoman Empire. The first was the Serbian uprising of 1804 followed by the Phanariot uprising of 1821. Macedonians, in an effort to liberate their Christian brothers from the oppressive Muslim Ottoman, took part in both uprisings. In the first Serbian uprising a Macedonian named Volche was instrumental in building the Deligrad fortifications and distinguished himself as a great fighter in battle. Petar Chardaklija was another Macedonian who also distinguished himself as a great fighter in the Serbian resistance. Petar Ichko, another Macedonian, led a delegation that concluded the well-known Ichko Peace Treaty of 1806 with the Ottoman government. When news of the Serbian uprising reached Macedonia the Macedonian people were stirred to action. Unfortunately the Ottoman authorities were ready and concentrated large numbers of troops in Macedonia, quelling the rebellion even before it had a chance to start.

Macedonians also participated in the Phanariot uprising of 1821. Immediately after the outbreak of the Morea revolt Macedonians formed their own bands, particularly in the Voden district and joined up with the Morean rebels. Among the band leaders who fought side by side with the Moreans were the brothers Ramadanovi, Dimche Minov, Dincho Drzhilovich and Demir Trajko.

Strongly influenced by the ideals of the Phanariot freedom fighters who were calling on the entire Balkan population to take up arms against the Ottoman yoke, many Macedonians, particularly those in the Voden and Negush districts, did take up arms. In early March 1822, under the leadership of Atanas Karatase and Angel Gacho, a revolt broke out in the town of Negush. In no time the rebels put down the Ottomans and declared Negush liberated. The revolt quickly spread towards Voden engulfing a large number of villages. Unfortunately, effort and determination alone were not enough to stop the numerically superior Ottoman army. Isolated and besieged from all sides the rebels were suppressed and dispersed. After a fierce battle the Ottomans recaptured the town of Negush and persecutions and pillaging followed. To avoid further problems, the population of Negush was either enslaved or resettled in other parts of Macedonia.

The Kuchuk Kainarji Treaty bolstered Russian expansionism in the Balkans, which alarmed the western Powers and initiated the “Eastern Question”; “What will happen to the Balkans when the Ottoman Empire disappears?” The Eastern Question of the 1800’s later became the Macedonian Question of the 1900’s.

Two overwhelming “forces” came into being in the 19th century, which transformed the Balkans. The first was the 1848 “western economic revolution” which thrust the Balkans into social and economic upheaval. The second was “increased intervention” from non-Balkan political forces. As the century advanced these developments merged, working not for the interests of the Balkan people but for the benefit of Europe's Great Powers.

Before continuing with internal Balkan developments I want to digress a little and explore the “external forces” and their “political desires” in Balkan affairs.

Besides the Ottoman Empire, there were six Great Powers during the nineteenth century. They were Russia, Great Britain, France, Austria-Hungary, Italy and Germany. From time to time the Great Powers expressed interest in the Balkan population but, in crisis situations, each followed their own interests. When the Great Powers made compromises, they did so to avoid war with each other and often failed to address the real issues that caused the crisis in the first place. This is similar to what the Great Powers are doing in the Balkans today.

Russia tended to be the most aggressive and was usually the cause of each new Ottoman defeat. The 1774 Kuchuk Kainarji Treaty allowed Russia access to the north shore of the Black Sea, gave it “power to act” on behalf of the Orthodox millet and to conduct commerce within the Ottoman Empire. Russia’s goals in the Balkans were (1) to gain exclusive navigation rights from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean Sea for both merchant and military ships and (2) to annex Constantinople and Edrene (the Dardanelles) for itself, both of which were unacceptable to the Western Powers.

After the end of the Crimean war in 1856, by the Treaty of Paris, the Western Powers made sure Russia’s desires for expansion were curbed. First, all Russian warships were barred from the Black Sea and second, the Black Sea was opened to merchant ships from all the states. After that, all the Great Powers, not just Russia, became the guarantors of the Balkan states.

From 1815 to 1878 Great Britain was Russia's strongest rival for Balkan influence. British interests led it to intervene against the Ottomans

in the Morean revolution of the 1820s but went to war against Russia in 1853 (Crimean war) on the Ottoman Empire's behalf.

The British goals in the Balkans were to maintain access to the eastern Mediterranean and to secure shipping lanes to India. Most of the trade routes passed through Ottoman controlled waters. The Ottoman Empire was too weak to be a threat, so Britain was inclined to oppose France, Russia and Germany when they became a threat to the Ottoman Empire.

To bolster its claim to the Eastern waterways, in 1878 Britain took control of the island of Cyprus and in 1883 occupied Egypt and the Suez Canal. After that Britain kept a close watch on Morea and Russian access to the Straits, interfering less in Ottoman affairs.

Britain also had important commercial interests inside the Ottoman Empire, and later in the successor states. Investors in railroads and state bonds took as much profit as they could, as soon as they could, which in the long term contributed to the Ottoman Empire's instability.

France, like Britain, had both political and economic interests in the Balkans. During the Napoleonic wars, France was a direct threat to Ottoman rule (Napoleon invaded Egypt in 1798) but after its 1815 defeat it lost military and political clout. France had commercial rights in the Ottoman Empire dating back to the Capitulation Treaties of the 1600s and relied heavily on trade with the Ottoman Empire.

In the 1820s France joined British and Russian intervention on behalf of the Moreans. France did this mostly to protect its commercial interests but also to counter-balance Russian-British domination in the region.

More so than the British, French investors played a key role in Balkan policy. During the Eastern Crisis and the war of 1875-78, the Ottoman State went bankrupt and French bondholders were the biggest potential losers in case of default. So when the Ottoman Public Debt Administration was created to monitor the Ottoman Empire's State finances, French directors were right in the middle of managing Ottoman State finances. Like the British investors, French investors forced the Ottoman Empire to maximize their returns and ignored the needs of the Ottoman people.

Austria had been the main threat to Ottoman rule at one time, but after 1699 Russia replaced it in that department. Austria retained a major interest in the Ottoman Empire mainly because it was neighbouring Hungary. In other words, Vienna had no desire to replace a weak Ottoman neighbour with a strong Russia or Russian allies like Serbia or today's Bulgaria.

Austria's goals were aimed at creating a western Balkan economic resource and a potential market. Control of the Adriatic coast was key to Austria's foreign trade through the Adriatic Sea. Austria made sure it exerted enough influence to keep the hostile Great Powers away and to prevent the growing new Balkan nations from annexing it. Austria had no desire to annex the western Balkans for itself. The ruling German Austrians, or the Hungarians had no ethnic or religious ties to the indigenous people living in the region.

After 1866 Germany (not Austria) became the leader in central Europe. Austria now had only southeastern Europe where it could exert influence. Austria was too weak to absorb the Balkans by itself so it preferred to sustain a weak Ottoman Empire instead of "Russian controlled" states. This explains why Vienna took an anti-Russian position during the Crimean War and why it became allied with Germany later. Germany was an ally of both Russia and Austria, but Austria turned on Russia so Germany had to abandon the Russian-German alliance to please Austria.

Serbia and Romania created problems for Vienna, which it unsuccessfully tried to manage through political alliances and economic treaties. Romania feared Russian occupation and Bucharest generally accepted alliances with Austria. Serbia, however, had fewer enemies and less incentive to bend to Austrian wishes. The two states (Austria and Serbia) found themselves on a collision course which resulted in the war of 1914 (World War I).

Italy became a state in 1859 after fighting a successful war against Austria. In 1866 the Kingdom of Piedmont united the Italian peninsula and took its position as a new Great Power. Italy lacked economic and military might in comparison to the other Powers but made up for it in influence at the expense of the weaker Ottoman Empire.

Italy viewed the western Balkans, especially Albania, as its "natural zone of influence" and its leaders watched for opportunities to take the area away from the Ottomans. Italy's Balkan goals were not only a threat to the Ottoman Empire but also to Serbia and Greece who both had aims at seizing the Adriatic. Italy was too weak to seize Balkan territory so it followed a policy of "lay and wait" until 1911 and 1912 when it took the Dodecanese Islands and Tripoli (Libya) from the Ottomans.

Germany, like Italy, became a Great Power at a later time after the German State unification of 1862 to 1870. Due to its strong military and economic might, Germany had more influence in Europe than Italy, but no

direct interest in Balkan affairs. For the new German Empire the Balkans were only economic outlets.

After defeating Austria in 1866, Germany made Austria-Hungary an ally and to retain loyalty, Germany had to support Austria in Balkan matters. After 1878 Germany could no longer reconcile Russian and Austrian differences over the Balkans and by 1890 Germany and Austria strengthened their alliance and pushed Tsarist Russia into a conflicting partnership with republican France. After that, German policies in the Balkans supported economic and military investments in the Ottoman Empire state. This made Germany a rival not only of Russia but also of Britain. The Great Power alignments of 1890-1914 established a pattern that dominated the two world wars.

Germany had no stake in the development of any of the successor states which left it free to support the Sultan (and later the Young Turk regime). German officers trained Ottoman troops and German Marks built Ottoman railways.

The Ottoman Empire of the 19th century was the weakest of the Great Powers, especially after the Crimean war. At the 1856 Treaty of Paris, Britain and France granted the Ottomans “legal status” in the Balkans that was far beyond its ability to control. The Western Powers desperately wanted the Ottoman Empire stable and intact.

The Ottomans, on the other hand, mistrusted the other Powers, partly because they were infidels and partly because of bad past experiences. Russia was clearly the Ottoman's greatest enemy, bent on dismantling its empire. To keep Russia at bay, the Ottomans cooperated with the other Powers but was always wary of falling under the influence of any single Power. From the 1820's to the 1870s, Britain was the Ottoman's guardian. After 1878 Germany replaced Britain as economic and military sponsor. Ottoman relations with the new Balkan states were poor at best. Any gains for them usually meant losses for the Ottomans.

The western Great Powers believed that if corruption, crime and poverty could be eliminated, Balkan unrest would end and the Ottoman Empire could remain intact. After all, they didn't want anything to happen to their goose that laid golden eggs. So instead of kicking the “sick man” out of Europe, they pushed for reforms. However, it was one thing to draw up reforms and another to make them work. By examining Ottoman efforts in Macedonia it was obvious that the Ottomans lacked the resources and the will to carry out reforms. Also, Europeans failed to grasp that

suggestions and wishes alone could not replace five hundred years of Ottoman rule. The Ottomans believed their way of life was justified.

By 1875 the Ottomans entered a crisis situation owing 200 million pounds sterling to foreign investors with an annual interest payment of 12 million pounds a year. The interest payments alone amounted to approximately half the state's annual revenues. In 1874, due to some agricultural failures, military expenses and worldwide economic depression, the Ottoman government could not even pay the interest due on the loans. On the brink of bankruptcy, to preserve Ottoman stability and to make sure the Ottomans paid up western European debts, the Great Powers in 1875 took over the management of Ottoman revenues. This was done through an international agency, called the Ottoman Public Debt Administration (OPDA). To continue to receive credit, the Sultan had to grant the OPDA control over state income. Therefore, control of the state budget and internal policies fell into foreign hands. The agents in control were representatives of the rich capitalists and were only interested in profit, and very little else. This was definitely not to the advantage of the local people.

Prelude to the 1903 Macedonian Revolution

The first of these uprisings began in 1875 in Bosnia but soon spread to Montenegro and Serbia. About a year later the village peasants in Bulgaria showed their discontentment and staged a massive liberation struggle. To a lesser extent, the liberation struggle extended to Macedonia where an armed insurrection took place in Razlovtsi in 1876.

In the spring of 1878 Macedonia reached the crossroads of its destiny. It was one step away from overthrowing six hundred years of Ottoman tyranny when Western Powers stepped in to prevent it. The real reason for throwing Macedonia back to the Ottomans had little to do with religion, nationalism, or human rights and a lot to do with economics, profit and access to the Mediterranean Sea. Russia desperately wanted to access the Mediterranean but the Western Powers desperately wanted to prevent it. Here is what Trevelyan has to say about that. "Throughout the 19th century Russia was striving to advance towards Constantinople over the ruins of the Turkish [Ottoman] Empire. It drawn forward by imperialist ambition, in the oppressed Christians of its own communion,..., and by the instinct to seek a warm water port-a window whence the imprisoned giantess could look out upon the world. The world however, had no great wish to see it there."

"Canning (a British politician, 1812-1862) had planned to head off Russia's advance, not by direct opposition, but by associating her with England and France in a policy of emancipation, aimed at erecting national States out of the component parts of the Ottoman Empire. Such States could be relied upon to withstand Russian encroachment on their independence, if once they were set free from the Ottoman. The creation of the Kingdom of Greece was the immediate outcome of Canning's policy" (Page 372, Trevelyan, British History in the 19th Century)

Russia had no economic stake in the Ottoman Empire so it wanted the Ottomans out of the Balkans. The Western Powers invested heavily in the Ottoman economy and infrastructure and were anxious to keep the Ottoman Empire alive and well in the Balkans. The success of the Crimean war (the Ottomans won), convinced the British to slow down their policy of creating new Balkan States in favour of exploiting the lucrative Ottoman markets and collecting returns on loans made to the Ottomans.

At the stroke of a pen Bulgaria was freed (autonomous) while Macedonia was sentenced to suffer further indignity and humiliation. Back in the hands of the Greek clergy and the Ottoman authorities, Macedonia

now entered a new era of suffering and cruelty, destined to pay for the sins of all the other nations that rose up against the Ottomans.

Between the spring and summer of 1878, Macedonia's fate was decided not by Russia or the Western Powers, but by Britain alone. Britain who created Greece and introduced the curse of Hellenism into the Balkans, was now prepared to fight Russia, by military means if necessary, to keep it out of the Mediterranean Sea. To avoid war a compromise was reached. "The essentials of this compromise were agreed upon between England and Russia before the meeting of the European Congress, which took place at Berlin under the chairmanship of Bismarck, and formally substituted the Treaty of Berlin for the terms of San Stefano" (Page 377, Trevelyan, British History in the 19th Century)

"To our (British) eyes the real objection to the San Stefano lies not in its alleged increase in Russian power, but in the sacrifice of the fair claims of Greeks and Serbians, who would not have remained long quiet under the arrangements which ignored their racial rights and gave all the points to Bulgaria. Lord Salisbury felt this strongly, especially on behalf of Greece."

"Beaconsfield's success, as he himself saw it, consisted in restoring the European power of Turkey. It was done by handing back Macedonia to the Port (Ottomans), without guarantees for better government. This was the essence of the Treaty of Berlin as distinct from the Treaty of San Stefano. 'There is again a Turkey in Europe' Bismarck said. He congratulated the British Prime Minister – 'You have made a present to the Sultan of the richest province in the world; 4,000 square miles of the richest soil.' Unfortunately for themselves, the inhabitants went with the soil. Since Beaconsfield decided, perhaps rightly, that Macedonia should not be Bulgarian, some arrangements ought to have been made for its proper administration under a Christian governor. Apart of all questions of massacres, the deadening character of the Ottoman rule is well known. Lord Salisbury seems to have wished for a Christian governor, but nothing was done in that direction. A golden opportunity was thus let slip." (Page 378, Trevelyan, British History in the 19th Century)

After gaining status as protector of the Suez Canal and the waterways to India, Britain was awarded Cyprus. Content with its gains, Britain became lax and agreed that Russia and Austria-Hungary should oversee Ottoman affairs in Macedonia. "The British people, when left to themselves, neither knew or cared who massacred whom between the Danube and the Aegean. Byron's Greece had appealed to their imagination

and historical sense, but the Balkans were a battlefield of kites and crows” (Page 373, Treveleyan, British History in the 19th Century)

The Macedonian people were not at all happy about what went on in the Berlin Congress and showed their discontentment by demonstrating first in Razlovtsi in 1876 then in Kresna in 1878 but as usual their pleas were ignored. The Ottoman army was dispatched and the demonstrations were violently put down.

Facing the possibility of becoming extinct in Europe, the Ottoman Empire began to re-organize and take demonstrations and rebellions seriously. After the Greek uprising the Sultan became distrustful of the Phanariots and expelled most of them from his services. He came close to ousting the Patriarch and his tyrannical Bishops but Russia stepped in and prevented it. Many of the Macedonian people were not happy with being ruled by a Greek Patriarch and after Russia’s show of solidarity to the Greeks and the Patriarch, they threatened to convert to Catholicism. This created a real concern for Russia. “In the days when Panslavism was a force in Russia and General Ignatieff ruled Constantinople. Russia naturally feared that if the [Macedonians]...became Catholics it would lose its ascendancy over them.” (Page 73, Brailsford, Macedonia) In 1870 Russia convinced the Sultan to allow a new millet to be formed, thus creating the schismatic Bulgarian Exarchate Church which was immediately excommunicated by the Patriarch. Fracturing the Rum (Romeos) Millet into two opposing factions suited the Ottomans perfectly because now Christians, instead of rebelling against the Ottomans, would fight one another. Now, in addition to the Ottoman and Greek, a third government was created that would rule the same people in three conflicting ways. From a religious standpoint, minor differences distinguished the Greek from the Bulgarian Church. Both were Christian Orthodox, except that the Greeks acknowledged the authority of the Greek Patriarch while the Bulgarians obeyed the Bulgarian Exarch. The language of liturgy was about the only distinct difference between the churches. The Bulgarians used the Old Church Macedonian, familiar to Macedonians, while the Greeks used an ancient language no Macedonian could understand. The creation of the Exarchist Church stepped up nationalistic activities inside Macedonia and increased the stakes for territorial claims.

From the day they were liberated, both Serbia and Greece were strengthening their economies and poisoning their people with nationalist propaganda. Serbia introduced education for the masses and was teaching its youth about its ancient exploits and past empires that ruled Kosovo,

Albania and Macedonia and that the Macedonians (except for the Bulgarians who were Serbia's enemies) were truly Serbs.

The modern Greeks on the other hand, infatuated with the discovery of the Ancient City States, were going overboard promoting "Hellenism" and making territorial claims on Macedonia based on ancient rites. At the same time, the Greeks were making wild claims that all Orthodox Christians were Greeks. Their argument was that if a person belonged to the Greek Orthodox Church they were Greek. Here is what Brailsford has to say about that. "Hellenism claims these peoples because they were civilized by the Greek Orthodox Church. That is a conception which the Western mind grasps with difficulty. It is much as though the Roman Catholic Church should claim the greater part of Europe as the inheritance of Italy. To make the parallel complete we should have to imagine not only an Italian Pope and a College of Cardinals which Italians predominate, but a complete Italian hierarchy. If every Bishop in France and Germany were an Italian, if the official language of the church were not Latin but Italian and if every priest were a political agent working for the annexation of France and Germany to Italy, we should have some analogy to the state of things which actually exist in Turkey." (Page 195, Brailsford, Macedonia) Here is what Brailsford has to say about how the Greeks received title to the Orthodox Church. "The [Macedonian]... Churches had disappeared from Macedonia, and everywhere the Greek Bishops, as intolerant as they were corrupt-'Blind mouths that scarce themselves know how to hold a shephook'-crushed out the national consciousness, the language, and the intellectual life of their [Macedonian]...flocks. It is as a result of this process that the Eastern Church is a Greek Church. The sanctions of 'Hellenism' so far as they rest on the Church, are the wealth of the Phanariots and the venality of the Turks...the [Macedonian]...libraries in the old monasteries were burned by the Greek Bishops." (Page 196, Brailsford, Macedonia)

After 1878, for a Macedonian to be Hellenized meant that he had to give up his name, his own language, his own culture, his history, his folklore and his heritage. Here is what Karakasidou has to say. "...The ideological content of notions of the Hellenic nation, which far from being ecumenical has shown itself to be intolerant of cultural or ethnic pluralism, has lead many inhabitants of Greek Macedonia to deny or hide those aspects of their own personal or family pasts..." (Page 125, Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood)

Hellenization was made by choice or by brute force. One was made to “feel Greek” when it suited the Greeks. The moment one wanted something from the Greeks or one crossed one of the Greeks, they were reminded of their “true identity” and quickly “put in their place”. To be Hellenized meant to lose dignity and to suffer constant and unwarranted humiliation because no matter how hard one tried to be a Hellene, one could never measure up. A Hellenized person was neither Greek nor Macedonian but a soul in limbo.

To quote David Holden “To me, philhellenism is a love affair with a dream which envisions ‘Greece’ and the ‘Greeks’ not as an actual place or as real people but as symbols of some imagined perfection.” (Page 12, *Greece without Columns*) What is Hellenism then?

Before I answer that question, I will once again quote David Holden. “Further back still beyond the War of Independence, when the modern nation-state of Greece came into being for the first time, the whole concept of Greece as a geographical entity that begins to blur before our eyes, so many and various were its shapes and meanings. But if geography can offer us no stable idea of Greece, what can? Not race, certainly; for whatever the Greeks may once have been,..., they can hardly have had much blood-relationship with the Greeks of the peninsula of today, Serbs and Bulgars, Romans, Franks and Venetians, Ottomans, Albanians,...,in one invasion after another have made the modern Greeks a decidedly mongrel race. Not politics either; for in spite of that tenacious western legend about Greece as the birthplace and natural home of democracy, the political record of the Greeks is one of a singular instability and confusion in which, throughout history, the poles of anarchy modulated freedom has very rarely appeared. Not religion; for while Byzantium was Christian, ancient Hellas was pagan.” (Page 23, *Greece without Columns*) Unlike Macedonia and other Balkan nations who have natural and vibrant languages, Greece artificially created and used (up until the 1970’s) an imposed adaptation of the classical language called the Katharevousa. “Hellenizing” under these conditions not only rendered the Hellenized races mute but also imposed a meaningless and emotionless language on those doing the Hellenization.

When Greece was created for the first time in 1832 it was unclear what its national character was? To quote David Holden, “the Greek nation-state was a product of western political intervention-‘the fatal idea’ as Arnold Toynbee once called it, of exclusive western nationalism impinging upon the multi-national traditions of the eastern world. By extension, therefore,

at any rate in theory, it was a child of the Renaissance and of western rationalism. (Page 28, Greece without Columns)

Officially, Greeks call their modern state Hellas, and are officially known as Hellenes, but at the same time they called themselves Romios (from the Ottoman Rum millet) implying that they are descendents of the Romans. Greece, however, is a derivation of the Latin “Graecia” (Page 29, Holden, Greece without Columns) the province of the Western Roman Empire which extended from Mount Olympus to the Peloponnesus. Again, to quote David Holden, “its international use to describe the sovereign state that currently occupies that territory is merely a reflection of the fact that ‘Greece’ in this modern sense is literally a western invention. (Page 29, Greece without Columns)

If philhellenism is a love affair with a dream, then Hellenism is a dream of a few “evil geniuses” (Phanariots) who sought to destroy what was real in favour of creating something artificial, like a Frankenstein’s Monster. Hellenism may be a dream for a few but it has been a nightmare for Macedonia. Here is what Karakasidou has to say. “Greek natural identity was not a ‘natural development’ or the extension of a ‘high culture’ over the region of Macedonia, although now it is frequently portrayed as so. The ideology of Hellenism imposed a homogeneity on the Macedonian region and its inhabitants.” (Page 94, Fields of Wheat, Hills of Blood)

If modern Hellenism is a western invention propagated by the Phanariots, then who are modern Greeks? According to historical records, a large majority of the Greeks of Morea that fought during the Greek War of independence were Slavs and Tosk Albanians that later Hellenized after the 1830’s. The Slavs of Peloponnesus (what happened to them?), the Vlachs of Larissa, and the Albanian Tosks of Epirus (what happened to them?) were also Hellenized. In other words, the Greeks of today are a “forcibly Hellenized diverse collection of people”. Even the Greek national dress, the fustanella, is not Greek. The fustanella is the national costume of the Albanian Tosks. (Page 230, Brailsford, Macedonia)

In addition to desperately trying to define an identity and a language for itself, after 1878 Greece stepped up Hellenization activities inside Macedonia through the Orthodox Church and by employing (bribing) the services of the Ottoman authorities. Willing young Macedonian men were enrolled in Greek schools in Athens, with promises of education, only to be poisoned with Hellenization and Greek nationalist propaganda. Many of

these young men came back (home) to Macedonia only to be used as agents of Hellenism.

After the creation of the Bulgarian Church, Bulgaria was not far behind in its attempts to instill Bulgarian nationalism in the Macedonian youth. This was most evident when young Macedonian men, like Gotse Delchev, were expelled from the Bulgarian schools for wanting to use the Macedonian language and to learn Macedonian history. Here is what Radin has to say about that. “In the 1870’s, six Macedonian districts seceded from the Exarchate. Bulgarian schools were destroyed, with the Macedonian teaching intelligentsia organizing students against the Exarchate. Macedonian literary associations were discovered, to study Macedonian history and culture. The periodical ‘Vine’ (Loza) was published to mobilize Macedonians against the vehement propaganda. In 1891, an attempt was made to re-establish the Macedonian Church. This national renaissance significantly produced a Macedonian intelligentsia that was to later prove instrumental in founding IMRO (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization). (Page 45, A. Michael Radin, *IMRO and the Macedonian Question*)

Russia’s rash attempt to gain access to the Mediterranean, by creating a “Greater Bulgaria” (San Stefano Treaty), gave the Bulgarians rationale to make territorial claims on Macedonian territory. On top of the Greeks forcibly trying to Hellenize Macedonia, the Macedonian people now faced a new enemy, Bulgarian chauvinism. At the hands of the Ottomans, Greeks, Bulgarians, Albanians and Serbians, Macedonian misery seemed to flourish as if all the evil in the world was unleashed at once and struck Macedonia with all its fury. What makes Macedonia’s misery even more tragic is that the entire world stood by and watched the horrors unfold and did nothing.

While the Greeks employed brutality, the Bulgarians adopted intrigue to sway Macedonians to their side. The Bulgarians were publicly calling for Macedonian autonomy while they were promoting a Bulgarian nationalist agenda. In the next decade after 1878, nationalist fever gripped the Balkans. The new nations (Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria) were making exclusive claims not only on Macedonian territory, but also on the Macedonian people, each claiming that Macedonians were Serbs, Greeks, or Bulgarians. Each new nation desperately tried to prove its claim by propaganda campaigns, coercion and forcible assimilation. Here is what Brailsford has to say on the subject. “Are the Macedonians Serbs or Bulgars? The question is constantly asked and dogmatically answered in

Belgrade and Sofia. But the lesson of history is obviously that there is no answer at all. They are not Serbs, ... On the other hand they could hardly be Bulgarians... They are probably what they were before a Bulgarian or Serbian Empire existed..." (Page 101, Macedonia Its Races and their Future) As for the Macedonian's being Greek, this is what Brailsford has to say. "The Greek colonies were never much more than trading centers along the coast, and what was Greek in ancient times is Greek today. There is no evidence that the interior was ever settled by a rural Greek population." (Page 91, Brailsford, Macedonia)

"The period immediately following the Berlin Congress demonstrated therefore, that Balkan chauvinist intent was not merely to occupy, govern and exploit Macedonia, but to eradicate the Macedonian culture, and superimpose its own culture upon a people alien to it. By guile, gun, religion and quasi-legal manipulation, the Balkan States attempted to divest the native Macedonians of their language, religion, folklore, literature, traditions and consciousness. The ultimate goal therefore, was to anaesthetize the Macedonian people, and then remold them into Bulgarians, Greeks and Serbians." (Page 45, A. Michael Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

The 1878 Treaty of Berlin set events in motion in the Balkans for the next forty years. The re-appearance of Ottoman soldiers, the worsening economy and the reign of terror imposed by the Greek clergy was crushing the spirits of the Macedonian people. In the meantime, the economic situation of the Great Powers and the new Balkan States was improving daily. In 1881 the Muhareem Decree gave Europeans complete control of Ottoman finances and trade markets. During the same year the Constantinople Conference of Great Powers agreed to the Greek annexation of Thessaly and Epirus. Later that same year Austria-Hungary agreed to allow Serbia to annex parts of Macedonia in some future time. Four years later Bulgaria, with some Russian help, annexed eastern Rumelia. While the Western Powers were contemplating the "Eastern Question" and collecting returns from Ottoman loans, the new Balkan States were plotting Macedonia's demise. Here is what each of them had to say:

Bulgaria: "Bulgaria's whole future depends on Macedonia, without her our State will be without importance or authority. Solun must be the main port of this State, the grand window to illuminate the entire building. If Macedonia does not belong to us, Bulgaria will never be firmly based".

Greece: "Macedonia is the lung of Greece, without it the rest of Greece would be condemned to death. For Greece to become a greater power she must expand into Macedonia."

Serbia: "We are ready to enter into any combination if necessary in order to prevent the Macedonian Question being settled in any way that harms our vital interests, without which Serbia cannot survive".

In addition to being handed back to the Ottomans, the 1878 Treaty of Berlin now subjected Macedonia to three new tyrants. In time, Macedonia would be subjected to all kinds of evil but the most cunning would turn out to be Bulgarian chauvinism. The Macedonian people knew very well where they stood with the Greeks. Greek policies were straightforward, Hellenize everyone by any means possible, force and brutality included. The Bulgarian approach was very different. The Bulgarians were interested in educating the Macedonian masses into believing that they were Bulgarians. Anyone who showed any opposition didn't live to tell about it. And so became the legacy of so many educated Macedonian young men and women.

It was the charismatic humanitarian William Gladstone, a three time British Prime Minister, who uttered the words "Macedonia for the Macedonians" which rang out like loud church bells throughout Macedonia. "Macedonia for the Macedonians" was the signal that rallied the Macedonians into action and gave them hope that finally the West would support their cause. In spite of his great sympathy for the Macedonian people, unfortunately, Gladstone was not in a position to help. The best the Great Powers could offer were "reforms". A great number of reforms were drafted and agreed upon but never implemented. The Ottoman Pashas continued to humour the westerners with reams of fictional statistics and accomplishments, while the Begs (feudal lords) continued to dominate the "Chiflik" (estates) and squeeze the village peasants out of their existence. The only visible reforms were rail and road improvements sponsored by western companies who were able to divert Ottoman finances from the state budgets. Peasants who owned land were taxed so excessively that they had to work on Sunday at road and bridge building to catch up on back taxes. To get such a job they had to resort to bribery. As if that was not enough, in 1889, re-imposing a personal tax of seven shillings per year for each newborn son further increased the tax burden. This was only reduced when the boy was able to work, at age fifteen. Some of these taxes were raised to assist small-scale manufacturing, which was largely owned by foreign investors. Village

peasants were forced to sell their most valued possessions, hand-made crafts, old coins and heirlooms, for next to nothing, to pay these taxes.

To further aggravate the situation, lawless acts by the Ottoman authorities, without any avenue for appeal, contributed to the oppressive climate in the villages. In addition to pillaging, Ottoman soldiers now plundered the farms and villages for their daily sustenance. The Ottoman administration was in such disarray that suppliers of the military were not paid for long periods of time and in turn they were refusing to feed the army. To counter the plundering, peasant militias began to form but were soon outlawed by the Ottoman authorities.

By late 1890, those Macedonians who had land couldn't afford to work it because of high taxes and frequent raids. Those who worked for the Begs were at the mercy of their landlord without rights or legal recourse. The courts were clearly working against the Macedonians and beyond "external intervention" there was no way to challenge their tyrannical authority. Though the land was fertile there was no incentive to work. Agrarian life became a burden, filling village life with hopelessness and crushing the spirit of the Macedonian peasant. Many Macedonian men left their families and turned to migrant work, traveling to various foreign countries in search of work but often returning home poorer due to high travel and lodging expenses. It was during these times that large emigrant Macedonian communities began to form in cities like Sofia, Paris, London, etc. Besides migrant workers, young Macedonian men also traveled abroad to pursue a higher education. They too became involved in the growing Macedonian worker communities. By the late 1890's over 100,000 Macedonian men were working or studying outside of Macedonia. Cafe conversations dominated by discussions of "what to do to improve the situation at home" became commonplace. It was clear to many that the discontentment they were experiencing was not a local or village issue, but a matter that enveloped all of Macedonia. It was also clear that Ottomans would not allow Macedonia to protect itself or Ottoman courts to rule in Macedonia's favour. It became clear to all that the only option open to a Macedonian was outright rebellion, a rebellion that would have common purpose, tactical mobilization and central direction. There were many lessons to be learned from the great deeds and disasters of the American war of Independence, the French Revolution and others. By the late 1890's Ottoman tyranny was not the only ill in Macedonia. There was also the process of Hellenization, Greek propaganda and the Greek clergy to

contend with. Beyond that there was Bulgarian propaganda that was becoming more venomous by the day.

On another front, escalated Bulgarian activities in Macedonia prompted Greece and Serbia to reconsider an old alliance (1866-67) of restoring ecclesiastical unity under the Patriarch in order to take away from the Exarchate. This alliance, due to Greek greed, for the time did not work out. This, however, would be a prelude to a future and deadlier alliance that would last to this day.

By 1890 the rebellion started to organize and gain momentum. The students were the first to take action. Student revolutionary organizations were formed in Switzerland and Bulgaria. Both used various tactics to combat anti-Macedonian chauvinist Balkan propaganda. Organized in 1891, the group in Bulgaria allied itself with the organization of Macedonian emigrant workers (Pechalbari) in Sofia and had much success. In time more organizations sprang up in Russia, Britain and Greece but none could match the achievements of the Sofia based "Young Macedonian Literary Society" under the tutelage of Petar Pop Arsov. This Society of young Macedonians formulated its own constitution and managed the revolutionary publication "Loza" (Vine). The first issue of Loza came out in January 1892 followed by six more publications before the Society was denounced by the Greek and Serbian press, and claimed as "its own" by the Bulgarian press. According to official Bulgarian State policy, "Macedonians were Bulgarians" and any worthwhile Macedonian creation belonged to Bulgaria.

While émigré Macedonian students were fighting Greek and Bulgarian propaganda and shoring up western support, an historic moment inside Macedonia was about to unfold. It was October 23rd, 1893 in Solun when two high school teachers, Damjan Gruev and Anton Dimitrov, together with Petar Pop Arsov, a former editor of Loza and Hristo Tatarchev, a doctor, got together in bookshop owner Ivan Nikolov's house for an informal meeting. The main point of discussion was the plight of the Macedonian people and what to do about it. As word got around a committee was formed, more Macedonians got involved and a second (formal) meeting was held on February 9th, 1894. The topic of discussion included the drafting of a constitution to guide the committee. By the end of the meeting the committee made the following resolutions:

1. The committee will be revolutionary in nature and will remain secret.
2. Its revolutionary activities will be confined to inside Macedonia's borders.

3. Irrespective of nationality or religion, any Macedonian can become a member of the committee.

The committee also set the following objectives for itself, which were later ratified at the first Revolutionary Congress held in Resen in August 1894:

1. Destroy the Ottoman social system.
2. Remain an "independent" organization.
3. Seek Macedonian autonomy.

The organization later became known as Vnatrezhna (Internal) Makedonska (Macedonian) Revolutzionerna (Revolutionary) Organizatsia (Organization), VMRO (IMRO). According to historian Aleksandar Donski, the original name of the organization was TMORO. It was later named VMRO/IMRO, years after Gotse's death.

Being clandestine in nature, IMRO had some difficulty recruiting new members, but within a year or so its influence extended beyond Solun and into the rest of Macedonia. Initially the organization was more ideological and less practical, with the majority of its recruits being teachers, most of whom taught at the Exarchate schools inside Macedonia. To rally the masses the organization needed to educate them and bring them in line with IMRO's objectives. For that it needed a charismatic leader who was able to talk to people at their own level and who was free to travel without too much interference from the authorities. The man who answered that call was Gotse Delchev, a man of vision matched by only a few, the father of the Macedonian Revolution and the soul of the movement. (If you want to learn more about the IMRO leadership, you must read Michael Radin's book, *IMRO and the Macedonian Question*).

Gotse was a realist and at the same time an idealist who loved people, hated tyranny and saw the world as a place of many cultures living together in peace. 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. People needed to feel like people with rights and freedoms and not like slaves. With that in mind Gotse set out to build up a revolutionary conscience in the Macedonian population and thus set the revolutionary wheels in motion. Gotse's installment as undisputed leader of IMRO was consolidated during the Solun Congress of 1896, after which IMRO began to massively organize. Gotse's abilities to "listen and learn" brought him close to the problems of ordinary people who wanted freedom but also wanted to preserve their religion, culture and way of life. With Gotse's field research in mind, IMRO's strategy was to "give the people

what they want" and win them over. Initially the strategy worked well and won IMRO the support it needed.

By 1896 it was able to exert influence to a point where it acted like a state within a state, taking over administrative positions from the Ottomans, leading boycotts against Ottoman institutions and offering isolated villages protection from Greek and Bulgarian sponsored brigands. In time IMRO operatives were able to penetrate Ottoman economic, educational and even judicial functions. The downside of "giving the people what they want" was that it opened the doors for Bulgarian infiltration. By "attitude" and use of the Greek language it was easy to recognize Greek influence. However, Bulgarian influence was not as easily recognized. While the Greeks cared nothing about Macedonian affairs and loathed the Macedonian language, the Bulgarians were a part of Macedonian affairs and spoke the Macedonian language eloquently. By far the largest Bulgarian infiltration into Macedonian affairs took place in Sofia among the migrant workers.

As mentioned earlier, the cosmopolitan lifestyle in Sofia, a far cry from life in the village, seduced some Macedonians to succumb to Bulgarian propaganda, which resulted in the formation of the "External Macedonian Revolutionary Organization"; better known as the "Supreme Macedonian Committee". This organization was formed in Sofia in March of 1895; called the "Trojan Horse" of IMRO, by Gotse Delchev. The initial membership consisted of emigrant Macedonian nationalists but in time its leadership was infiltrated by officers from the Bulgarian State Army. The objective, on the surface of this "two faced" organization termed "Vrhovist" (Supremacist) by IMRO, was to fight for Macedonia's independence, by armed intervention in an aggressive revolutionary manner. It's true nature, however, (concealed from the people) was to undermine IMRO by subordinating its central committee to its own "Supremacist directives". This, and the fact that Vrhovism masqueraded itself as "Macedonian patriotism" in the eyes of the Macedonian people, very much disturbed Gotse Delchev. True to his nature of keeping an open mind, Delchev, along with Gruev, took a trip to Sofia in hopes of reconciling their differences with the Vrhovists but came back more disillusioned. Instead of receiving a handshake on March 20th, 1896 Gotse was informed that Bulgaria would no longer support IMRO and all finances and arms would be cut off. From here on forward the Vrhovists would decide what actions IMRO would take inside Macedonia. This was indeed an attempt by the Vrhovists to usurp control of IMRO.

Disappointed but not disillusioned IMRO turned to "Mother Russia" for assistance, but there too he found no welcome reception. Russia had no interest in helping IMRO because there were no advantages to gain from liberating Macedonia (given Russia's current relationship with the Western Powers).

Due to IMRO's popularity, strength and ability to recognize a "Trojan Horse", the Bulgarian led organization failed to achieve its true objectives. After that it resorted to violent attacks and assassination attempts with the aim of eliminating the entire IMRO structure and its leadership. It used armed interventions in order to provoke Ottoman reprisals against innocent village peasants and put the blame on IMRO. By selective propaganda and vilifying the Ottomans in the eyes of the world, the Bulgarian led organization was hoping for a Great Power intervention to weaken the Ottomans and at the same time create a climate for a Bulgarian invasion (disguised as a "liberation" of the oppressed Macedonians).

In the meantime both Delchev and Gruev were promoted to the rank of "District Inspector of Schools" in their employment, enabling them to travel unabated and without suspicion. Using inspection tours as cover, they were able to find ways to purchase and smuggle arms into Macedonia. They also took time to address Macedonian villages and made personal contacts with the village chiefs. Many people flocked to hear what these legendary figures of men, patriots and saviors had to say. Unfortunately, lecturing out in the open placed IMRO leaders at risk from spies. As a result, on one occasion Gotse was arrested by the Ottoman authorities in May of 1896 and spent 26 days in jail. When the Ottomans couldn't find anything to charge him with, Gotse was released.

Bulgarian influence was not limited to Vrhovist actions alone. Bulgarian undercover agents were dispatched to Solun to spy on IMRO activities and report back to the Bulgarian State. The Exarchate also had policies of its own and continued to rally the Macedonian youth for its own cause.

When it seemed like IMRO was unbreakable, the Vrhovists resorted to infiltrating the IMRO leadership itself, which in time brought them some success. Bulgarian interference in IMRO policies caused hardships and internal squabbling between executive committee members and eventually caused the organization to split into hostile factions. This undermined IMRO's credibility with the outside world. The Vrhovists badly wanted to provoke the Ottomans so that they could "liberate" Macedonia, but the Great Powers, especially Russia and Britain, "didn't buy it" and saw their

actions as provocative and dangerous. While the Vrhovist leadership agreed to curb its provocative actions, its armed wing of insurgents, however, had already penetrated and captured parts of eastern Macedonia. Even though the invasion lasted about two days, it became clear as to "who was who" and the true Vrhovist agenda was exposed. After that IMRO gave the Vrhovists a stern warning to "stay out of Macedonia". To use Delchev's words, "Whoever works for the unification with Greece or Bulgaria is a good Greek or Good Bulgarian but NOT a good Macedonian." After that, while IMRO worked for a "Macedonia for the Macedonians" the Bulgarian Supreme Committee openly worked for a "Macedonia for the Bulgarians". IMRO leadership strove to purify IMRO from the Vrhovist infiltration. In essence, the IMRO constitution was bolstered to exclude Vrhovist demands but was still able to give the Macedonian people what they wanted. The IMRO leadership, without much success, made attempts to infiltrate and sabotage the Vrhovist Supreme Committee by making frequent trips to Sofia and attempting to rally dissident emigrant forces inside Bulgaria.

While the Vrhovists were plotting against IMRO and the Macedonian people from the north, a new menace was brewing from the south. On April 9th, 1897 armed Greek bands began to aggressively cross into Macedonia. The Ottomans protested this action to the Great Powers but the Greeks denied responsibility, insisting that it was not Greek soldiers but the Macedonian Cheti. It wasn't long before the Ottomans took the offensive, drove the Greeks out and pursued them inside Greece. When the Ottomans were about to overtake the entire country the Great Powers intervened on Greece's behalf to once again save it. The Greek Government, in charge of the invasion, fell out of grace and, when a new Government was elected, agreed to pay a hefty fine, which consisted of four million Ottoman pounds, as well as giving up Thessaly to the Ottomans. In addition to losing grace, Greece had to relinquish control of its own finances (to the Great Powers) to ensure prompt payment of the fine. The Great Powers, without German support, forced the Sultan to accept the offer and sign a peace deal. The Germans never forgave the Greeks for lying to them about their aggressive actions against the Ottomans. The Germans at that time were responsible for the Ottoman Empire.

Outside of Greek brigand actions, for the moment at least, Greece was not a direct threat to IMRO.

IMRO demonstrated great leadership by its ability to organize Macedonia into seven revolutionary districts (Solun, Serres, Strumitsa, Shtip, Skopje, Bitola and Edrene (Dardanelles)). (Because of the inclusion of the Dardanelles (Odrin) the Revolutionary organization was initially called TMORO as in Taina (Secret) Makedonska (Macedonian) Odrin (Dardanelles) Revolutsionerna (Revolutionary) Organizatsija (Organization)). It also demonstrated its weaknesses. Having allied itself with the poor village peasants and striving to refrain from obligations and debts, IMRO found itself strapped for finances. The IMRO committee was unable to raise all the necessary funds to finance its campaigns. While the leadership turned a blind eye, the local commanders resorted to kidnapping rich landowners, merchants and foreign dignitaries for ransom. Kidnappings did not exclude foreign missionaries, like Miss Stone, who fell into the hands of Sandanski's Cheta (armed band). Taken by the plight of her captors, Miss Stone voluntarily made sure the ransom was paid in full. Short of finances, mostly due to unfriendly terms with the Vrhovist Supreme Command in Sofia, IMRO found itself lacking the necessary arsenal to wage war. Subordination to Bulgarian demands was out of the question so Gotse had to look elsewhere to get his weapons. Efforts were made to purchase weapons from Greece, Albania and even from the Ottomans themselves, but without too much success. By 1897 the situation was getting desperate so the IMRO leadership resorted to purchasing from the black market, even stealing weapons. One such purchase was made from the Bulgarian Military. The military allowed the sale of outdated guns but later refused to sell cartridges, fearing the weapons might be turned against them. In October 1900 Chakalarov, a local chief in the Lerin/Kostur regions who spoke Greek dressed up as an Albanian pretending to be from Ianitsa, was successful in purchasing some arms from Athens. Later attempts by others, however, were not so successful. On one occasion a translator betrayed the purchasers to the Ottoman consul on the advice of a Greek priest. After that the Ottomans trusted this translator and made him a sergeant in their gendarme. He served the Ottomans well and brought them much success in their "search and destroy" missions, until he discovered he could make even more money by taking bribes before turning people in. As a result of this man's actions many band members, from many villages, were killed.

The lack of sufficient arms brought home the realization that this "uprising" was going to be a long one. Here again, Gotse and the IMRO (TMORO at the time) leadership proved their worth by adopting a policy

of self-arming. With a little bit of skill on weapons manufacture, learned from the Armenian Revolutionaries, IMRO set up a number of munitions factories in remote and secluded areas, capable of producing homemade bombs and other explosives. Unfortunately, in 1900 during a raid at one of these factories, Dame Gruev was arrested by the Ottoman authorities and imprisoned in Bitola. He came back to active duty in April 1903.

In spite of all efforts made to obtain them, the Macedonian "Cheti" lacked arms but had plenty of courage to make up for it, which in time put fear in the Ottoman hearts. As IMRO grew beyond its ideological stage, it began to recruit, equip and train fighters. Volunteers were recruited mainly from the villages, young men who were willing to fight for their freedom. Those who were in trouble with the law (brigands) were armed and recruited into active duty. Those were men who flourished by attacking Ottomans and stealing from them. They were admired for their courage and ability to live free. They were men who practiced the art of war, knew how to live in the open, how to ambush and how to hide. They were the men who taught the young Macedonian recruits to fight and win. The rest were reservists and lived at home, only called to duty as required. Each reservist was expected to purchase and secure his own rifle and ammunition. Recruitment was carried out in utmost secrecy. Even women were enlisted in the Macedonian revolution, but their role was limited to cooking, washing, mending and nursing the wounded.

The primary role of a fighter was to defend the people from the Ottomans and brigand attacks. The Cheti consisted of about five to ten men, organized for rapid mobilization and quick response. The goal was to have one Cheta responsible for one village (preferably their own) in all of Macedonia. The leader of each Cheta was chosen for his abilities to lead his men, and more so, for the peoples' confidence in him to protect their village. To respond quickly, the Cheta had to be familiar with the village's terrain and escape routes. To maintain secrecy, all orders were given by word of mouth.

The IMRO mobilization managed to elude the Ottoman authorities for a long time. However an unfortunate discovery of some explosives accidentally uncovered the secret and led the Ottoman militia on wide "search and destroy" missions. The militia's conduct, unfortunately, was less than honourable when the soldiers began torturing innocent people and burning properties in order to obtain confessions. The Cheta's responsibility was to ambush the militia, using guerrilla tactics, before they entered villages and prevent them from doing harm. This, however, did not

always work so some of the Cheta Chiefs resorted to retaliations and reprisals for crimes already committed. Although poorly armed and vastly under-manned (sometimes as low as 1 Macedonian for 10 Ottomans), the Cheti fought fierce battles and gained legendary reputations among both the Ottomans and the Macedonians. Unfortunately, as the Ottoman authorities became aware of IMRO's intentions the Ottoman militias began to swell up with soldiers. If that was not enough, at about the same time the Exarchate, suspecting IMRO affiliation, began to dismiss Macedonian teachers en masse. Even though most Macedonian teachers despised working for the Exarchate, they used the schools as a means of promoting IMRO's aims. They frequently gave lectures, taught Macedonian patriotic songs, canvassed house to house etc. This was a blow to IMRO. A more severe blow however, came in April of 1897 in what was termed the "Goluchowski-Muraviev Agreement". This was an agreement drawn up by Tsar Nikolas II of Russia and Emperor Franz Joseph of Austria regarding the future of the remainder of the Ottoman Empire. In part, the agreement stated that, at some future time the Macedonian territory would be divided equally between Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria. In other words, when the Great Powers got their fill of the Ottoman Empire and abandoned it, Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria were welcome to take their turn. This indeed was bad news and, as history showed, was devastating for IMRO and disastrous for the Macedonian people.

In about 1898 the Bulgarian Exarchate, instructed by the Bulgarian Prime Minister, created a Vrhovist organization inside Macedonia. Based in Solun, known as the "Revolutionary Brotherhood", it in turn began to form its own Cheti. While pretending to be part of IMRO, the purpose of this organization was to carry out terrorist activities and, in the eyes of the world, discredit the real IMRO. By the year 1900 IMRO's enemies were growing in number and intensifying in ferocity. IMRO's woes were just beginning when they discovered that the Vrhovists had dispatched six assassins to murder Delchev and Sandanski (a legendary Cheta chief affectionately known as the "Tsar of Pirin"). The Vrhovist Cheti were raining terror on Macedonian villages provoking the Ottomans to act. Although never proven, it was alleged that the Vrhovist leaders were working with the Ottomans in successfully arresting members of Organization, destroying munitions depots, and torturing, raping and murdering people. Even the Ottomans themselves participated in sabotage tactics. Several Greek spies were killed at one time and IMRO was blamed. As a result of this many organizers were rounded up and arrested.

In reality, however, it was Ottoman Begs who committed the crimes as was later discovered. The same Begs were seen attacking Ottoman tax collectors. Failing to assassinate Delchev and Sandanski, the six assassins, in frustration, turned to attacking people, burning down villages, stealing money and claimed it to be the work of IMRO. Several important leaders, including the famous "Marko Lerinski" (the "Tsar of Lerin"), Cheta leader of the Lerin and Kostur Regions, was killed in these attacks.

On January 31st, 1903 the Ottomans declared IMRO illegal and sought ways to destroy it. This bad news for IMRO gave the Vrhovists the necessary momentum they needed to become a wedge between those in IMRO, who wanted an immediate uprising and those who believed that an uprising at this point in time was suicidal. Gotse Delchev was against this "willing sacrifice" and was hoping to find a better solution, but time was running out.

A second Solun Congress, dominated by the Vrhovists, was staged in February of 1903. Delchev and most of IMRO's loyal supporters did not attend. A resolution was reached, but not ratified by the regional committees, that an uprising would take place on Ilinden, on the 2nd of August 1903. To weaken the Ottomans, the Vrhovists, through anarchists, ordered a number of bombings and terrorist acts. The Solun Constantinople railway was bombed on March 18th, as was the Solun Ottoman bank a month later. This did not weaken the Ottomans as expected but instead brought more Ottoman troops into Macedonia and further escalated the violence against innocent civilians. If that was not enough, the sudden rise in violence against Ottoman institutions was not well received by European investors and businessmen, who saw Ottoman Macedonia as a safe place to invest. The few lonely voices in London, calling for Macedonian support, were quickly drowned out by the many voices of discontent calling for the demise of the terrorists.

Tragically the Ottomans killed Gotse Delchev in Banitsa on May 4th, 1903, a day after the IMRO Smilevo Congress had started. Termed the Bitola Congress, the purpose of the Smilevo Congress was to review the resolutions from the Vrhovist dominated Solun Congress, held earlier the same year. Damjan Gruev (a native of Smilevo) chaired the Congress and tried hard to present the situation realistically by arguing for and against an early uprising. When the matter was put to a vote, however, the majority declared themselves in favour of an uprising. With these words, "better an end with horrors than horrors without end", Gruev also voted in support of the Ilinden rebellion. From here on there was no turning back. A general

staff was elected with Gruev as one of three heads (the other two were Boris Sarafov and Atanas Lozanchev) and preparations for the uprising began. In due time plans were made, a military strategy prepared, weapons, medical supplies and food-stuffs were requisitioned and stock piled. Cheti were organized and training drills were performed. On July 26th, 1903, by a dispatch to the Great Powers via the British vice-consul in Bitola, the General Staff formally announced the uprising. Then on July 28th, 1903 IMRO dispatched mounted couriers to all the sub-districts with the message "let the uprising begin". On the same day the General Staff informed the Ottoman Director of Railways to warn travelers to choose a different mode of transportation in order to avoid being hurt.

The Ilinden 1903 Macedonian Uprising and the Aftermath

Following Damjan Gruev's orders from Smilevo, the village Cheti combined forces to form the following: the Smilevo and Gjavato Region Cheta (650), the Krushovo Region Cheta (400), the Kichevo Region Cheta (350), the Bitola Region Cheta (250), the Ohrid Region Cheta (880), the Resna Region Cheta (450), the Demir-Hisar Region Cheta (420), the Prespa Region Cheta (300), the Kostur Region Cheta (700) and the Lerin Region Cheta (450).

The Cheti, under the command of capable leaders such as Damjan Gruev, Vasil Chakalarov, Petar Pop Arsov, Pitu Guli and others, fared well and enjoyed considerable success in the few weeks before the Ottoman militia began to amass. The local villagers also joined the movement giving moral support to the fighters. Even men from other regions that had not yet risen left their homes and came to fight. All in all the Macedonian people possessed the will to fight but lacked the rifles and ammunition with which to do it.

When the rebellion began, as a precaution, most villages were evacuated. People who left the villages took up residence in secluded places up in the mountains. They took with them whatever they could carry and set up camp. Temporary shelters were constructed from tree branches and were covered with vegetation. They fenced their livestock, out of sight, in wooded areas. They even built underground ovens to cook food and bake bread in safety.

Some villages that didn't join the rebellion felt it was unnecessary to evacuate because they posed no threat to the Ottomans. Residents of one such village, Neokazi near Lerin, stayed home thinking they would be safe. When the Ottoman militia passed by they razed the village and turned on the civilian population. Not being satisfied with just burning the village, the Ottomans summoned about 60 Macedonian men and placed them under arrest. On their way to Lerin the Ottomans, instead of taking the men to jail, tortured and massacred them in cold blood. Eyewitnesses reported observing the Ottomans lining the men up in rows and firing at them to see how many one bullet could kill. They had new rifles and wanted to test them.

Three days later it was Armensko's turn. After losing a skirmish to Chakalarov, Haireddin Bimbishi's (the butcher of Smrdesh) troops, defeated, angry and embittered were heading for Lerin when they came across a welcoming committee at Armensko. The priest and other

members of the village went out to greet and welcome the Ottomans. The Ottomans were not pleased and murdered the welcoming committee on the spot. Bambishi's men then turned on the defenseless village and pillaged, burned and satisfied their brutal lust undisturbed. Sixty-eight villagers were massacred and ten women and eight girls were violated. "Several women who managed to crawl out of their burning houses were afterwards caught as they lay dying, and violated repeatedly until they expired." (Page 160, Brailsford, Macedonia its Races and their Future, taken from Page 319 of the "Blue Book")

The Ottoman soldiers had orders to burn down all empty villages, a sure sign that they belonged to the families of insurgents, and to spare the rest. As it turned out those who didn't join the rebellion and didn't want trouble not only lost their homes but some even lost their lives. It was a choice between having your village burned or having it burned and being massacred as well. It was a hard lesson learned but it didn't help the sick and bedridden who were burned alive where they lay.

As battles raged on throughout western Macedonia, the Cheti put down most of the local Ottoman garrisons. They destroyed bridges, railway lines and communications centers, captured most chifliks and briefly liberated some regions such as Kichevo, Demir-Hisar, Kostur, Lerin, Klisoura and Neveska. The cities of Kostur and Lerin themselves were not liberated. The most successful and highly celebrated of all battles was the storming of the town of Krushevo. Nikola Karev led the Cheti in the attack and defeated the local Ottoman garrison with ease. The Macedonians quickly took over the most strategic points like the Post Office, Town Hall and local Police Station and declared Krushevo liberated. True to their democratic commitments, the leaders of the liberating force constituted the Krushevo assembly which appointed a committee of sixty members, twenty from each of the community's Macedonian, Vlach and Albanian populations. The committee in turn elected an executive body of six delegates, two from each community, which operated as a provisional government. The government in turn established a financial, judiciary and police force. "At Krushevo, under the rays of temporary liberty, fraternity and equality, national hatreds were dispelled and peace and concord reigned. For ten whole days Krushevo lived as a little independent state, and although in miniature, clothed with flesh and blood that idea which spurred Macedonians to fight, against tyranny up to the Ilinden rising." (Page 193, Vasil Bogov, Macedonian Revelation, Historical Documents Rock and Shatter Modern Political Ideology)

The "Krushevo Republic", unfortunately, only lasted ten days but it was a glorious Republic that will forever remind the Macedonian people of their eternal struggle for independence and thirst for freedom. The liberation of Krushevo imprinted on the new Macedonian generations the legacy of a timeless and irreversible march towards self-determination. IMRO came a long way from a group of academics deliberating what to do in the face of repression to delivering, in true revolutionary fashion, a democratic Republic with all the socialist trimmings. Here again we see the Macedonian desire for multiculturalism and for a new multiethnic society waiting to resurface. The Republic was constituted on a multiracial basis in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the Macedonian people.

Next to Krushevo, Kostur faired second best in the tactical mobilization of the Cheti, under the command of Lazar Pop Trajkov and Vasil Chakalarov. These brigades staged successful raids, liberating Klisura and Neveska, then returned southward and, with the support of over three thousand villagers, attacked Kostur but without success. In the meantime other Cheti attacked and liberated Ohrid, which remained free for almost three months. The Ohrid attack was the most successful in terms of advance planning and administering the establishment of medical aid, underground workshops, secret bakeries and securing foodstuffs. Ohrid later became the center for establishing refugee camps for many displaced persons.

Uprisings outside of western Macedonia were limited to swift guerilla actions consisting mostly of attacks against Ottoman institutions, bombings of railway lines and the occasional skirmish with the Ottoman militia. Many Cheti were successful in capturing important Ottoman officials. They hoped to construct dialogue for prospective negotiations but, in actuality, met with little success.

Vrhovist involvement, as expected, was minimal during the uprising and brought to light, once again, the true nature of Vrhovism (Macedonia for the Bulgarians).

As the Cheti fought gallantly putting down garrison after garrison in the larger towns, many of the smaller villages were left unprotected and open to Bashi-bazouk and Ottoman militia attacks. Keeping in mind the Neokrazi and Armensko incidents, many of the Cheta chiefs felt compelled to return home to repel such attacks. Due to this and the fact that the numerically superior Ottoman militia overpowered the Cheti, in the short term, a large-scale operation against the Ottomans never

materialized. Unfortunately, as time passed so did the opportunity for a decisive strike, as an even larger Ottoman force was amassing.

The initial success of the rebellion was a surprise to the Ottomans especially since Ottoman forces were numerically superior to those of the rebels. The Cheti, however, demonstrated their abilities in battle and more than matched the numbers with will. The Ottomans, unfortunately, were determined to put down the rebellion and amassed additional forces, deploying a total of 167,000 infantry, 3,700 cavalry and 440 pieces of artillery (all cannons). Krushevo alone was surrounded by 20,000 Ottoman troops with 18 cannons against an encircled force of no more than 1,200 rebel fighters. The battle to retake Krushevo began on August 12th with the Macedonians crying out "Sloboda ili Smrt" (liberty or death) against the onslaught of Ottoman cannon fire. Pitu Guli and his men fought gallantly. They provided stiff opposition to the Ottoman advance but were no match for General Baktiar Pasha. Baktiar was a skilled war veteran who overwhelmed the Cheti by attacking the entire region simultaneously. The region was surrounded by soldiers, encircled by cannon fire and every Macedonian stronghold within was attacked simultaneously, cutting off all reinforcements and outside support.

Once Krushevo fell, one by one other IMRO strongholds began to yield, winding down the ten-week-old rebellion. In Krushevo, Baktiar Pasha allowed his troops to kill, pillage and rape for three days. The town was permanently devastated with 117 civilians murdered, 150 women raped and 159 houses burned.

In the Ilinden aftermath, according to Radin, in total 4,694 civilians were murdered, 3,122 women raped, 12,440 houses burned, 201 villages razed, 75,835 people left homeless and about 30,000 people left the country for good, becoming permanent refugees. (Page 105, IMRO and the Macedonian Question) Besides the atrocities committed against the civilian population in Macedonia, the most significant impact of the uprising was the loss of so many great IMRO leaders.

To preserve whatever they could from a failing rebellion, IMRO turned its attention to diplomacy. In September 1903 Pere Toshev, of IMRO, took a trip to Constantinople to elicit some guarantees from official representatives of the Great Powers. Toshev's only request was that Macedonia be given a Christian governor. Unfortunately, his request was rejected in favour of the status quo. Later, however, when statistics of Ottoman atrocities started pouring in, the Great Power attitude softened a little. In October the Great Powers reconsidered Toshev's request, but

instead of appointing a Christian governor each nation agreed to send a small "peace-keeping" force. This did not help the Macedonian position at all. In fact it hindered IMRO from self-defense initiatives even against Bashi-bazouk attacks.

Ottoman atrocities committed against the Macedonian villages, in the eyes of the world, created bad publicity for the Ottomans and for their allies, the Western Powers. As a result, Ottoman popularity started to decline and so did Ottoman favour with the Great Powers. Being financially strapped and having its hands tied, the Ottomans turned to their neighbours for assistance. By declaring Macedonia a "multi-interest zone" and inviting armed propaganda from Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia, to counter IMRO insurgence, the Ottomans were hoping to turn the tide of the rebellion in their favour. Again Great Power inaction put Macedonia and the Macedonian people in peril.

At the end of August, after the fall of Krushevo, Nasir Pasha was appointed to take over command from Omar Rushdi Pasha. Rushdi was blamed for the flare up of the rebellion and Nasir was chosen to put an end to it. Nasir Pasha was a favourite of the Sultan, who spoke German and was considered civilized by many who had high hopes for a quick end to the rebellion. Unfortunately, Nasir's plans involved the burning of ALL revolting villages and quickly cornering and rounding up all those doing the revolting. He certainly had the "right men" with the "right courage" to execute such a barbaric plan. Unfortunately, Nasir Pasha's plan did not involve pursuing the Cheti. "...The regiments which should have been pursuing the insurgents found it more agreeable and interesting to pillage the defenseless villagers and make war on the women and children." (Page 155, Brailsford, Macedonia its Races and their Future) Nasir Pasha's strategy forced IMRO and the Cheti to rethink their plans and change tactics. Henceforth, organized Cheti attacks on the Ottomans subsided and the Cheti regrouped to take up defensive positions. Concerned for their families and villages, some of the Cheti broke up and returned to defend their own homes. After that fighting became disorderly and on November 2nd, 1903 the insurrection was declared at an end.

According to Brailsford, the Cheti fought about 150 battles in total with 746 casualties, which amounted to about 15 % of the total fighting force. In most of these encounters the Cheti were outnumbered by at least 10 Ottomans to 1 Macedonian. (Page 155, Macedonia its Races and their Future) Before it was all over, the Ottomans were attacking everywhere, even in secluded areas that once were beyond militia reach. To save

themselves, many civilians resorted to camping among the fighters and even following them in wild battles. Their only safety was to be with the Cheti. "...Sometimes the battle raged about the lair where the women and children lay, the men fighting with all their manhood to defend some shallow trench, knowing that behind them cowered wife and child expecting massacre if their courage failed or their bullets missed the mark." (Page 162, Brailsford, Macedonia its Races and their Future)

"The young women fared the worst, for, when the troops (Ottomans) could catch them, they were often carried off to the Ottoman camps and there kept for some days until the last brute who desired them had had his will." (Page 163, Brailsford, Macedonia its Races and their Future) Many of the young girls who survived returned to their village. Instead of finding a home they found abandoned ruins and again fell prey to prowling soldiers or marauding Bashi-bazouks.

The Ilinden rebellion had no happy ending for Macedonia. The Macedonian people lost their bid for freedom and paid the ultimate price. Henry Brailsford in his book, Macedonia its Races and their Future, describes the Ilinden aftermath in some detail by providing specific accounts of some of the worst horrors perpetrated. Brailsford was an aid worker inside Macedonia during the conflict and was witness to some of the accounts in his book. The book is worth reading, as long as you keep in mind that when he talks about Bulgarians and Greeks he means Macedonians who belonged to the Exarchate or Patriarchate Church.

The Macedonian rebellion did not succeed because there were too many factors working against it. The Macedonian people showed will and determination and rose to the task in spite of all odds. Compared to the Serbian, Greek and Bulgarian rebellions, the Macedonians were the most determined, well organized and most desperate, but they were not ready. The Serbians, Greeks and Bulgarians had only one enemy, the Ottomans, but received a lot of help from friends in high places (the Great Powers). In contrast, no one beyond the Macedonians wanted the Macedonians to succeed. The Greeks and especially the Bulgarians went out of their way to create obstacles. The Great Powers, believing that they had nothing to gain, also abstained from helping Macedonia. The Serbian, Greek and Bulgarian struggles for independence prepared the Ottomans and made them more determined to deal with the Macedonians. "The Turks had made war upon the women and children, and the men dared not prolong the unequal conflict with starvation." (Page 163, Brailsford, Macedonia its Races and their Future)

When the conflict was over, the people who returned to their villages were devastated to find their homes destroyed. Added to all their ills, winter was fast approaching and no food or shelter was to be found. "The villages were mere heaps of charred wood and blackened stone, buried beneath a red dust which the rain converted to mud. A few walls still stood upright, the only hope for the winter." (Page 164, Brailsford, Macedonia its Races and their Future) To make matters worse, a curfew was placed on travel and those away from home found themselves stranded. Those in need of work were no longer allowed to leave their vilayets. This was the first time in Macedonian history that Macedonians ever considered permanent emigration. Many early Macedonian emigrants to Canada, the USA and Australia were refugees from the Ilinden aftermath.

The failed uprising, loss of so many great IMRO leaders, the Ottoman backlash and now the foreign influence was too much for IMRO. The close links with the villages and the ideological differences between isolated IMRO branches widened. Although IMRO continued to live, it lacked direction and was on the verge of an ideological collapse. In time, however, it managed to muster two more congresses. With the advent of Krste Misirkov's book, a new tide of opinion was spreading throughout Macedonia. Misirkov warned against falling under the influence of the chauvinistic elements and recommended taking a more nationalistic approach in order to weed out Vrhovist and conservative elements. At the Prilep Congress held in May 1904, IMRO was re-vitalized and its independence reasserted (this time with a socialist character). The most significant developments to emerge from this Congress were IMRO's ability to shed itself of its conservative elements and to adopt a resolution to decentralize the organization and give more power to the sub-districts. This Congress literally split IMRO into two ideologically polarized halves. While leftist IMRO adopted a defensive strategy, the right wing conservative Vrhovists pursued a policy of renewed confrontation. The two factions continued to masquerade under the same banner and were headed for a showdown. The showdown materialized in November of 1905, at the Rila Monastery near the Macedonian-Bulgarian border and took the form of a General Congress. There was a single item of paramount importance on the agenda, to determine the direction of the Organization. Twenty-two elected delegates, in total, attended the Rila Congress and by secret vote the left came out victorious.

Defeated at the Rila Congress, the Right wing Vrhovists took up permanent residence in Sofia and continued to wage a terrorist war on the

IMRO leadership. Both Nikola Karev, in 1905, and Dame Gruev, in 1906, were indirectly eliminated by terrorist acts of the Vrhovists.

Bulgarian interference in Macedonia not only damaged the revolutionary movement but also put fear in the civilian population, ripening conditions for Balkan intervention. Greece and later Serbia were quick to take advantage of a weak IMRO and a frightened population. With the assistance of the Ottoman military they were able to step up armed propaganda campaigns inside Macedonia. The aim was to kill two birds with one stone. By being the eyes and ears of the Ottomans, the Greek clergy spied on the Macedonians and disclosed information to Ottoman authorities. The Ottoman military in turn, stepped up activities to eradicate the remnants of the Cheti and their leaders. At the same time, in the midst of terror, the same Greek spies were offering Macedonians Hellenism as a way to salvation. "No one can deny that the Greeks owed much to the Ottomans. Indeed the victory of the Ottomans in 1903 was the salvation of Hellenism in Macedonia. From the outset the Greek clergy and notables devised means of passing information to the Turks. The Ottoman authorities on their side welcomed this support." (Pages 118-119, Dakin, *The Greek Struggle in Macedonia 1897-1913*)

The ultimate disgrace for Karavangelis came after the massacre of the village Zagoricheni. Refusing to bend to Hellenism, Zagoricheni, on direct orders from Karavangelis, was massacred to the last person the Greeks could lay their hands on, including the unborn children inside the wombs of pregnant women. Witnesses reported finding bodies of pregnant women with their abdomens cut open. The survivors who escaped the atrocity refused to bury the dead bodies of their neighbours. For days the dead were guarded until the European consuls in Bitola came to witness the atrocities for themselves. Here is what Brailsford had to say. "The chef d'oeuvre of this Hellenic campaign was achieved at Zagoricheni, a large Bulgarian village (author's note: Macedonian village, there were no Bulgarian villages inside Macedonia) near Klissoura, which, like Mokreni, took a leading part in the uprising of 1903, and like Mokreni was burned by the Ottomans. A Greek band, which is said to have numbered over two hundred men under three Greek officers in uniform, surprised it by night (April 6-7, 1905) by using bugle calls which led the villagers to suppose that Ottoman regulars were manoeuvring in the neighbourhood. They burned ten houses, and twenty-eight of the temporary homes erected amid the ruins of the last conflagration. They wounded seven persons and killed no less than sixty, among them seven women, twenty-two persons over

sixty years of age, and five children under fifteen. There was a good deal of evidence to show that the local Ottoman authorities were privy to this massacre, and some circumstances seemed to include the Archbishop of Castoria (Kostur). It is quite clear that no conflict or provocation preceded what was simply a deliberate massacre, and the only reason for choosing Zagoricheni was that it was an eager and patriotic Bulgarian center, and that it disobeyed the summons of the Greek Archbishop to return to the Patriarch fold." (Pages 216-217, Macedonia its Races and their Future) After the massacre when it was discovered that Karavangelis was implicated, to escape punishment, the cowardly Archbishop of Kostur fled to Sveta Gora (Holy Mountain) where he spent two years in hiding before fleeing to Austria. Today, there is a statue of Karavangelis in Kostur to commemorate his great contributions to Hellenism.

Macedonians were well acquainted with the murderous activities of the Bulgarian Vrhovists whose new waves of terrorist bands began to penetrate the eastern borders of Macedonia in March of 1904. Fortunately, Yane Sandanski's forces were still in control of the Pirin district and more often than not, successfully repealed Bulgarian advances. In the west bands of young Turks, who deserted the army during the Ilinden rebellion, joined Albanian gangs, looting and killing indiscriminately. From the north Serbian bands began to penetrate Macedonian territory. By mid 1905, there were eleven bands numbering almost 100 men pillaging, murdering, razing entire villages and wreaking their own special brand of terror. The most violent campaign was waged by the Greek terrorists who penetrated the south-central regions of Macedonia. By 1905 the Greeks imported a contingent of Cretans, a thousand-strong, reinforced by Ottoman deserters who roamed unhindered razing and slaughtering entire villages. By 1906 eight bands numbering over 400 men were operating in the Solun district alone and another twelve bands (600 men) around Bitola.

Along with the intrusions of armed bands in Macedonia there reappeared the foreign schools and propaganda institutions directed by the Greek and Bulgarian churches. The terrorist bands instilled fear in the Macedonian population and the churches were quick to take on the role of protector, setting the stage for the partitioning of Macedonia. Unfortunately for them, something else was brewing within the Ottoman Empire, liberalism, headed by a small group of European educated, young Turks.

The Western Powers had little faith in the Ottomans and their old Ottoman conservative Islamic values but preferred the status quo

maintained in Macedonia. There were two factors at play that hindered the Powers from taking action. The first was the lucrative Ottoman import-export markets upon which the Ottoman consumer was dependent for a variety of goods, and a moneymaking venture for the Western Capitalists which they did not want to lose. The second was the power struggle between the Great Powers themselves over Balkan domination. The Powers were locked in a diplomatic embrace where none could freely maneuver without upsetting the others. Each of the Great Powers knew that a sudden or massive shift in any one's policies would result in an engagement that would involve all of them. No one wanted a "world war" on his hands.

Britain, at one point, contemplated creating an autonomous Macedonia but knew that Russia and Austria would be against it. "It was fortunate for Greece at this juncture that Lansdowne's plans foundered in a sea of European politics and that both Russia and Austria opposed Macedonian autonomy." (Page 152, Dakin, *The Greek Struggle in Macedonia 1897-1913*).

The Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913 and Macedonia's Partition

The “Balkan League of Nations” consisting of Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia and Montenegro was spawned in June 1912 and shortly after the Ottomans were given a signed ultimatum bearing the League’s signature, which in short read, “deliver the promised reforms in Macedonia or prepare to be invaded”.

There was much intrigue, agreements, counter-agreements and secret deals between the League of Nations (Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia) but from the outset each was determined to exploit any situation that developed, purely for its own gain. “The League of Nations in fact was simply a device for synchronizing a military effort upon the part of the four powers (Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia and Montenegro) who had come to realize that the simplest way to settle the Ottoman question, before it was too late and while circumstances were favourable, was to attack the Ottoman Empire simultaneously and present the European powers with a *fait accompli*.” (Page 440, Dakin, *The Greek Struggle in Macedonia 1897-1913*) All that remained now was to provoke the Ottomans into committing an offence against the Christian population and the invasion would become a reality.

When the Ottomans investigated disturbances conducted by Vrhovist bands, both Patriarchist and Exarchist authorities corroborated their stories and pinned these acts on the Macedonians. As expected the Ottomans responded swiftly and dealt with the situation in the usual manner. Unfortunately for the Ottomans their actions were welcome news to the League’s spies who dispatched them to the European press. The Ottomans, in the eyes of the world, committed atrocities against the Christians in Macedonia and something had to be done. It was now up to the Great Powers to decide the course of action.

Along with documents of Ottoman atrocities, the foreign press also received well-camouflaged League propaganda. The League had commenced extensive propaganda campaigns against the Ottomans, detailing every Ottoman act for European consumption. A war was imminent but, according to the League’s propaganda, it was a necessary war to “liberate” the enslaved Christians from Ottoman oppression. The League, through extensive media campaigns, called on all Christians in Macedonia to join the League and oust the oppressive Ottoman. Here is what Yane Sandanski had to say; “We ought to work on the awakening of the consciousness of the Macedonian masses that they are an independent

nation...because those who seek to ‘liberate them’... will actually be coming to enslave them...” (Page 134, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

As mentioned earlier, the Western Powers had not exhausted the full potential of the Ottoman markets and were unwilling to let the Ottoman regime in Macedonia collapse. At the same time Britain, France, Italy and Russia were greatly concerned about the aggressive attitudes of Germany outside of the Balkans. More importantly, they were concerned that the Ottoman regime was leaning towards an Ottoman-German alliance.

When Russia proposed the idea of a “Balkan League of Nations” it was welcome news for Britain, France and Italy. The League was viewed as an anti-German front, a way of ejecting the Ottoman regime from Europe and at the same time, safeguarding (British, French and Italian) interests and expansionary ambitions. The not so obvious Russian motive for sponsoring the League was to guarantee its own influence in the Balkans perhaps through Serbia or Bulgaria or both.

On October 18th, 1912 Montenegro declared war on the Ottoman Empire with the League following suit. The battles that ensued were fought almost entirely on Macedonian soil, once again causing the Macedonians to suffer from someone else’s war.

Russia, the architect of the Balkan League, was against a war in 1912 and so were France and Britain. A war at this point might throw off the delicate diplomatic balance and escalate into a “world war”. Russia feared that the half-millennium old Ottoman Empire might not be as easy a target as the League had estimated. Britain and France feared a backlash from Germany and Austria now that the Ottomans were warming up to them as prospective allies. To stop the League’s aggressive actions, both Britain and France threatened them with economic sanctions but that was not enough to suppress the appetites of the three hungry Balkan wolves.

The League’s plan was to surround the Ottoman army in Macedonia and force it out to Constantinople. To everyone’s surprise, however, the League won a crushing and unexpected victory in just six weeks. Five Ottoman divisions were surrounded and defeated in two battles, in Bitola and Kumanovo. With the exception of Sandanski and a force of 400 Macedonians who fought back and liberated Melnik and Nevrokop, the League received no opposition from the Macedonians. In fact, the enthusiasm created by the “liberators” not only helped the League fight harder but also encouraged thousands of Macedonians to enlist in the League’s armies. “A Macedonian Militia force of 14,000 fought under the

Bulgarian command in the East. The ‘Volunteer regiment’, directed by IMRO veterans, consisted of a thousand Macedonians, Ottomans and Albanians. In the Serbian and Greek armies, Macedonian detachments such as the ‘National Guard’ and the ‘Holy Band’, were given the task of encircling the Ottomans to fight their retreat.” (Page 143, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question) Even Chakalarov, the protector of the Lerin and Kostur regions, joined the fight to help the League get rid of the Ottomans. The League’s victories and intense propaganda were so convincing that the entire Macedonian nation welcomed the “liberators” with open arms.

The moment the three wolves evicted the Ottoman army from Macedonia, they quickly worked out a partitioning strategy along the following lines:

Serbia was to receive the northwestern portion of Macedonia, which included Skopje, Bitola, south to west of Lerin, east to Gevgelija and west to the Albanian Mountains.

Bulgaria was to receive all of Thrace, west to Gevgelija, south to the Aegean Sea and east from Solun.

Greece was to receive north to Lerin, west to the Albanian Mountains, all of Epirus and east to Solun. “To ensure their hegemony and quell any dissent, the occupying forces set up the apparatus of government and, by legislative decrees, extended their own constitutions to these new bodies, from which Macedonians were absent. Indeed, in many provincial centres, such as Gevgelija, a double or triple condominium was established, much to the detriment of the Macedonian citizens.” (Page 143, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

In view of the Macedonian contribution to the League’s success in evicting the Ottomans, in December 12th, 1912 Sandanski called for Macedonian autonomy. The League’s occupying armies, however, refused to budge and initiated a violent assimilation program. The Macedonian fighters, who fought side by side with the League’s armies, found themselves policed by a joint League command ensuring that no resistance or independent action would arise. The League also pursued Sandanski and his men. Sandanski resisted and stayed active in the Pirin Region until his assassination in 1915 by Bulgarian agents.

The changing conditions inside Macedonia forced the IMRO leadership to seek refuge in foreign cities away from home. Some of the more prominent leaders moved to St. Petersburg and joined the Macedonian community living there. This small group of Macedonians

consistently lobbied for Macedonian Statehood and, in the war's aftermath, acted as a government in exile. The most outspoken advocate of the Macedonian leaders was Dimitar Chupovski who published the "Macedonian Voice" and continuously protested to the Great Powers against Macedonia's partition. In June 1913 he wrote; "The division of Macedonia among the brother nations is the most unjust act in the history of these nations – it is trampling on the rights of man, and a disgrace for the entire [Macedonian]... race." (Page 145, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question) In total eleven issues of "Macedonian Voice" were published and distributed all over Europe.

"A great terror reigns in Macedonia now. The 'freedom' of the allies has no frontiers, no-one from Macedonia has the right to travel outside, to protest or complain before the European states. Whoever disturbs this order is either killed or imprisoned. The allies surround Macedonia with a Chinese Wall..." (Page 145, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

The Macedonian people must not stand idly by and accept the unworthy fate of being divided so that others may profit from it. "In the name of the Macedonian people, we demand that Macedonia remain a single, indivisible, independent Balkan state within its geographical, ethnographic, historical, economic and cultural frontiers...Macedonia represents a unified body both from the historical and natural viewpoints, and cannot voluntarily end its many centuries of existence by agreeing to be broken up...Can we allow a people to be, at one and the same time, Bulgarian, Serb and Greek? Is it not simpler to assume that the nationality attributed to us is dictated by the big power politics of the interested parties who wish to take over Macedonia?" (Page 145, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

By November it was becoming apparent that the Ottomans were running out of options. On November 12th, 1912 it called on the Great Powers to bring about an armistice. To deal with the situation a peace conference was scheduled for December 16th, 1912, to take place in London. Having some time to adjust to the new situation, the Great Powers, for the first time, opted from the usual "status quo" recommendations and considered making concessions to the victors. Austria, however, was not too happy at the prospect of a "large Serbia" let alone allowing Serbia access to the Adriatic Sea. Austria was eyeing the Adriatic region as a prospective sphere of influence for itself. Being unable to make concessions by itself, however, Austria did the next best thing and agreed with Britain to the idea of "creating" a new State, Albania. Another

reason why Austria did not want Serbia to have access to the Adriatic Sea was because a Serbian port might become a Russian port.

This attempt to deny Serbia access to the Adriatic Sea not only left Serbia landlocked but also upset Russia, causing it to break relations with Austria. Italy too was affected by this diplomatic power play, pushing it to improve its relations with Austria. This, as it turned out, was the crucial historic moment which gave birth to the “Triple Alliance” (Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy) and the “Triple Entente” (Britain, France and Russia), a division that would have future consequences.

As a result of this sudden change of events, Austria began to amass troops along the Serbian border. At the same time, fearing German intervention, Russia ordered a halt to Bulgarian and Serbian advances towards Constantinople. To fully curb Serbian and Russian expansionism: France, Britain and Italy voted to grant the newly created Albanian State full independence. This saved Albania from being partitioned by the Greeks and Serbians and made it a Great Power protectorate, which Albanians enjoy to this day.

I want to emphasize that by 1912 it was well known that a Macedonian Nation with a Macedonian consciousness existed and demonstrated its desire for independence. These actions were well documented and familiar to the Great Powers, yet even after pleading their case, the Macedonians were NOT ALLOWED to attend the London Peace Conference of December 16th, 1912. Numerous petitions were made by IMRO affiliates from St. Petersburg, all ignored. Also, Chupovski’s memo to the British delegation was not tabled. Here is what Chupovski (in part) had to say; “In the name of natural law, of history, of practical expediency, for the Macedonian people, we ask that Macedonia’s right to self-determination be admitted, and that Macedonia be constituted within its ethnic, geographical and cultural borders as a self-governing state with a government responsible to a national assembly.” (Page 147, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

The London Conference adjourned on August 11, 1913, officially declaring an end to the First Balkan War. In spite of all the wheeling and dealing that went on during the conference, the resolutions left all parties dissatisfied. Serbia was dissatisfied with losing the Albanian territory. Serbia appealed to Bulgaria to grant it access to the Aegean Sea via Solun and the Vardar valley, but its appeals fell on deaf ears. Greece also was not happy with Bulgaria’s invasion and annexation of Edrene (Dardanelles). To balance its share, Greece wanted Serres, Drama and Kavala as

compensation. That too fell on deaf ears. Bulgaria, frustrated with not achieving its “San Stefano Dream” (fiction), was bitter about Russia deserting it during the London Conference negotiations.

Seeing that Bulgaria was not going to budge and the fact that neither Greece nor Serbia alone could take on Bulgaria, should a conflict arise, Greece and Serbia concluded a secret pact of their own to jointly act against Bulgaria. In short, the objective was to take territory from Bulgaria west of the Vardar River, divide it and have a common frontier.

After stumbling upon this Greek-Serbian pact, despite Russian attempts to appease it by offering it Solun, Bulgaria remained bitter and in a moment of weakness was lured away by Austria. By going over to Austria, Bulgaria in effect broke off all relations with the Balkan League. Russia, disappointed with the Bulgarian shift in loyalty, made it clear that Bulgaria could no longer expect any help from Russia.

In what was to be termed the “Second Balkan War”, the Bulgarian army, unprovoked, attacked its former allies on June 30th, 1913, again on Macedonian soil. Preferring the element of surprise, Bulgaria turned on its former allies and renewed the conflict, officially turning the Macedonian mission from “liberation” to “occupation”. There were two things that Bulgaria didn’t count on, Romanian involvement and Austrian treachery. The bloody fight was short lived as Romania, Montenegro and the Ottomans joined Greece and Serbia in dealing Bulgaria a catastrophic blow. The promised Austrian support didn’t materialize as the risks for Austrian involvement outweighed any benefits. The real surprise, however, was Romania’s break with neutrality. Up to now Romania had remained neutral and refused to get involved. No one, not even Bulgaria, anticipated this attack from the north. However this was a once in a lifetime opportunity for Romania to regain lost territory. Even the Ottomans were able to re-gain some of what they had recently lost to Bulgaria. Being involved in too many fronts at the same time, Bulgaria was unable to repel the Ottomans and prevent it from taking back the Edrene (Dardanelles) region. The biggest winners were Greece and Serbia, both of whom got exactly what they wanted, virtually unabated.

The Macedonians fared worst in the conflict mainly due to their own enthusiasm. As frontlines shifted positions, Macedonian citizens who were enthusiastic about supporting one faction now became traitors for doing that and butchered by the other faction for showing sympathy to their enemy. “The Carnegie Relief Commission, dispatched to the Balkans in late 1913, reported the incredible story of human suffering. In Macedonia

alone, 160 villages were razed leaving 16,000 homeless, several thousand civilians murdered, and over 100,000 forced to emigrate as refugees.” (Page 149, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question) This genocidal tragedy was committed in a relatively short time, by those who marched in and were welcomed as “liberators”. Worst and most unexpected was that “Christians” committed this genocide against “Christians”, reminiscent of the 1204 tragedy committed by the Western Crusaders.

After a great deal of jockeying for position, deliberating and negotiating, the warring factions agreed to an armistice, and peace between Romania, Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia was negotiated in August, 1913 in Bucharest. The map of Macedonia was again redrafted without Macedonian participation. The new boundaries ignored previously agreed upon considerations such as lines of “nationalities” (not that any existed), the Macedonian people’s democratic desires, etc., as the Bucharest delegates imposed their artificial sovereignty upon the Macedonian people. With the exception of one minor change in 1920 in Albania’s favour, these dividing lines have remained in place to this day. Of the total Macedonian territory 51% went to Greece, 39% to Serbia, and 10% to Bulgaria. August 10th, 1913 became the darkest day in Macedonian history.

Not since Roman times has Macedonia been partitioned in a way where three brothers were forced to assume three different (imposed) identities, speak three different foreign languages in their own homes and were treated as strangers in their own lands. The future will show that where half a millennium of Ottoman suppression and a century of forced Hellenization/ Bulgarization couldn’t erode Macedonian consciousness, Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian aggression, in less than a decade, would. The once proud Macedonian nation, that long ago conquered the world, bridged the gap between east and west, introduced Christianity to Europe, safeguarded all ancient knowledge and protected the west from eastern invaders, had now been beaten and reduced to a shadow of its former self. The force of this latest intrusion transformed the Macedonian nation into a shy creature, seeking homes in foreign lands and hiding in the twilight while its enemies danced on the heads of its dead and, to the world, proclaimed them as their own. It was not enough that they consumed the Macedonian lands. These new depraved creatures, spawned by western greed, consumed all Macedonian treasures such as history, culture, religion, literature, folklore, ancient knowledge stolen from Holy Mountain (Athos), etc. and regurgitated them as their own. Without hesitation they will lie to the world, even to their own people, about “their

true identities” and blame their ills on the innocent. Their propaganda will turn “lies to truths” and “truths to lies” until all people are poisoned with hatred, an artificially created hatred, which will haunt Macedonians for all time and render them mute. Silence will fill the air and children will not dare cry, for if they utter anything Macedonian a terrible curse will befall them which can only be partially lifted if they leave their lands or submit to the will of their new masters. The proud name “Macedonia” which echoed through the centuries and outlasted time itself, will become a “dirty word” never to be spoken. The Macedonian language, the mother of some Eastern European languages, the “Voice of Eastern Christianity” will be “muted”, to be spoken only in the shadows, in fear that “enemy ears” may be lurking. In time it will become known as “our language”, spoken by “our people”, a mute language spoken by a nameless nation. In time, the Macedonian nation, the Macedonian people and the Macedonian language will become “an anomaly” in its ancestral land.

This is the fate that awaits the Macedonian people in the 20th century, all with the blessings of the Great Powers (Britain, France, Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy).

The Greek atrocities were revealed to the world when a lost mailbag was discovered containing letters from Greek soldiers in Macedonia to their families in Greece. The mailbag was turned in to the Carnegie Relief Commission and the contents of the letters were made public. Expecting to fight for the glory of the fatherland, the soldiers instead found themselves torturing, murdering, burning houses and evicting women and children from their homes in a most vile way. The letters revealed that the soldiers were acting on direct orders from the Greek authorities and the Greek king himself. Macedonian families of known Exarchists (Macedonians belonging to the Bulgarian Church) were ordered by force to "take with them what they could carry and get out". "This is Greece now and there is no place for Bulgarians here." Those who remained were forced to swear loyalty to the Greek State. Anyone refusing to take the loyalty oath was either executed, as an example of what would happen to those disloyal, or evicted from the country. To explain the mass evacuations, Greek officials claimed that the inhabitants of Macedonia left by choice or became Greek by choice. The truth is, no one was given any choice at all.

"A thousand Greek and Serbian publicists began to fill the world with their shouting about the essentially Greek or Serbian character of the populations of their different spheres. The Serbs gave the unhappy Macedonians twenty four hours to renounce their nationality and proclaim

themselves Serbs, and the Greeks did the same. Refusal meant murder or expulsion. Greek and Serbian colonists were poured into the occupied country... The Greek newspapers began to talk about a Macedonia peopled entirely with Greeks-and they explained the fact that no one spoke Greek by calling the people 'Bulgaro-phone Greeks' ... the Greek army entered villages where no one spoke their language. 'What do you mean by speaking Bulgarian?' cried the officers. 'This is Greece and you must speak Greek.'" (Page 104, John Shea, Macedonia and Greece, The Struggle to define a new Balkan Nation)

In 1913 Professor R.A. Reiss reported to the Greek government: "Those whom you would call Bulgarian speakers I would simply call Macedonians...Macedonian is not the language they speak in Sofia...I repeat the mass of inhabitants there (Macedonia) remain simply Macedonians."

History again turned its eyes away from the Greek, Bulgarian and Serbian atrocities in Macedonia to focus on new events that were about to unfold and engulf the entire world.

After losing Bosnia and Herzegovina to Austria in 1908 and the Albanian territories in 1912 (again because of Austria) Serbia became bitter and resentful. "To the nationalist Serbs the Habsburg monarchy (Austria-Hungary) was an old evil monster which prevented their nation from becoming a great and powerful state. On June 28, 1914, a young Serbian nationalist, Gavrilo Princip, assassinated the heir of the Habsburg monarchy, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, and his wife at Sarjevo." (Page 104, Felix Gilbert, The End of the European Era, 1890 to the Present)

Within two weeks of the assassination the First World War broke out, engulfing all of Europe. It was inevitable and a matter of time before a "world war" would break out in the Balkans. The Great Powers were incapable of exercising diplomacy either between themselves or with the new Balkan States they helped create. Macedonia was sacrificed in order to appease the new Balkan States but that did little to satisfy their ferocious appetites for lands and loot.

While World War I raged on consuming the lives of millions of young men and women, Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia were serving their own brand of chauvinism in Macedonia. For the next five years, with the world busy with its own problems, there was no one to hear the cries of the Macedonian people at the hands of the new tyrants. If the gravestones of the dead Macedonians could speak they would tell tales of torture and

executions, deception and lies. They would say, "Our Christian brothers came to liberate us but instead they killed us because we were in their way of achieving greatness. We were labeled 'criminals' because we would not yield to their demands. I ask you is it a crime to want to live as free men? Is it a crime to want to be Macedonian? Is it a crime to want to exercise free will? It is they who are the criminals for befouling everything that is Christian, for their lies and deception, and for murdering us to possess our lands. History will record August 10th, 1913 as the darkest day in Macedonia, the day our future died."

The triple occupation worsened living conditions in Macedonia but the fighting spirit of the Macedonian people continued to live underground and abroad. Three generations of fighting for liberty, freedom and an independent Macedonia came to a close. The Ilinden generation and IMRO were defeated, not by the Ottomans or Muslim oppression but by Christian cruelty and deception.

Soon after the occupation, underground societies sprang up everywhere urging the Macedonian people to refuse their new fate and oppose the partition. Accordingly, many Macedonians did so by refusing to obey the new officialdom and by not participating in the new institutions. This, however, did not stop the military regimes occupying Macedonia from systematic denationalization and violent assimilation.

The First Great War (WW I)

The battle for "dominion of the world", which started over Balkan affairs, soon took a sinister turn to again involve Macedonia. As the Entente Powers (Britain, France, Russia and Italy) were fighting with the Central Powers (Germany and Austro-Hungary), Bulgaria, smarting from its losses at Bucharest, remained neutral. In a turn of events, to the amazement of the Greeks, the Entente Powers approached Bulgaria with an offer of a substantial portion of Macedonian territory in exchange for its alliance. Bulgaria, however, seemed to prefer the company of the Central Powers, perhaps they offered it a bigger portion, because by late 1915 its armies marched in and invaded Macedonia. To quote the Bulgarian War Minister General Nikolaev, "We care little about the British, Germans, French, Russians, Italians, Austrians or Hungarians; our only thought is Macedonia. Whichever of the two groups of Powers will enable us to conquer it will have our alliance!" (Page 154, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

Soon after establishing the Solun front, the occupation of Greece was complete. France had dispatched 60,000 troops to the Balkans with hopes of safeguarding the Skopje to Solun rail links. By late 1917, Entente troops were emerging victorious over the Bulgarians and Germans in Macedonia. No sooner was the battle over than a problem developed between British and French commands in Macedonia. While the British General, Milne, supported Venizelos and his attempts to constitute a pro-British provisional government in Greece, the pro-Macedonian French General, Sarrail, opposed Venizelos and sought to drive the Greek army out of Macedonia. "The ambitious plan for Macedonian autonomy drafted by the French command in 1915 and 1916 were but mere progressive steps to ensure France a strategic outpost for capital expansion." (Page 155, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

Once again Macedonians were caught in the middle of someone else's war. To save face France recalled Sarrail and replaced him with a pro-Greek commander, thus avoiding a diplomatic disaster.

After establishing a government in Athens and consolidating his power in Greece, Venizelos committed nine divisions to the Macedonian front to assist Entente forces on the Solun front. To further prove his devotion to the Entente, Venizelos committed two more divisions to fight the Bolsheviks in Russia.

When the war was over, on November 11, 1918, a general armistice was signed and a Peace Conference was convened in Versailles, France. Venizelos arrived in Paris as the principle negotiator for Greece, determined to reap his reward for his solid support to his victorious allies. One of Venizelos's objectives was to resurrect the "Megaly Idea" by annexing parts of Asia Minor, Smyrna (Ismir) in particular. He convinced the world that the Christians living in Asia Minor were Greek and should be part of Greece. Unfortunately for Venizelos, Italy had prior claims in Asia Minor (Anatolia) which created a problem for the peacemakers. Greek ambition was viewed with suspicion by Italy so to strengthen its claims, in March 1919, Italy began to build up troops in the region. The Greeks viewed this as a threat to their own claim and before a final territorial solution was reached they demanded concessions. The reasons given were that the Greek people in Asia Minor were endangered by Ottoman aggression and needed protection. After much protest on the Greek side, Britain, France and the Americans finally gave them permission to send a small defense force. Under the protection of allied warships, on May 15, 1919, Greek troops began their landing in Smyrna. Instead of staying put however, as per prior agreements, they began to occupy western Asia Minor.

No sooner were the Central Powers driven out of Greek territories than the Greek Government, by passing LAW 1051, inaugurated a new administrative jurisdiction for governing the newly acquired lands in Macedonia.

When it started to become clear that the Entente Powers were winning the war, encouraged by Woodrow Wilson's principles of nationality, many Macedonian lobby groups placed their faith in the Peace Conference in Versailles. Wilson's fourteen principles of nationality implicitly asserted the right of all nations to self-determination.

In his address to the Pan Slavic Assembly in Odessa in August 1914, Krste Misirkov called for achieving autonomy by diplomatic means. An article was written and extensively circulated in May 1915, which specifically dealt with the autonomy call.

The student organization "Independent Society", in Geneva Switzerland under the slogan of "Macedonia for the Macedonians", demanded the application of Wilson's principles to create an autonomous Macedonia based on the principles of the Swiss Federative model.

Remnants of IMRO also took action in the rally for an Autonomous Macedonia. After the Bulgarians murdered Yane Sandanski in 1915, his

supporters fled the Pirin region to save their own lives and later regrouped in Serres to form the "Serres Revolutionary Council". "Having noted the impetus for unification of the Southern Slavs against the Central Powers, the Council issued a 'Declaration of Autonomy' in October 1918, in which it appealed for membership of a Balkan Federation on the basis of Macedonian territorial integrity. This plea was ultimately rejected by the ruling cliques of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, which later became known as Yugoslavia". "By striving for political and economic hegemony over the Balkans, Balkan nationalism has thrown the Balkan peoples and states into deep contradictions and conflicts which must be begun by war, and finished by war and always war." (Pages 158-159, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

Once again the Macedonian people came to the forefront to plead their case and once again they were shut out. How many more wars must be fought and how much more blood must be spilled for the world to realize that there is no end to Balkan conflicts without involving the Macedonian people in resolving the Macedonian question?

The Peace Conference, which was supposedly "the tribunal of international conscience", had no place for "Wilsonian Justice" or the opportunity for self-determination. Instead of practicing what they preached, the so called "peace makers of Versailles" rewarded aggression in exchange for self-interest.

With the stroke of a pen, in 1919 at the Treaty of Versailles (Paris), England and France sealed Macedonia's fate by ratifying the principles of the Bucharest Treaty and officially endorsing the partitioning of Macedonia. This gave Greece the license it needed to pursue forced expulsion and denationalization of Macedonians and to begin a mass colonization by transplanting "potential Greeks" into the annexed territories of Macedonia. The Neuilly Convention allowed for forced exchanges of populations. About 70,000 Macedonians were expelled from the Greek occupied part of Macedonia to Bulgaria and 25,000 "so called Greeks" were transplanted from Bulgaria to Greek occupied Macedonia.

"Macedonia's fate has been the subject of every kind of political combination, negotiation and treaty since 1912, each more immoral than the last, each ignoring completely the local interests and desires of a population which, with the stroke of the statesman's pen, can be condemned to national dissolution, and denied the right to a free national life while Armenians, Albanians and Jews receive political freedom." (Page 160, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

The Great Powers did not dare lose the strategic importance and untapped wealth in Macedonia or dare disappoint their trusted allies in the Balkans. Think of the endless bickering and complaining!

What was surprising, especially to the Balkan delegation, was the raising of the Macedonian question by Italy. On July 10, 1919, Italy along with the USA made a proposal to the "Committee for the Formation of New States" for Macedonian autonomy. France flatly opposed the motion while Britain proposed establishing a five-year Macedonian Commissary under the auspices of the League of Nations. Greece and Serbia, by refusing to acknowledge the existence of a Macedonian question, literally killed the motion.

Another item that came out of Versailles was Article 51, the League of Nations' code to "protect national minorities". Article 51 of the Treaty of Versailles espouses equality of civil rights, education, language and religion for all national minorities. Unfortunately, article 51 was never implemented by the Balkan States or enforced by the League of Nations which Greece and Bulgaria, to this day, violate and ignore. Why is this? Because to this day, Greece and Bulgaria claim that "the Macedonian nationality" does not exist and has never existed. So, what minorities should they be protecting? In response to the Greek claim I would like to ask the Greeks the following questions:

1. To what minorities were you referring, when on September 29, 1924 your Minister of Foreign Affairs Nikolaos Mihalakopoulou signed an agreement with the Bulgarian Foreign Minister Kalkoff?

2. To what minorities were you referring, when on August 17, 1926 you made an agreement with Yugoslavia regarding the nationality of the ["Macedonians"]... in Greece?

(Pages 159-161, G.A.L. I Kata Tis Makedonias Epivouli, (Ekdosis Deftera Sympleliromeni), Athinai 1966)

On September 29, 1924 Greece signed an agreement with Bulgaria declaring that the Macedonians in Greece were Bulgarians. Not to disappoint the Serbians, when they found out about the Greek-Bulgarian agreement, the Greeks changed their mind and on August 17, 1926 declared that the Macedonians in Greece were in reality, Serbs.

As it turned out, the loudly proclaimed "Wilson principles" at the Paris Conference were only for show. The real winners at the end of the conference were the "players", the biggest one of all being Venizelos of Greece. "The entire forum was a farce, and its offspring the Versailles Treaty, the ultimate insult to the dignity and self-esteem (what remained of

it after continuous war and bloodshed) of the long-tormented Macedonian people. Those Macedonians prodded by conscience, by the mistrust gained after generations of suffering, and by the desire for freedom, thereafter treated the Versailles Treaty, and all political treaties, with the contempt they deserve." (Page 166, Radin, IMRO and the Macedonian Question)

At the conclusion of the Treaty, Greece got back what it had previously annexed and, additionally, received a large portion of Epirus, western Thrace, Crete and the Aegean Islands. It is important to mention here that when Albania's affirmation for independence was signed, at the London Conference in February 1920, more of Macedonia's territory was partitioned. A narrow strip of land running through Lake Ohrid and southward along Macedonia's western boundary was awarded to Albania.

Soon after arriving victorious in Greece, Venizelos, in a speech in Solun, announced his plans for a "Greater Greece" (Megali Idea) and to bring together all "Greek peoples" under a single Greater Greek State.

The Asia Minor campaign was over along with the "Megali Idea" of a Greater Greece. Worse yet, as a result of this catastrophic Greek fiasco, over one million Ottoman Christians were displaced, most of them into Macedonia. Their settlement affected the demography of the Macedonian landscape as well as the morale of the Macedonian population.

An entire generation of young Macedonian men, who were drafted into the Greek military, were sent to the Asia Minor campaigns and many lost their lives. The Greek authorities never acknowledged their service and no compensation was ever paid to the families of those "breadwinners" who lost their lives. The reason for the omission, according to the Greek authorities, "they were Bulgarian".

While Greece was contemplating repopulating Macedonia with alien refugees, new developments were boiling to the surface in Macedonia.

"A book of great importance to Macedonian linguistics and historiography was published in Athens; that was the primer entitled ABECEDAR (A B C), printed in the Latin alphabet, and intended for the children of the Macedonian national minority in Greece - the '[Macedonian]... speaking minority' as Sir Austin Chamberlain, British diplomat and delegate to the League of Nations, and Sir James Erick Drumond, General Secretary to the League of Nations, referred to the Macedonians in Greece." (Page 184, Voislav Kushevski, 'On the Appearance of the Abecedar' in Istorija magazine, 1983, No. 2)

Even before Greece had secured its grip on Macedonia, officials were sent to administer "the new lands". The first official Greek administrator

arrived in Solun near the end of October 1912, accompanied by two judges, five customs officials, ten consulate clerks, a contingent of reporters and journalists and 168 Cretan soldiers. Among other things, the first order of business was to "Hellenize the New Lands". "After the Greeks occupied Aegean Macedonia, they closed the Macedonian language schools and churches and expelled the priests. The Macedonian language and names were forbidden, and the Macedonians were referred to as Bulgarians, Serbians or natives. By law promulgated on November 21, 1926, all place names (toponymia) were Hellenized; that is the names of cities, villages, rivers and mountains were discarded and Greek names put in their place. At the same time the Macedonians were forced to change their first and surnames; every Macedonian surname had to end in 'os', 'es', or 'poulos'. The news of these acts and the new, official Greek names were published in the Greek government daily 'Efimeris tis Kiverniseos no. 322 and 324 of November 21 and 23, 1926. The requirements to use these Greek names is officially binding to this day. All evidence of the Macedonian language was compulsorily removed from churches, monuments, archeological finds and cemeteries. [Macedonian]...church or secular literature was seized and burned. The use of the Macedonian language was strictly forbidden also in personal communication between parents and children, among villagers, at weddings and work parties, and in burial rituals." (Page 109, John Shea, Macedonia and Greece, The Struggle to Define a New Balkan Nation)

By 1928 1,497 Macedonian place-names in the Greek occupied Macedonia were Hellenized (LAW 4096) and all Cyrillic inscriptions found in churches, on tombstones and icons were destroyed (or overwritten) prompting English Journalist V. Hild to say, "The Greeks do not only persecute living ...[Macedonians]..., but they even persecute dead ones. They do not leave them in peace even in the graves. They erase the [Macedonian]...inscriptions on the headstones, remove the bones and burn them."

In the years following World War I, the Macedonian people underwent extensive measures of systematic denationalization. The applications of these "denationalization schemes" were so extensive and aggressively pursued that in the long term, they eroded the will of the Macedonian people to resist.

"In Greece, in 1929 during the rule of Elepeterios Venizelos, a legal act was issued 'On the protection of public order'. In line with this Act each

demand for nationality rights is regarded as high treason. This law is still in force.

On December 18, 1936, Metaksas' dictatorial government issued a legal Act 'On the activity against state security' on the strength of which thousands of Macedonians were arrested, imprisoned, expelled or exiled (EXORIA) on arid, inhospitable Greek islands, where many perished. Their crime? Being ethnic Macedonian by birth.

On September 7, 1938 legal Act No. 2366 was issued banning the use of the Macedonian language. All Macedonian localities were flooded with posters: 'Speak Greek'. Evening schools were opened in which adult Macedonians were taught Greek. Not a single Macedonian school functioned at the time." (Page 8, What Europe has Forgotten: The Struggle of the Aegean Macedonians, A Report by the Association of the Macedonians in Poland)

Many Macedonians were fined, beaten and jailed for speaking Macedonian. Adults and school children alike were further humiliated by being forced to drink castor oil when caught speaking Macedonian.

In Vardar Macedonia, the Yugoslav government attacked the problem of denationalization and assimilation by enacting laws, such as the September 24, 1920 "Resolution for the Settlement of the New Southern Regions", designed to effectively exclude Macedonians from owning any property. The Macedonian language was banned along with cultural institutions through a uniform code known as the December 30th, 1920 EDICT, which was aimed at persecuting all political and trade union associations.

The bulk and most arable of Macedonian lands were awarded to Serbian army officers who survived the World War I Solun front. Land was also awarded to the Serbian administrators of Macedonia including government bureaucrats, judges and the police. The denationalization measures were complemented with aggressive re-education programs producing "little Serbs" out of the Macedonian children. As for the unwilling adults, they were given two options - "live as a Serb" or "die as a Macedonian"!

In Pirin Macedonia, the Bulgarian government enforced compulsory name changes and, through repressive political and economic means, stepped up the assimilation process. Initially land reforms favoured the poor, including the Macedonian peasants. Later, however, that too changed and Macedonians here were exposed to a similar fate as the Macedonians in Aegea and Vardar.

The Macedonians in Albania posed little threat to Albania's authority and fared relatively better than their kin in Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia. The village inhabitants were not persecuted or subjected to any comprehensive denationalization programs. As a result the Macedonian culture flourished, original names remained and the people spoke Macedonian uninhibited.

As mentioned earlier, many of the IMRO regional leaders, fooled by the Balkan League's propaganda, voluntarily joined the League's armies in 1912 to help oust the Ottomans and liberate Macedonia. When it was over and the so-called "liberation" turned into an "occupation", they found themselves prisoners of the League's soldiers. Those fortunate enough to have escaped, fled to the Pirin region and joined Yane Sandanski's Cheta, which was still active at the time. After Sandanski's assassination in 1915, however, many of his followers went underground and later re-emerged in Serres to form the "Serres Revolutionary Council". The left wing of IMRO re-emerged prior to the 1919 Paris Peace Conference with high hopes of settling the Macedonian question by lobbying the peace delegates. After realizing that their efforts were futile, they gave up and merged together with the Provisional Mission of western Macedonia to form IMRO (United). Macedonia is alive, "United" in spirit if not in substance. Unfortunately, because of Macedonia's division and the impenetrable barriers (closed borders) erected, putting up a united national front was difficult if not impossible. Even though there was much desire to achieve a 'united autonomous Macedonia', no form of mobilization was practical. So how was IMRO going to achieve its objectives? Some leaders believed that by internationalizing the Macedonian question and by working with the supportive political elements of each Balkan State, the denationalization process could be slowed down, even reversed, and a climate for reunification created. IMRO believed that by employing new, revolutionary and non-nationalistic tactics the barriers erected in Macedonia could be penetrated. By joining the "international class struggle against a common oppressor", IMRO believed self-determination could be achieved. IMRO called on the Macedonian people to join the class struggle and support those sympathetic to the Macedonian cause. Many Macedonians did rise to the task but found they had very little in common with the exploited working class in their respective new countries. Macedonians felt they were exploited first because they were Macedonians and second because they were a working class. To win them over, the Communist International (Comintern) was obliged to consider

concessions like offering Macedonians autonomy and the right to self-determination or at least recognize the Macedonian nation with full rights and privileges. The Comintern saw the Macedonians as a potentially strong ally that could be persuaded to rally for its cause. Unfortunately there were problems, many problems. First, there were disagreements between the various Balkan State Communist Parties regarding the degree of concessions to be awarded. Then there were fears of losing Macedonian territory if autonomy was considered. Moscow, the leading Comintern figure, favoured a Balkan Federation with the whole of Macedonia as one of its republics. Unfortunately Bulgaria, still dreaming the San Stefano dream, backed out of the deal.

While there were some prospects for basic human rights for the Macedonian people in the Greek State in the early 1920's, those prospects died as Greece tightened its grip on Macedonia by implementing more racist assimilation policies. If that was not enough, on December 18, 1936 the Greek Government issued a legal act concerning, "Activities Against State Security". By this act thousands of Macedonians were arrested, imprisoned and expelled from their homeland. Among other things, Metaxas on September 7, 1938, by legal act 2366, outlawed the Macedonian language and prohibited people from speaking it by imposing heavy fines and imprisonment.

In Yugoslavia events were progressing in a similar manner to those in Greece. After King Alexander declared himself dictator of Yugoslavia in 1929, he suspended the constitution and subdivided his kingdom in such a way that the Serbs would be a majority in all districts. He also abolished trade unions and removed personal liberties. The Serbian occupied territory of Macedonia was referred to as "South Serbia" and the Macedonian language was forbidden from being spoken in public. The history of the Macedonian people and their surnames were changed as well, to give Serbian emphasis. Place names too were changed and replaced with historically Serbian names. Unlike the Metaxa regime, after the 1930's, the Yugoslav regimes began to relax their tight grip and allowed unofficial and limited use of the Macedonian dialects to be spoken in the streets of Macedonia and in plays and drama clubs.

In Bulgaria events followed a similar course as in Yugoslavia and Greece. A military coup was imposed in May 1934, the 1879 constitution was abolished and political organizations and trade unions were suppressed. In 1935 King Boris III, in a bloodless coup, overthrew the old dictatorship and replaced it with his own Royal one. Bulgarian

governments since Bulgaria's inception in 1878 have officially and adamantly denied the existence of the Macedonian nationality arguing that Macedonians are Bulgarians. Thousands of Macedonians, who over the years tried to express different views, were jailed or exiled. The attitude that Macedonians are Bulgarians was used to justify violent assimilation acts and to deny Macedonians their basic human rights. Ever since its inception in 1878, Bulgaria has been obsessed with possessing Macedonia and has caused immense suffering for the Macedonian people.

The downfall of the Tsarist Russian Imperial Empire, the break-up of the Habsburg Austro-Hungarian Empire and the demise of the Ottoman Empire removed three of the Great Powers from internal Balkan influence. While Britain played a less active role, France and Italy attempted to form competing alliances in the Balkans but did not have the military might to enforce them. The Balkan governments, on the other hand, for the first time had an opportunity to adjust their relations with each other and form alliances to protect their mutual interests. Unfortunately their hatred for each other and fear of losing Macedonia always prevented such alliances and again allowed outsiders to play a role in their internal affairs.

Germany's humiliating defeat in the Great War, coupled with its economic plight in the 1930's, gave rise to a new kind of German radicalism. Hitler exploited that and turned it to his own advantage. Hitler, in the short term, also gave the German people what they desired most, work and hope for a better future. Unfortunately, in the long term, he delivered disaster not only to the German people but also to many other nations, including the Macedonia.

The Second Great War (WW II)

As a new-world order emerged from the Great War, new alliances began to form. On one side stood the Axis partners, initially consisting of Germany, Italy and Japan. As war broke out, Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Finland and Thailand joined in. On the other side the Allied partners consisted of Britain, the Soviet Union, the USA and China. As the war progressed more and more nations joined the allies, totaling about fifty before the war was over.

In September 1940 Germany, Italy and Japan signed a cooperation agreement. This basically identified their intentions with respect to each others' spheres of influence, defining their political, economic and defense strategies as well as their obligations to each other. The agreement came to be known as the "tripartite pact".

After war broke out in the Balkans, the first to fall to fascist aggression was Albania. By an ultimatum delivered to Albanian King Zogu, on March 23, 1939, Italian troops landed in Albania and occupied its territory on April 7, encountering little resistance. Soon after consolidating control in Albania, on October 28th, 1940, Italy declared war on Greece. Greece, however, turned out to be tough to defeat and Metaxa's foresight in arming his state paid off.

Official history praises Greece and Greek soldiers for their bravery and fighting spirit but neglects to mention the contributions and sacrifices Macedonians made to keep Greece safe. Macedonians were the first to be dispatched to the front lines in Albania, taking the full brunt of the offensive as well as the winter cold. More Macedonian men suffered from gangrene than from Italian bullets and bombs. Unprepared for the frigid temperatures, many men lost their fingers, toes, limbs and even their lives to frostbite. Food too was in short supply. The brave Macedonian soldiers had to fight off starvation as well as the Italians. The shame of it is that they did this to protect a country that refused and still refuses to recognize them.

All their sacrifices were in vain because six months later, on April 6th, 1941, the German army marched into Greece. Again the Macedonians fought bravely but they were no match for the well-trained, well-disciplined German army. (If you wish to learn more about World War II, specifically about events that involved Greece, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Albania, read Volume 4 of "The Marshal Cavendish Illustrated

Encyclopedia of World War II, but don't expect to find anything about the Macedonian contribution.)

When the Germans reached Athens, the Greek government capitulated and the soldiers on the Albanian front were left on their own. Some were told to go to Epirus and regroup, expected to make the long trek on foot. Others were told nothing and were left to roam the countryside. Eventually they were all picked up by German patrols, disarmed and sent home. The returning soldiers were given a hero's welcome. Unfortunately for those who were wounded, losing fingers, toes and limbs to frostbite, there was no compensation or solace for their pain.

The German invasion was a welcome relief for the soldiers from the Italian front, but at the same time it posed an uneasy uncertainty as to what was going to happen next. No one was certain how the new invaders were going to react. The Macedonian people, having ample prior experience with being occupied, were expecting the worst. As time would show the new invaders were a mixed blessing for the Macedonian people.

After war broke out in Europe, Bulgaria allied itself with the axis powers and on March 1, 1941 joined the German led pact. The entry of German troops into Bulgaria put Yugoslavia in a difficult position. To avoid German wrath, on March 25, 1941, the Yugoslav Regent, Prince Paul, also joined the German led pact. This did not sit well with young King Peter who, with the help of the Yugoslav military, staged a coup and deposed the Regent. This meant that Hitler had to negotiate with Yugoslavia again. Hitler was counting on Yugoslavia to allow him passage to attack Greece. The new situation angered Hitler and instead of negotiating he signed directive number 25 declaring Yugoslavia an enemy of Germany and ordered its destruction. Hitler wanted a swift strike so he withdrew troops from the Russian campaign.

It took Hitler's army 12 days to demolish Yugoslavia, a small diversion in his destructive career, but there are those who believe that this little diversion changed the course of history. To begin with it gave the Soviet Union just enough time to adequately prepare for an offensive, which ultimately led to Germany's defeat. Secondly, the violent nature of the attack created the right conditions for a Partisan uprising, which ultimately helped to establish the Republic of Macedonia. The battle for Yugoslavia and Greece was swift and effective. When it was over the Germans, as an ally to the axis powers, allowed Bulgaria to occupy Vardar (Yugoslav occupied) Macedonia and the eastern region of Aegean (Greek occupied)

Macedonia. Later, after the Italians left, Germany allowed Bulgaria to occupy western Macedonia as well.

Many Macedonians from the Vardar region who had suffered under the Yugoslav regime welcomed the Bulgarian invaders as saviors and liberators. Their euphoria was short-lived as the Bulgarians quickly began to oppress and forcibly Bulgarize the Macedonian population. If there had been any pro-Bulgarian sentiment before, it quickly disappeared after the occupation. Germany's violent entry into Yugoslavia, coupled with Bulgarian oppressive attitudes towards the Macedonian people, gave birth to an underground Macedonian resistance movement.

In Aegean Macedonia, after the Germans settled in, life for the Macedonian people took on an uneasy normalcy. The Greek police, who had supported the Metaxa regime before the occupation, now cooperated with the German military and again became active in Macedonia. To counter its oppressive tactics the old Komiti (Ilinden revolutionary guard) rearmed and went back to active duty. The "old timers" were angered by Greece's oppressive laws and were spurred back into action by Bulgarian propaganda condemning the oppressive Greek tactics. The Bulgarians were well aware of the unfavourable conditions the Greek Government had created in Macedonia and used the opportunity to agitate the Greeks. Komiti actions were limited at best and were restricted to the Italian zones, as the Germans would not tolerate armed actions in their zones.

The Partisan movement in Yugoslavia was more organized and progressive than in Greece. Led by Tito, the Communist partisans in Yugoslavia organized a war of national liberation in which the Macedonians fought on an equal footing. Macedonians formed their own section of resistance even before they were recognized and accepted by Tito. The first anti-fascist war of national liberation began in the Republic of Macedonia on October 11, 1941. October 11th is the "Second Ilinden" for the Macedonian people. Since 1941 they have celebrated it as "Macedonian Revolution Day". The Macedonian people by their actions, loyalty and patriotism earned their place in the world. By hardship, determination and the spilling of blood the Macedonian people demonstrated their desire for freedom and the willingness to rule themselves. The Great Powers in 1829 (by the London Protocol) satisfied the Greeks by making Greece a country. Similarly in 1878 (by the congress of Berlin) Russia liberated the Bulgarians making Bulgaria a country. Unlike the Greeks and Bulgarians, however, the brave people of

Vardar Macedonia had to fight by themselves, for themselves, to earn their place in the world among the free nations.

For just over a year the Macedonians of Vardar endured enough Bulgarian treachery to last them a lifetime. Then in April 1942 they rose up and demonstrated their displeasure. Macedonian Partisans took up arms against the Bulgarian army but were massacred in a bloody battle. Unarmed Macedonians then took to the streets to protest the massacre and they too were cut to pieces.

Sections of the Macedonian Partisan force in Yugoslavia fled into Aegean Macedonia to avoid further persecution but mostly to fight for reuniting Macedonia. Some entered the Italian zones near the village of Besfina and the rest penetrated the German zones in the region around the village Sveta Petka and quickly went underground. The Besfina force, before it had a chance to make contact with the local population, was spotted by the Komiti who quickly sprang into action. Seeing uniformed men on the Besfina hillside startled the old Komiti. Thinking that it was a Greek police (Andari) invasion force, the Komiti appealed to the local Italian garrison and were given arms and permission to attack. When the Komiti started the offensive the Partisans backed off and sent representatives to negotiate. They went from village to village and spoke with the local chiefs. The strangers wore handsome uniforms and conducted themselves seriously, with charm and charisma. They spoke long and well about freedom, liberty and the treachery of the Bulgarian Fascists.

When the Komiti found out that the uniformed men were Macedonians they accepted them with open arms, gave them (surrendered) their weapons and many voluntarily joined their cause. The Partisans of Sveta Petka, because of a German presence, had to work under cover but they too succeeded in recruiting volunteers from the local population. After the Partisan penetration, the Macedonian people of Aegean Macedonia learned about Bulgarian atrocities and ceased to believe the Bulgarian propaganda. The old Ilinden guard was demobilized and replaced by a Partisan movement.

Partisan organizers took extraordinary measures to explain to the Macedonian people that they were fighting for the freedom and liberation of the Macedonian people from the tyranny of the oppressive states. The Macedonian involvement in this war, and later in the Greek civil war, was not about "Communist ideologies" or about alliances or obligations to the Great Powers. It was simply the next stage in the long struggle for

"liberation from oppression" and to fulfill a longing for freedom, reunification and self-rule. The Macedonian contribution in fighting against Fascism is not only under emphasized but also misinterpreted by historians. I will once again say that the Macedonian people, during the Second Great War (WWII), rose on the democratic side and fought against fascism for the liberation of the states in which they lived. The Macedonian people, like other people in the Balkans, fought to liberate their homeland and thus earn their place in the world. This cannot be ignored and must be recognized and recorded in the annals of history.

The Germans and Italians did not care one way or another about Macedonian affairs as long as there was no trouble for them. Macedonian interest in Partisan activities continued to climb, bringing new recruits and volunteers to the cause. Youth organizations (NOMS) were created with young men and women recruited to be the eyes and ears of the community and to help defend the villages. Many young volunteers of military age were recruited and trained to perform policing and civic duties in the newly formed organizations. The organization NOF (Macedonian People's Liberation Front) was formed and recruited fighters from the Kostur, Lerin and Voden regions. NOF even cooperated with Greek organizations with similar ideologies. Later there was talk about re-uniting Macedonia, possibly through a Balkan confederation. Britain unfortunately was against the idea and discouraged Greece from taking part in such matters. Bulgaria too could not agree and withdrew support. As usual the Bulgarians wanted to become rulers of Macedonia, which was unacceptable to the Macedonians.

The leadership of the Macedonian force in western Aegean Macedonia was shared between Voivoda Ilia Dimov, code named "Goche", and Voivoda Mito Tupurkovski, code named "Titan". Both commanders were loved by their men for their fighting abilities and respected for their leadership.

I briefly want to mention that in an ironic twist of events, while Mito Tupurkovski engaged the Germans in bitter battles, his mother Sulta was accidentally killed by a stray German bullet.

In September 1944 German troops began to withdraw from the Balkans. Fearing reprisals many Macedonians evacuated their villages and set up temporary homes secluded in the mountains. As it turned out, the Germans were not a threat and after a month or so villagers returned to their homes. The people who lived near main roads were afraid to return and took up residence with relatives in secluded villages and stayed there

until all the Germans were gone. There was one incident that I know of where the Germans did do damage. This was in the Village of Trnaa where returning Germans found their "host village" empty, became enraged and stoned two old people to death.

To protect soldiers from being attacked out in the open at night, the Germans assigned them residences inside the villages among the locals. Each house was identified with a marker and returning soldiers used it for shelter. In Oshchima, as in other villages, identification numbers were stamped on the outside door of each house. Time and time again the same soldiers came back to the same house. According to stories my family told, several German soldiers used to spend the night at our house. When someone was missing, my grandfather would motion "what happened" and point in the direction where the man had last sat. The Germans would then motion back "sleep", meaning that he was killed or would say "mama" for gone home on leave to visit his family.

After all the German and Bulgarian occupying forces withdrew from Yugoslavia, the Partisans, numbering about 800,000, were in full control. There were no outside invasion forces (Allied or Russian) inside Yugoslavia, so foreign interference was not a problem. At that time the Macedonian Partisans possessed a sizeable force and wielded considerable influence in the ranks of the Tito regime. The Macedonian people did their share of fighting for the liberation of Yugoslavia from the Fascists and earned their place as equals among the Yugoslav people.

On August 2nd, 1944 Macedonia was officially proclaimed a Republic within the Yugoslav Federation. A Bitolsko-Prilepski dialect was chosen and adopted as the official language of the Republic and the city of Skopje was chosen as the new Republic's capital.

Political changes after the capitulation of fascist Bulgaria and the September 9th, 1944 coup d'etat positively influenced the Macedonians in Pirin. On August 9, 1946 the Communist Party of Bulgaria, under the leadership of Geogi Dimitrov, officially recognized the Macedonian nation and the right of the Bulgarian controlled part of Macedonia to attach itself to the People's Republic of Macedonia. After World War II the Macedonians in Bulgaria were recognized as a separate and distinct ethnicity. Demographic data from a free census in 1946 revealed that the majority of the population in Pirin Macedonia declared itself to be ethnic Macedonian. There was a period of cultural autonomy and affirmation of Macedonian national and cultural values. The Macedonian literary language and national history were introduced in the educational system

and almost 32,000 students were taught Macedonian. In 1947 in Gorna Djumaja (Blagoevgrad) the first Macedonian bookstore, reading room and Regional Macedonian National Theater were opened. Macedonian newspapers such as "Pirinsko delo", "Nova Makedonija", "Mlad borec" etc. were also published. Literary, cultural and artistic associations were founded contributing to the spread of Macedonian culture.

In the 1956 census conducted by the Bulgarian government, 63.7% of the population living in Pirin Macedonia declared itself Macedonian. Since that census and after Tito broke relations with Bulgaria and Russia, Bulgaria changed its attitude and has negated the existence of Macedonians and forbade expression of the Macedonian ethnicity and language. Another census conducted in 1965 shows only 8,750 or less than 1% of the total population living in the district of Blagoevgrad as being Macedonian. According to the previous census, Blagoevgrad had the highest percentage of Macedonians living there.

The Greek Civil War

No sooner had the Germans withdrawn from Greece than the British military arrived in Athens. Athens was evacuated on October 12, 1944 and a British occupation force entered the city a few days later. While Britain entered Greece with only four thousand troops, most unfit for combat, ELAS (Greek Partisans) in contrast had seventy thousand men armed and ready for combat. Even the British admit that if the Greek Partisans wanted to, they could have seized power. The conditions were certainly right. The question is why didn't they and what was the Civil War all about? Official history provides no answers, only more questions.

It took the British a couple of months to organize and by mid December 1944 they had fifty thousand soldiers of their own and some loyal Greek troops to back them. The local Greek troops came from the ranks of the Andari (National Republican Greek League), the same men who fought alongside the Germans. They switched their German gear for British uniforms and were back on the streets again attacking the Partisans.

As Greece started to collapse, before Germany invaded in 1941, King George II fled and formed a government in exile in London, which was recognized by the Allies as the official Government of Greece. Also the British, in advance of the German departure, established a center of Greek activity in Cairo where a Greek army, navy and air force operated under British command.

After the British consolidated power in Greece they were able to support the British appointed Greek Government and ordered the Partisans to demobilize. What is interesting here is that before the British were able to militarily enforce a disarmament they ordered the Partisan forces to disband. What is more interesting and noteworthy is that EAM agreed to demobilize its own forces with hardly any conditions. The only condition worthy of mention is the request for Britain to disarm the "Government support units"; EAM's main opposition. Knowing full well that Britain would never allow communist rule in Greece and also knowing that the Soviet Union signed an agreement with Britain not to interfere in Greece, EAM still believed it could come to power with no outside help.

When the British went ahead with the original plan, ignoring EAM's request to disarm the Government Support Units, EAM withdrew from the government. EAM then protested against British actions by organizing demonstrations and general strikes. When the Athens Square began to flood with thousands of demonstrators the police were ordered to fire on

the crowds, killing fifteen people. To make matters worse, Churchill approved a plan for Britain to occupy Athens by any means necessary if required. ELAS still held more than three-quarters of Greece but because it could no longer count on outside (Soviet) support, it had to re-evaluate its own position.

Under these conditions EAM, in January 1945, accepted an armistice trading guns for votes. The Vardkiza agreement was signed on February 12, 1945 requiring all bands to demobilize and surrender their weapons. The British, once again, confirmed their allegiance to the Greek Government by giving Athens full political and military support, committing their willingness to fight to prevent a Partisan victory. The biggest losers of the Vardkiza agreement were the Macedonians. As soon as EAM signed the agreement, all anti-Macedonian laws were back in force and the Macedonian people lost all that they had gained during the German occupation. EAM/KKE (Greek Communist Party) made absolutely no effort to safeguard Macedonian rights in the agreements with Britain and as a result began to lose favour with the Macedonian leadership. When the Macedonian Partisan forces were ordered to demobilize, as part of the Vardkiza agreement, the Macedonian leadership refused. Goche and Titan refused to disarm and disband without guarantees that no harm would come to their men or to the Macedonian people.

The question of "what will happen to Aegean Macedonia under Greek communist rule" was still unclear. Greece was determined to rid itself of the Macedonians one way or another and outlawed the Macedonian forces. A strike force was assembled by ELAS (the Greek Partisans) and sent north to intervene and arrest the Macedonian outlaws. Instead of putting up a fight the Macedonian brigades crossed over the Yugoslav border and entered Vardar Macedonia. There they were a welcome addition to existing Macedonian forces fighting the Albanian Balisti (German allies) in Tetovo and Gostivar. The Macedonian leadership could have stayed and fought ELAS but it would have made no sense to bring the war home to Macedonia. They knew very well that British troops would soon follow and they would be fighting a senseless, bloody war in their own backyard.

With the Macedonian force out of the way, the Greek police were back and up to their old tricks. This time it wasn't only the Macedonians who were their victims. They hated the Greek Partisans just as much. With practically no one to stop them, the Greek police escalated their terror activities arresting, torturing, and murdering people indiscriminately,

including the EAM, ELAS and KKE (Communist Party of Greece) leadership. By the time elections were convened most of the Partisan leadership had disappeared. They were either in jail serving hard time on fabricated and trumped up charges or they were dead.

Elections were scheduled for March 31st, 1946. Instead of voting, the Greek Partisans re-armed themselves and rebelled against the Greek Government. The rebellion manifested itself as an attack on Greece in the village of "Lithohorion", situated east of Mount Olympus directly south of Katerini in Thessaly. Other attacks soon followed and in no time the conflict escalated into a full scale Civil War, engulfing not only Greece but Greek occupied Macedonia as well.

In a bizarre turn of events, ELAS, who less than a year ago turned their guns on Macedonian fighters, now extended their hands in friendship. All was forgiven and forgotten when the ELAS leadership asked the Macedonians for their help. This time they came with offers of "equal rights", "recognition" and even possibilities of "re-unification with Vardar". Now tell me what Macedonian could resist that?

Many Aegean Partisan fighters who had crossed over to Vardar Macedonia only the year before came back. On their return they organized themselves under NOF, the Macedonian National Liberation Front, and fought side by side with ELAS. Many were well aware of the saying "beware of Greeks bearing gifts" and knew that the Greek offer was too good to be true. But there was always that small ray of hope that perhaps this time the outcome for Macedonia might be different. Besides, their families, homes and lives were in Aegean Macedonia. What other choice did they really have? They returned because they were lonely, loved their families and because they had to live with the guilt of leaving their loved ones in dire straits. Every Macedonian born in Macedonia, even in the most desolate places, knows the feeling of homesickness and yearns to return.

The new alliance between ELAS and NOF opened many opportunities for the Greek Partisans beyond the Greek borders. While the Greek government controlled the big cities and towns, Partisan strength was in the villages and mountains. Most of the Partisan recruits came from the peasant population and showed themselves to be idealistic, hopeful and determined to fight. Camps were set up in mountainous seclusion where new recruits were given combat training. There were also training camps and supply depots set up outside Greece, in Albania and Yugoslavia. One such camp was the town of Bulkes located in northern Yugoslavia. Bulkes

was a beautiful town with neat rows of lovely houses and fertile lands that could feed an army. The Germans had built Bulkes to house German families. After the German armies retreated, some residents of Bulkes were kicked out while others left voluntarily. The empty town was loaned to the Greek Partisans to use as a supply depot for warehousing food, uniforms and weapons. Bulkes was also a training center for officers and an administrative center for propaganda. During the Partisan days the town of Bulkes was administered in the true spirit of socialism.

By early 1947 the Partisan force was showing real strength in military capability and promise for delivering on its commitments to the Macedonian people. About 87 Macedonian schools were opened in the Lerin and Kostur regions. A record number of students were reported attending school. Macedonian literature and culture seemed to flourish. The Greeks, unfortunately, were never at ease with the Macedonian gains and there was visible resentment and mistrust between the two peoples. Greek chauvinism seemed to flourish even at the best of times. Macedonians, on the other hand, were never at ease about revealing their real names or identities, especially to the Greek Partisans. One Macedonian explained it to me this way, "If they knew that you were Macedonian then you had to watch both your front and back, because you never knew where the next bullet was going to come from."

In Macedonia the ranks of the Partisans were swelling mostly with volunteers from the patriotic Macedonian villages. Some who had combat experience were promoted to the rank of officer. The Greeks were hesitant and careful not to promote Macedonians to high ranks. Those they reserved for Greeks only. In addition to enlisting men, the Partisans also drafted women as nurses, field medics, tailors, menders, launderers, cooks, supply organizers and even armed combatants. For a while the Partisans grew their own food in donated and abandoned fields. The workforce, managing the harvests and delivering food to the Partisan camps, was made up mostly of women volunteers.

Britain was not happy with the new developments and pressed the Greek Government to expand its military capability and arm itself with heavy arms. "Up to 1947 the British Government appointed and dismissed Greek Prime Ministers with the barest attention to constitutional formalities. British experts dictated economic and financial policy, defense and foreign policy, security and legal policy, trade union and unemployment policy." (Page 306, Barbara Jeleovich, History of the Balkans, Twentieth Century) For its interference inside a Sovereign State's

affairs and for allowing heavy-handed tactics, Britain received criticism from the United States, whose dollars were used to rebuild Greece.

Both the Greek Government and the Partisans were recruiting fighters from the same population. While young men were drafted to fight for the Greek Government, their wives, sisters, brothers, mothers and fathers were drafted to fight for the Partisans. There were heavy propaganda campaigns conducted on both sides poisoning the minds of the young and impressionable, dividing and tearing the community apart and pitting brother against brother.

This was the Greek legacy passed on to the Macedonian people for offering their help. This was the "Greek curse" that many Macedonians must bear for partnering with the Greeks. To this day many Macedonians harbour hard feelings and struggle to make amends. To this day the Macedonian community remains divided on this issue.

From the day the British set foot in Greece they were adamant about ridding themselves of the Partisans by any means possible, even condoning acts of violence and terror. From mid-1945 to May 20th, 1947 the Partisans reported that "in Western Macedonia alone, 13,529 Macedonians were tortured, 3,215 were imprisoned, and 268 were executed without trial. In addition, 1,891 houses were burnt down and 1,553 were looted, and 13,808 Macedonians were resettled by force. During the war, Greek-run prison camps where Macedonians were imprisoned, tortured, and killed included the island of Ikaria near Turkey, the Island of Makronis near Athens, the jail Averov near Athens, the jail at Larisa near the Volos Peninsula, and the jail in Thessaloniki. Aegean Macedonian expatriates claim that there were mass killings on Vicho, Gramos, Kaymakchalan, and at Mala Prespa in Albania." (Page 116, John Shea, Macedonia and Greece, The Struggle to Define a New Balkan Nation)

In 1946 the Greek police attacked a band of musicians from Oshchima and Trnaa at Ppli while they were on their way to play at a wedding in Rudari. The musicians were severely beaten and their musical instruments destroyed. For one young man his trumpet was his only means of support.

In 1946, a Greek policeman shot and killed Sofia Ianovska in Zhelevo for fun. The woman, whose husband was in Canada at the time, was standing on her front porch waiting for her children to arrive from work. The crazed policeman fired at the woman instantly killing her because she was looking in his direction. According to local accounts no inquiry was

conducted about the shooting, nor was the policeman ever questioned or disciplined.

In 1945-46, in retaliation for one of their own being killed, the Prosfigi (people that Greece imported from Asia Minor during the 1920's) of Ppli killed Nikola Cholakov, an innocent man from Orovnik. The only connection Nikola had with the dead man was that he was a supporter of the opposite side in the conflict.

I have been told that the Prosfigi in Macedonia committed atrocities against the Macedonian people but were never punished for their crimes. I also want to emphasize that the Macedonian Partisans had the strength and opportunity to round up all the Prosfigi in northwestern Macedonia and massacre them to the last one but instead they used sound judgement and left them alone. Macedonians understood that the Prosfigi were also victims of Hellenism.

The Greek Government in Macedonia worked closely with local collaborators and enlisted, from the Macedonian population, only those who could be proven trustworthy. The collaborators worked hard to identify all those who were sympathetic to the Partisans and reported on their activities on a regular basis. Anyone reported aiding the Partisans was severely punished and sometimes executed. In the spring of 1947 all those who were blacklisted were rounded up, arrested and locked up in Lerin jails. Those accused of aiding the Partisans were taken out and executed. The rest, after spending one hundred days in jail without trial, were sent to various concentration camps in the most desolate Greek Islands.

I want to mention something very important here because I believe the Greek Government, even before the Greek civil war, had plans "to deal with the Macedonians in Greece". "In 1947, during the Greek civil war, the legal act L-2 was issued. This meant that all those who left Greece without the consent of the Greek government were stripped of Greek citizenship and banned from returning to the country. The law applied to Greeks and Macedonians, but in its modernized version the act is binding only on Macedonians. It prevents Macedonians, but not former Communist Greeks who fought against the winning side from returning to Greece and reclaiming property. On January 20, 1948, the legal act M was issued. This allowed the Greek government to confiscate the property of those who were stripped of their citizenship. The law was updated in 1985 to exclude Greeks, but still binding on Macedonians." (Pages 116-117, John Shea, Macedonia and Greece, The Struggle to Define a New Balkan Nation)

Clearly acts L-2 and M were designed to work against the interest of the Macedonian people. Even innocent Macedonians who left before the Greek Civil War were not allowed to return. The question now is "What was Greece planning to do with the Macedonians?" The way acts L-2 and M were enforced over the years brings another question to mind. If there were no Macedonians living in Greece, as the Greeks claim, then what ethnicity were these people the Greek Government refused to allow back? Why is it that Greek law makes distinction between Macedonians and Greeks when it suits Greece but not when it benefits the Macedonians?

By the end of 1947 battles were raging everywhere and the war was slowly moving north into Macedonia. Clearly this was a "Greek War", yet again the Macedonian population was being sucked into it. The heavily armed Greek air force and mechanized artillery gained control of most cities and main roads. The Partisans were literally trapped and continued their strictly defensive campaigns mainly from the mountains of Vicho and Gramos.

As the situation became critical, both sides stepped up their recruitment campaigns and again were drawing from the same population. The Partisans could no longer count on volunteers alone and began to enlist fighters by force and drafted anyone they could get their hands on, male or female. In addition to support roles, women were now armed and given combat duties. They fought alongside the men against the well-trained, well-disciplined and heavily armed Greek Army. Such was the fate of the Macedonian women, most of whom were taken by force to fight in someone else's war.

As the war intensified the Greek air force regularly bombed Macedonian villages putting the civilian population, including children, in danger. In the spring of 1948, to save the children, a temporary evacuation program was introduced and implemented on a voluntary basis. It is estimated that about 28,000 children from the ages of 2 to 14 were rounded up and taken across the border into Yugoslavia. From there they were sent to various Eastern Block countries.

Again, I want to point out that the evacuation program was sponsored and organized by the Greek Partisan Leadership which was fully versed in "Greek Law"(act L-2). Yet they carried out the children's evacuation program and lied to the trusting mothers that the evacuation was only a temporary measure. Almost all the Macedonian children who were evacuated in 1948 are still not allowed entry into Greece.

By the spring of 1949 the Greek Civil War became a "killing field" consuming the Macedonian population. Some of the children who were previously evacuated were brought back to fight against the battle hardened Greek army. Children who were strong enough to carry a rifle, regardless of age, were snatched from the child refugee camps in Romania and brought back to Greece. Two of the three groups that were brought back were instantly massacred upon engaging the Greek Army. They were all under the age of fifteen, had no combat training and no idea of what to expect. The third group was spared only because mothers protested against such barbaric acts. The Partisans demobilized the third group before it reached the battlefields and sent the children home.

By the twisted hand of fate, Zachariadis, the supreme commander of the Partisan forces and his cronies, in their wisdom, decided to make a final stand against Greece that would make or break the Partisan movement. Their rationale was that the Partisans needed to occupy a large town or city to serve as their base. This would make them worthy of consideration and perhaps gain the attention of the Great Powers, especially the Soviet Union. There are many who share my belief that the Partisan attack on Lerin on February 12, 1949 was nothing more than an attempt to exterminate the Macedonian fighting force and terrorize the rest of the Macedonian population into leaving Greece. I can say that with certainty now because that is exactly what happened.

In one last-ditch attempt to gain composure and legitimacy, the Partisans attacked the city of Lerin, attempting to create a base of operation and show the world that they were a force worthy of recognition. Their effort however was not rewarded. They didn't capture Lerin and lost most of the force in the attempt. Seven hundred young Macedonian men and women died on that fateful day, their bodies buried in a mass grave. The Partisan leadership waited until dawn before ordering the attack. Wave after wave of innocent young men and women were slaughtered, cut down in their prime by Greek machine-gun fire. The horror of the slaughter became visible at dawn when the first light revealed the red stained terrain. The fresh white snow was red with the blood and bodies of the fallen.

To this day opinions are divided on the rationale for attacking Lerin so late in the war. The war was almost over and the Greek Army, supported by Britain, was unstoppable. In retrospect, some believe that gaining control of Lerin would have given the Partisan leadership a bargaining chip for surrender. Looking at the facts, however, reveals a more sinister

plan. By now it was well known throughout the world that Britain would not allow a communist influence in Greece. Britain's decision was supported by the Soviet Union and by Stalin himself. The Partisan leadership was well informed that it could no longer depend on support from the Communist Block countries, under Soviet influence. Relations with Yugoslavia had broken off and the Greek-Yugoslav border was closed. The Communist Party, which promised Macedonians human rights and freedoms, slowly began to distance itself from its commitments. Most of the Partisans who fought in the battle for Lerin were new recruits and inexperienced fighters. Most of the force was made up of Macedonian men and women under Greek leadership. The Partisan command hesitated when it was time to launch the offensive, thus giving the enemy extra time to prepare its defenses. The hesitation demoralized the Partisan combatants who were not prepared for the prolonged outdoor winter cold.

A cursory analysis of developments prior to the Lerin assault and a post-mortem of the aftermath led to one inescapable conclusion. The assault on Lerin was designed to destroy the Macedonian Partisan force. By offering the Lerin offensive instead of surrendering, the Partisan leadership "sacrificed its own force". By accident or by design the assault on Lerin contributed to the demise of many Macedonian fighters and to the mass exodus of the Macedonian population. Many believe that the Greek civil war succeeded in "ethnically cleansing" the Macedonian people, where many years of assimilation had failed.

Fearing reprisal from the advancing Greek army, in August 1949 waves of refugees left their homes and went to Albania to save themselves. When the war was over Greece did not want them back. As a result they were sent to Eastern Block countries that were willing to take them.

Years later some tried to return but Greece (act L-2) would not allow it. Even innocent Macedonians, who did not participate in the conflict, including the evacuated refugee children, were refused entry (again act L-2). Years passed and still they were refused entry again and again. They were not even allowed to visit ailing relatives. Finally in 1985 a repatriation policy was introduced and amnesty was given but only to those of "Greek genus". This again excluded the Macedonians.

As the Macedonian terrain was rained upon by bombs from the air and from cannon fire, the frightened Macedonian people, mostly old men and women and mothers with young children, took with them whatever they could carry and left their homes for the safety of the mountains. From there they were told to go to Albania and meet up with their relatives.

"One such group left the village of Kolomnati and was headed down the mountain towards Rula when it was spotted by a young Greek officer. The young man immediately telephoned his general and informed him of the situation. 'Should we intercept?' inquired the young officer. 'No, let the troublemakers go, we don't want them here,' replied the old general." (Story told by the general's assistant who asked to remain anonymous)

When the Greek Army broke the Lerin Front the Partisan force that survived the onslaught fled for Albania. The fighters closest to the city were captured and imprisoned. Those who confessed to having voluntarily joined the Partisans were all executed. The others were either exiled in the Greek Islands or released after serving their sentences in local jails.

In its pursuit of the fleeing Partisans, the Greek Army managed to cut off the escape route of a group of Partisans who were manning the cannons and artillery fire at Bigla (the cannons after the war were put on display in the city of Lerin). Being unable to flee to Albania, the Bigla group attempted to cross into Yugoslavia near Prespa Lake. At the Yugoslav border they were stopped by the Yugoslav army, which agreed to allow them passage only if they voluntarily disarmed. Expecting to continue the war from Albania, the Partisans were reluctant to disarm and chose a different escape route. Unfortunately, they attempted their escape during the daytime and were spotted by the Greek Air Force. Many were killed by machinegun fire from above and some drowned attempting to swim across Lake Prespa. Only a small group made it to Albania.

When they arrived in Albania, to cover for their own blunders, the leaders of the Bigla group concocted stories claiming that Tito's forces attacked them and would not allow them entry into Yugoslavia. Later the same men changed their stories and told the truth about what happened. Unfortunately by then Greek Partisan and Yugoslav relations had deteriorated. Even though Yugoslavia was one of EAM's strongest supporters, the Greek Partisans used this story in their propaganda campaigns to discredit Tito in the eyes of the Soviet Union.

When the Greek Civil War was over the Partisan leadership assembled in the abandoned Italian camp of Bureli, Albania, to assess what went wrong and why they lost the war. After some deliberation they came to the conclusion that it was Tito and Macedonian collaboration that sabotaged the war effort. The failure was blamed on the Macedonian Partisan leadership for co-operating with Tito's Partisans. Seven of the most loyal Macedonian leaders were accused of sabotage and sentenced to death. Fortunately Enver Hodzha (Albania's highest State Leader) did not want

atrocities committed in his country and would not allow the executions to take place. The men and women were taken to the Soviet Union, tried for treason and sentenced to life imprisonment, to be served in the prison camps of Siberia. After Stalin's death Khrushchev re-opened their cases and found the people innocent of all charges and released them.

After the Greek Civil War was over life in Aegean Macedonia was no longer the same. The smaller villages were evacuated (some permanently) and the people were relocated to the larger towns under the watchful eye of the Greek police. The familiar joy and laughter that once filled the streets was gone and the streets were barren of children. The proud Macedonian people, who only a few years before had reveled in life, were once again joyless.

Evacuation and Expulsion of the Macedonian Refugee Children from Greece

The idea of evacuating the children was proposed by a sympathetic group of young men and women at a Youth Conference in 1947 in Belgrade, Yugoslavia. The escalating conflict in the Greek Civil War posed a threat to the civilian population, which was a concern for the "progressive youth". Although they couldn't do anything for the civilian adults who were needed to support the war effort, there was a way to help the children. They proposed a temporary evacuation whereby the children would be sent out of the country to pursue their education in safety, with the intent of being returned once the conflict ended. Although it was a good idea, the Greek Communist Party (KKE) saw no immediate need for such a plan and as a result it didn't give it much support. Partisan General Markos Vafiadis saw merit in the proposal because he believed that the conflict would escalate and concentrate in western Aegean (Greek occupied) Macedonia. He was, at the time, responsible for the defense of parts of western Macedonia that included the territories of the Lerin region and parts of Kostur and Voden regions. In 1947 the Partisans were at their peak strength and, with the exception of the large cities, were in control of all territories in western Aegean Macedonia.

When the Greek Government began to use heavy artillery and aerial bombardment, the idea quickly gained KKE support and the "save the children" program was born. Before the program was put into action it gained approval from the Macedonian Liberation Front, the Women's Antifascist Front and the Red Cross. The host countries, willing to look after the children, were contacted to gain their approval and information campaigns were begun to inform the people about the program. The district and village organizations were also asked to participate and were eventually given the responsibility of organizing and implementing the actual evacuations.

When the authorities in the Greek Government found out about the "save the children" program they initiated their own so-called "pedomazoma" (collect the children) campaign. The Greek army upon capturing Macedonian villages was ordered to evacuate the children, by force if necessary. After being gathered at various camps the children were eventually sent to the Greek Island of Leros. There they were enrolled in schools to study religion and became wards of the Greek Queen, Fredericka.

After the conclusion of the Greek Civil War (1951-52) some children from the “pedomazoma” were returned to their homes in Macedonia. Most, especially those whose parents were killed or fled the country as refugees, became wards of the Greek State and remained in dormitories until adulthood. All the children who remained at Leros were completely Hellenized and were never heard from again.

The Leros camps became active again after 1952, this time with children who had returned from the “save the children” program from Eastern Block countries. As a result of Red Cross intervention some children were allowed to return home. Unfortunately the Greek authorities collected them and sent them to the camps in Leros where they were kept until the fall of 1959 before they were released.

Pressure from the community prompted organizers of the "save the children" program to expedite the evacuation process to stop the "Burandari" (nickname for Greek Government soldiers and policemen) from taking more children.

The evacuations carried out by the Partisans were done strictly on a voluntary basis. It was up to the child's parents or guardians to decide whether the child was to be evacuated or not. No child was ever evacuated by force or without consent, but fear and peer pressure were certainly motivating factors. The evacuation zones were selected based on the severity of the conflict and the degree of danger it posed to the children. Central command organizers decided on the selection criteria and qualifications for which children were to be evacuated. The lists included all children between the ages of two and fourteen as well as all orphans, disabled and special children. Before the evacuation was put into effect, women over the age of eighteen were enlisted from the local population and from the Partisan ranks to be trained to handle young children. Widows of fallen Partisans were also recruited as "surrogate mothers" to accompany and assist the children through the evacuation process and during their stay in the host countries.

The evacuation program began to gain momentum in early March 1948 starting with the recruitment and training of the special teachers. The actual evacuations were carried out en masse starting on March 25th through to March 30th, 1948 until all the designated villages were evacuated. Most children were transported through Yugoslavia and were sent to Hungary, Romania, Czechoslovakia and Poland. Some were evacuated through Albania and Bulgaria. As the numbers of the evacuated rose, children were also sent to East Germany and the USSR. It is

estimated that about 28,000 children in all were evacuated, most of them from northwestern Aegean Macedonia. Although smaller in number some orphans, children of Partisans and children of families who were in trouble with the Greek Government authorities were also evacuated.

When the violence in Greece subsided, parents and relatives began to inquire about repatriating their children. Those who displayed some loyalty to the Greek cause were told that their children would be allowed to return if decreed by the Greek Queen Fredericka. Unfortunately this process required connections with the local Greek authorities and a lot of money, money that most Macedonians did not have. Those considered for repatriation had to meet a number of conditions including the willingness to accept permanent Hellenization. Children from Partisan families were automatically disqualified. Those who weren't willing to change their names or weren't liked for some reason were also disqualified. As the years passed fewer children were allowed to return and requests for repatriation continued to be ignored. Parents and relatives died and still their children were not allowed to return, not even for a visit.

Macedonian generations born in Greek occupied Macedonia after the early 1950's were brought up under an atmosphere of fear, suspicion and mistrust and began to lose contact with other Macedonians even in their own neighbourhoods. Many of these Macedonians who visited Canada, Australia and the USA, found culturally thriving Macedonian Communities. The freedom of belonging to a nation without punishment allowed the Macedonians in the Diaspora to form village community organizations, regional and even national organizations like the United Macedonians who not only aspired to have a mother country like the Republic of Macedonia but wished to see a united geographical Macedonia encompassing every ethnic Macedonian from everywhere.

Macedonians, especially from Greece, visiting relatives in the Diaspora found themselves overwhelmed with feelings of what it is to be Macedonian. More recently regional organizations like "The Lerin Region Macedonian Cultural Association of Ontario" were formed to culturally bridge Macedonians living in Ontario with their compatriots living in the Lerin Region. Visitors to Canada returning to Greece brought news with them that Macedonians were alive and well in the Diaspora. Macedonians not only existed but thrived as Macedonians with their own culture, language, traditions and Church and most importantly, they were free to do so with no state obstacles.

Macedonian churches in the Diaspora were first built in the early 1960's and since then have served as bastions of Macedonian unity and culture.

Although still restricted from speaking their language and practicing their culture, ethnic Macedonians in Greece and Bulgaria began to assert their rights as people first by speaking Macedonian in public and then by singing Macedonian songs at weddings and festivals. At first they could only sing and play melodies without lyrics but in time and as the numbers grew they began to add lyrics and even record songs in Macedonian.

With the imminent breakup of Yugoslavia looming over the horizon, Macedonians worldwide began to see the possibility of at last having their own State. Even the oppressed Macedonians in Greece began to feel the fervor and started to form their own movements. According to Pavle Voskopoulos, a Macedonian activist in Greece, "Vinozhito and the Macedonian activists in Greece have come a long way in the last twenty years or so since their first appearance in 1982. It was in 1982 that, for the first time since the 1940s, Macedonian songs and dances began to be openly and publicly expressed. No one would have believed that ten years later the Macedonians would have been able to organize Vinozhito. Even after Vinozhito became a political party in Greece, no one would have believed that in the next ten years it would hold its first successful congress in Solun, the heartland of Greek chauvinism. This was only possible through the hard work and perseverance of Vinozhito's membership and with the assistance of Vinozhito's European partners."

In their fight for human rights as national minorities in Greece, Bulgaria and Albania organizations such as Vinozhito, OMO Ilinden, OMO Ilinden-Pirin, Bratstvo, MIR, Prespa, MED and others began to form. To help their compatriots in the occupied Macedonian territories, human rights and other organizations began to form in the Diaspora. These organizations became the voice of the Macedonian people in the occupied territories. Initially the most active were the Detsa Begaltsi (Refugee children from the Greek Civil War) who organized worldwide and brought world attention to their plight, unfortunately without much success. Greece refused to hear their pleas and would not budge on their issues.

The Republic of Macedonia

As federal Yugoslavia began to disintegrate in the late 1980's the Macedonians in the Peoples' Republic of Macedonia sought their chance to finally create their own state. On September 8, 1991, in a referendum, 95% of eligible voters approved of a sovereign and independent Republic of Macedonia with Kiro Gligorov as its President.

The will of the people was confirmed on September 18, 1991 at the Macedonian Parliament with the declaration for acceptance of the results from the referendum.

The next important step in strengthening the state was the adoption of the Constitution on November 17, 1991, which was supplemented after the 2001 conflict and signing of the Ohrid Framework Agreement.

The internationally legal subjectivity of the state was recognized on April 8, 1993 with an acclamation of the UN General Assembly. Macedonia was admitted as the 181st full-fledged member.

Fearing that it might lose its Macedonian occupied territories, Greece was first to object to the Republic of Macedonia's independence.

Although the European Community acknowledged that Macedonia had fulfilled the requirements for official recognition, due to the opposition of Greece which was already a member of the community, the EC decided to postpone the recognition. Greece, afraid that Macedonia might put forward a historical, cultural and linguistic claim over Aegean Macedonia, insisted that the new nation had no right to use of the name "Macedonia" and use the emblem of ancient Macedonia on its flag. In July 1992 there were massive demonstrations by Macedonians in the capital Skopje over the failure to receive recognition. But despite Greek objections, Macedonia in 1993 was admitted to the United Nations under the temporary reference (not an official name) "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia". Full diplomatic relations with a number of EC nations followed, while Russia, China, Turkey, Bulgaria and most nations ignored Greece's objections and recognized Macedonia under its constitutional name "Republic of Macedonia".

Greece, dissatisfied with the results, in February 1994 imposed a trade embargo on Macedonia in an attempt to force President Gligorov to make changes to his country's name, nation and language and amend the Constitution to remove Article 47 which stipulated that "the Republic of Macedonia cares for the statue and rights of those persons belonging to the Macedonian people in neighboring countries, as well as Macedonian ex-

parties, assists their cultural development and promotes links with them." Ironically, Greece also has a similar article in its own Constitution, as is normal for any country in the world to care for its minorities in other countries.

Faced with an economic collapse and left without any support from the international community, Macedonia had no choice but to change its flag and constitution, after which Greece lifted the embargo.

In 1995 Human Rights Watch - Helsinki condemned Greece for the oppression of its ethnic Macedonian minority, which Greece denies exists. Both Amnesty International and the European Parliament urged Greece to recognize the Macedonian language and to stop oppressing ethnic Macedonians living within its borders.

Still reeling from the Greek embargo, from the internationally imposed embargo on Serbia, its traditional trading partner, and from unresolved issues with Greece, the Republic of Macedonia was faced with a new set of problems, a war at home.

Due to the conflict north of Macedonia and as a result of the NATO bombing of Serbia, an influx of war refugees numbering in the three hundred thousand entered Macedonia. This created economic as well as political strain on impoverished Macedonia which on one hand, had to cope with a 15% overnight population increase and on another with criticisms from various human rights groups for the ways it handled the refugees.

No sooner than that crisis was over, armed bands of Albanian fighters, spilled over from the Serbian conflict began to infiltrate and stir up trouble in Macedonia. In 2001 these illegal bands, first branded by the international community as terrorists and later as "freedom fighters" began to occupy camps and later villages in western Macedonia. Initially, these bands were seen as benign but as they started to assert themselves by restricting travel, kidnappings, torturing civilians and cutting off electricity and water supplies to various communities, the Macedonian police and military began to pursue them. There was an immediate backlash from the western media which, in spite of their violent acts, the Albanian band were viewed as human right fighters and the Macedonian government and its people as aggressors.

As the war raged on in western Macedonia, rumors were flying, some substantiated, that certain elements in the Macedonian government were involved in sparking the conflict in order to partition the Republic of Macedonia perhaps between Albania and Serbia, Greece or Bulgaria.

“In 1992 I came across a high-ranking NATO source in Brussels, Belgium. He revealed to me the secret plan to partition Macedonia along ethnic lines after a short war: the west would be incorporated into a Greater Albania and the left over parts would be incorporated either by Serbia or Bulgaria. I found the plan to be far-fetched when I first heard it. I thought this person was pulling my leg. But later events showed that it wasn't far-fetched.

The NATO source invited me out for drinks a number of times. He was a big vodka drinker. He must have had 5 or six when he let rip with the revelation that Macedonia's days as an independent nation were numbered. I laughed and said, ‘I agree with you unless the problem of corruption and the economy are fixed.’

‘No it's not just a matter of money,’ he said. ‘There are greater outside forces at work that you don't know about.’ He would not elaborate. He had another 5 vodkas and left. This cat and mouse game kept going for a month or two, until he let it all hang out.

He revealed in great detail how war would start in Macedonia; he named names; told me how weapons were being smuggled by ethnic Albanian insurgents into Macedonia through Kosovo and from Albania. He said a favourite supply route was through the western town of Debar, which sits on the Macedonian-Albanian border. He mentioned there were a number of mountain caves near Debar being used to hide weapons. Donkeys were being used to ferry ammunition.

But he would not tell me who was pushing for war in Macedonia. By 1993 UN peacekeepers from the UNPROFOR mission were deployed to protect Macedonia's borders. This mission later became UNPREDEP. Years later, for some crazy reason the Macedonian government recognized Taiwan and China in retaliation used its seat in the UN Security Council to stop the mission. With UN peacekeepers out of the way, the 2001 war in Macedonia began as a spill over from the Kosovo conflict of 1999.

The whole thing was mind-boggling. I remember talking to Mira, an elderly Serbian woman who was teaching the Macedonian language to Belgian children. She asked me what I was interested in writing about Macedonia. I said to her I would like to investigate the claims made by the NATO source and look into past Yugoslav communist crimes in Macedonia such as the infamous Chento show trial of 1946.

Her response was "You don't need to dig up the past nor worry about the future." I found her lack of curiosity surprising considering her ex-husband was famous Macedonian writer Meto Jovanovski, and both her

children are journalists. Son Borjan Jovanovski was a former Presidential media spokesman whilst daughter Svetlana Jovanovska is the Brussels correspondent for major newspaper Dnevnik.

One day walked into our Brussels office a fit looking man in his late 30s or early 40s. He had very short blonde hair and had a military bearing. He introduced himself as Andreas Renatus Hartmann, a Member of the European Parliament for the German political party, The Christian Democratic Union (CDU).

Mr. Hartmann invited Dr Naumovski and myself to dinner at a swanky Moroccan restaurant. The dinner went well. We talked about a wide variety of subjects but the attention inevitably turned to the Balkans. I was enjoying eating the couscous and almost choked when Mr. Hartmann said matter of fact that German Intelligence was about to open its first 'station' in Tirana, Albania since World War II, and the British were pissed off at being beaten to the punch.

I thought to myself why is this guy telling me this? He dropped more bombshells when he said that Europe, in particular Germany and France did not want an Islamic state in the Balkans namely Bosnia-Herzegovina or a Greater Albania. The German and French right wing parties wanted to strengthen Macedonia to act as a buffer state against possible Islamic fundamentalist terrorism.

I found this at odds with the NATO source's revelations. Was Macedonia caught in the cross-fire of a power play between competing European nations? What could it possibly all mean?

And why was I told this? I could only speculate and say maybe they saw me as a young and enthusiastic journalist wanting to make a name for myself who would float the information in my articles. But what they didn't count on was unbelieving newspaper editors!" (Sasha Uzunov)

A month later it was confirmed, when a force of 400 KLA (Kosovo Liberation Army) fighters was surrounded in the Village Arachinovo near the capital, Skopje. As Macedonian security forces moved in, they were halted on NATO orders. U.S. army buses from Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo arrived to remove all the heavily armed terrorists to a safer area of Macedonia.

Macedonia was forced to concede defeat and obliged to accept all the terrorist demands. When the peace treaty was signed, Lord Robertson proclaimed, "This day marks the entry of Macedonia into modern, mainstream Europe ... a very proud day for their country." (James Bisset).

This war placed great strains on Macedonia's economy and created a long lasting divide between the Macedonian and Albanian communities in Macedonia, communities that coexisted peacefully for centuries.

The western media vilified Macedonia quickly forgetting that Macedonia was the only republic to peacefully break away from Yugoslavia.

“The West has always insisted on the just principle that violence, terror, and ethnic cleansing should not pay. This principle was enforced - sometimes militarily - in Bosnia and Croatia. Yet, for tactical and political reasons, the West has made two exceptions: Kosovo, and Macedonia. In Kosovo, it rewarded a crime organization turned liberation movement (the KLA or UCK). It armed it, trained it, and transformed it into a respectable political player and partner in shaping the future and nature of Kosovo. In Macedonia, it has leaned on the democratically elected government of a sovereign country to accommodate the demands of armed terrorists, even as these terrorists continued to intimidate, murder, occupy land, and ethnically cleanse its Macedonian inhabitants. Thus, Macedonia is made to pay for the mistakes of the West in creating a monster (the KLA) that is now well out of their control (in the form of the NLA and ANA) and threatens to transform KFOR into 50,000 hostages in Kosovo.” (Sam Vaknin)

The war lasted approximately six months and officially ended with the signing of the Ohrid agreement on August 13, 2001.

“According to the Ohrid Peace Agreement, the international community was invited to support the challenging road of Macedonia from the brink of civil war in August 2001 to peace, stability and integration into Euro-Atlantic structures.

In response to a request for NATO assistance made by the Macedonian President Boris Trajkovski on June 20, 2001, this military organization drawn up the operational plan that was dedicated to the peace and stability of the Republic of Macedonia. However, NATO had imposed three conditions for its help in resolving the crisis: conclusion of political agreement between the various parties in the Republic of Macedonia, armistice linked with amnesty for the members of the so-called NLA and finally pledge of full demilitarization from the so-called NLA. Once the Macedonian political parties signed the Ohrid Peace Agreement, the way was opened for NATO's first mission in the Republic of Macedonia. The NATO military support to the Republic of Macedonia effectively commenced on August 27, 2001, with Operation Essential Harvest / Task

Force Harvest (TFH). This UK-led mission involved the rapid deployment of 4,600 Allied troops that were initiated to fulfill NATO's promise to assist the Macedonian people by collecting and destroying arms and ammunition on a voluntary basis from ethnic-Albanian extremists.

By September 14, 2001, the successful disarmament of the armed Albanians was achieved and in so doing, established the conditions for the peaceful resolution of the crisis that could well have engulfed this country. Essential Harvest succeeded in collecting and destroying 3,875 weapons over 30 days. Included were four tanks and armored personnel carriers that the so-called NLA have captured from the Macedonian security forces, 17 Strela-2M (NATO: SA-7b Grail) man-portable low-altitude air defense weapons systems, 161 anti-tank systems, 483 machine guns, 3,210 assault rifles and nearly 400,000 mines, explosives and ammunition. Because the armed insurgency was a manifestation of "discontent" among the ethnic Albanian community in the Republic of Macedonia, in accordance with the Ohrid Peace Agreement, constitutional changes have been made that are granting more rights to the ethnic Albanian minority that is 22.7 percent of the country's population of just over 2 million.

In order to prevent a rise in ethnic conflicts after the termination of the NATO Operation Essential Harvest, the Macedonian government, the EU, and the OSCE agreed that international observers should supervise the orderly return of Macedonian security forces to the areas formerly held by ethnic Albanian extremists. In order to provide additional security to the international observers, while authorities of the Republic of Macedonia had primary responsibility for their security, on September 26, 2001, NATO began restructuring Task Force Harvest (TFH) and the next day Operation Essential Harvest was replaced by Operation Amber Fox / Task Force Fox (TFF). Further democratization and improvement in human rights through the process of dialogue and reconciliation progressed significantly and the Operation Amber Fox was extended for a period of three months in March 2002 and again in July 2002.

As a result of the greatly improved security in the country, authorities of the Republic of Macedonia and NATO finally decided to bring the mission to an end on December 15, 2002. The Operation Amber Fox was of great importance for Germany because for the first time in this country's history the German Federal Armed Forces assumed leadership and logistics of a NATO military operation that was consisting of some 700 German and other NATO nation's troops."

(http://www.airserbia.com/magazin/bozinovski/eu-nato/eu-nato_in_macedonia.htm).

In regards to developments with the Macedonians in Greece, on September 8th, 1995, members of the ethnic Macedonian political party in Greece, the RAINBOW PARTY, also known as the “VINOZHITO PARTY” in Macedonian, opened an office in Lerin.

On January 19th, 1997 a Second Conference of the "RAINBOW" party was held in Lerin and was attended by 76 delegates of all local units. A Political Manifesto and Organizational Principles were adopted and a Central Council comprised of 19 members was elected.

The Central Council held its first session in Voden on January 26th, 1997, and elected a five-member Political Secretariat, an Economic Commission, an Editors' Council, etc.

In its Political Manifesto "RAINBOW" has aired its wish to cooperate with all democratic and anti-nationalist forces in the country in its struggle for peace and European integration.

The RAINBOW PARTY is a member of the European Free Alliance which has been standing up for the rights of stateless nations, peoples and regions for decades.

Other development with regards to the Macedonians in Greece includes the opening of the Greek branch of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages (EBLUL), an organization dedicated to the preservation of lesser used languages in Europe.

Across the European Union, no fewer than forty million people speak languages in their everyday lives, which are different from the official language of the state in which they are living. At present this figure represents 10% of the total European population, but shortly, with the expansion of the Union, the number of people speaking a different language from the official language of their state will be much, much greater. Greece, too, is no exception; however vigorously the state may deny it, the facts tell their own story. A by no means negligible section of the Greek population is bilingual. It is not possible to provide precise figures, since none of the censuses carried out to date has included a question on language. The one exception was the census of 1920, yet the figures it yielded for the northern regions of the country were never published.

Moreover, the long-standing policy of marginalization and suppression has succeeded, naturally enough, in reducing the actual number of those speaking the non-official languages. This hostile treatment of heteroglossy

in Greece had its beginnings in the early days of the modern Greek state, 170 years ago. In those areas of the country where Arvanitika was prevalent, every effort was made to discourage its use. There was perhaps some justification for this in the desperate efforts being made to unite the regional populations into a single Greek state, using as a means to this end a policy of homogenization of the various populations.

Macedonians, such as Nase Parisi who is currently President of the Greek branch of EBLUL, are striving to introduce the Macedonian languages into the Greek educational system.

In regards to development with the Macedonians in Bulgaria OMO Ilinden PIRIN was a political party of the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria. It was registered as a political party in 1999 and participated in municipal elections in October 1999, where it elected five local officials. However, on February 29, 2000, the Constitutional Court in Bulgaria declared OMO "Ilinden" - PIRIN unconstitutional. This was in direct violation of the right to freedom of association and the right to freedom from discrimination.

The Bulgarian government refuses to acknowledge the existence of the large Macedonian minority in Pirin Macedonia and continues to violate its basic human rights. Members and supporters of OMO Ilinden PIRIN (political party and human rights organization) and OMO Ilinden (human and minority rights organization) have been videotaped, harassed, beaten, fined, and even imprisoned simply for asserting their ethnic Macedonian identity.

In regards to current developments with the Macedonians in Albania, at the local elections held on February 18, 2007, a Macedonian from the party Macedonian Alliance for European Integration (MAEI) was, for the first time, elected as mayor. Edmond Temelko, a 36-year-old veterinarian turned politician won the mayoral position in Prespa municipality, making him the first Macedonian elected in Albania.

Macedonians in Albania are still unable to fully exercise their basic human rights such as obtain schooling in their mother tongue, using Macedonian national symbols and participation in state institutions. Macedonians fought hard to register their political party, the Macedonian Alliance for European Integration with success which is a major accomplishment for Macedonians, because they demonstrated maturity and voted for themselves. By doing so they showed the Albanian society that they are part of it and will take an active role in dealing with issues in the country.

The Prespa municipality has nine towns, inhabited mostly by ethnic Macedonians who speak their own language and foster their own cultural heritage. The Macedonian language will become the second official language and all Macedonian landmarks will be given their original names which were changed during Enver Hodza's regime.

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