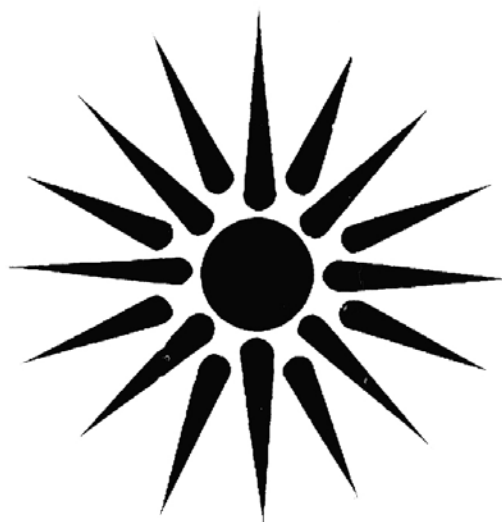


The Name Game

Greece's Objections to Macedonia's Name

A collection of Essays



By
Risto Stefov

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A collection of Essays

Published by:

Risto Stefov Publications
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Toronto, Canada

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Introduction

Allow me to be one of the first, if not the first to say that “there is no name dispute”! Macedonia has no problem with its own name, a historical name that belongs to the Macedonian people and has been with them for over three millenniums. It is Greece that has a problem! So, it is not a dispute between Macedonia and Greece but a one way dispute... Why is Greece disputing Macedonia’s name?

Well, only Greece can answer that question for sure. All we can do here is investigate the problem, gather evidence and present our findings.

But, as a Macedonian from Greece, I do know that what Greece is saying today about the name “Macedonia” is in contradiction with its past practices. In other words, for the longest part (from 1913 to 1988), Greece wanted no part of the name. In fact the word “Macedonia” or the “M” word, as some had referred to it, was a dirty word in Greece. Now that the Macedonian people want to use it, Greece says they can’t have it because it exclusively belongs to Greece.

Well, if we are to call it for what its is, Greece, since before 1913, before it even acquired 51% of Macedonian lands illegally and by force, as far as the Macedonian people are concerned, wanted everything Macedonian, including the Macedonian nation, wiped out and removed from the face of the earth. Yes, Greece wanted and still wants everything Macedonian to be erased!

Fortunately there are laws in this world and no one can do whatever they want and not face severe consequences; Greece included. So how does one get rid of Macedonia and of the Macedonian people and getaway with it? Easy! Make sure what is done is nice and legal! Disputing Macedonia’s name is legal and if Greece succeeds in blackmailing Macedonia into change its name then Greece will be one step closer in achieving its ultimate goal; get rid of the Macedonian identity forever!

Enjoy the essays...

1. How Macedonia became Greek, Serbian and Bulgarian

War and the suffering in Macedonia did not end after the failed 1903 Ilinden Macedonian National Uprising. Shortly after the Uprising was suppressed Macedonia became the apple of discord between Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria and to some extent Romania.

Unable to free itself from the Ottoman yoke, Macedonia became ripe for the plucking and whoever was able to muster enough strength and resources to drive out the Ottomans would have it in their possession. At that time Macedonia's neighbours knew they could not possess Macedonia without the cooperation of the Macedonian people, so first they tried their luck at "convincing" the Macedonians that they were not "really" Macedonians but "Greeks", on account of them being Orthodox Christians. Or they were "Serbians" on account of them supposedly speaking an "Old Serbian" language. Or "Bulgarians" because they supposedly spoke a dialect of the "Bulgarian" language and of course "Romanians" because many were Vlachs and spoke a dialect of "Romanian".

Failing to convince the Macedonian people "that they were not Macedonians" by propaganda alone, the four then resorted to using violence through the application of illegal armed bands. However, in addition to serving their masters by doing their bidding and murdering those who refused their will, these bands, consisting mostly of thugs, also served themselves by robbing, raping, beating and murdering innocent civilians.

Now in addition to the dastardly deeds performed by the Ottoman army and the Bashibazuks (armed Muslim civilians), there were Greek, Serbian, Bulgarian and Romanian armed bands roaming the Macedonian countryside preying on the Macedonian people.

The Ottoman authorities knew about them and so did the international peace keeping forces stationed in Macedonia but they did nothing to help the Macedonian population.

Unable to turn the general Macedonian population into Greeks, Serbians, Bulgarians, or Romanians to their satisfaction, by severe methods the four began to open more Greek, Serbian, Bulgarian and

Romanian churches and schools in Macedonia, offering Macedonian children “free education” but not in the Macedonian language. Education was offered in the Greek, Serbian, Bulgarian, or Romanian language respectively. Unfortunately, along with the so-called “free education” came a heavy dose of foreign propaganda. Along with their “free education” children and young adults were also offered a glamorous lifestyle, something their families in the village could not give them. Being “educated” and convinced that they would be more cultured and better off as Greeks, Serbians, Bulgarians, or Romanians these children were then sent back home to “convince” others and also turn them into Greeks, Serbians, Bulgarians or Romanians.

Many of these “educated children”, as young adults, became the new teachers and priests in the Macedonian village churches and schools. In addition to preaching and teaching they also unwittingly helped Macedonia’s enemies get a foothold in Macedonia. Those young adults who found their way back to who they really were or switched loyalties usually ended up dead because their benefactors could not tolerate traitors; a tradition Greeks practice to this day.

Almost the entire Macedonian population during these times, particularly in the villages, was uneducated and could not read or write. So, many people relied on the village teacher or village priest to help them with administrative matters and filling out travel forms etc. And while they were doing a public service for their illiterate, fellow villagers these teachers and priests were doing their benefactors a favour by registering the Macedonians as Greeks, Serbians, Bulgarians, or Romanians with a Greek, Serbian, Bulgarian, or Romanian sounding name depending on who was their benefactor. That is why Macedonians who traveled abroad during the late 19th century and early 20th century, before Macedonia was partitioned, had Greek, Serbian, Bulgarian, or Romanian sounding names. These names which exist to this day can be found in the United States, Canada and other places outside of Macedonia where Macedonians immigrated during Ottoman times.

Macedonians were never Greeks, Serbians, Bulgarians, Romanians, or Albanians. They were simply made to look like that for “political” reasons which became obvious after Macedonia was

illegally invaded, occupied, partitioned and annexed by Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria in 1912 and 1913.

Looking at this another way, there are many Greeks, Serbians, Bulgarians, Romanians and Albanians today who not too long ago had Macedonian ancestors!

In all this there was one organization which cared for the Macedonian population and fought to correct the injustices perpetrated and that was the Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (MRO). Unfortunately because the MRO was a great threat to Greek, Serbian, Bulgarian and Romanian ambitions in Macedonia its members were hunted down and killed. In addition to killing off its members, the various factions, particularly the Bulgarians, made attempts to infiltrate the MRO and pose as patriotic Macedonians. This caused much internal strife and mistrust, which is felt to this day in modern Macedonian organizations. I must also add that even though the 19th and 20th centuries are now in the past, Macedonia's enemies have not ceased their attempts to infiltrate Macedonian organizations. So who can blame the Macedonians for being overly suspicious?

Greek political aims in Macedonia

Greek propaganda in Macedonia began in June 1903 when Greek military officers, Pavlos Melas and Georgios Tzontas, began to hire illegal armed bands and dispatch them in Macedonia to create havoc and spread "Greater" Greek propaganda. Immediately after the August 1903 Ilinden Uprising, the secretary of the Greek consulate in Bitola, Ion Dragoumis, established a secret Greek committee to work towards the assimilation of the Macedonian people and the annexation of Macedonia to Greece. Around about the same time the Greek bishop of Kostur, Germanos Karavangelis, created an illegal armed band. In the beginning of March 1904 two Greek armed bands were created in Thessaly. Six new illegal armed Greek bands in total were created and dispatched to operate in Macedonia.

Then in the fall of 1904 the Hellenic - Macedonian committee was formed in Athens whose job was to finance the Macedonian campaign and spread Greek propaganda in Macedonia. Most of the

manpower for these illegal armed bands was hired from newly annexed Crete and manned by Greek officers.

Of all the illegal armed bands that operated in Macedonia, the Greek bands most closely cooperated with the Ottoman army and in many instances carried out missions for the Ottomans.

The goals and objectives of the Greek armed bands operating in Macedonia were regulated by a Rulebook entitled “General Instructions for the Macedonian Bands”, especially created for this purpose by the Hellenic-Macedonian Committee. The Rulebook contained three main points: 1. destroy the MRO insurgency and replace it with a Greek one; 2. eliminate all those who worked against the Greek cause; 3. convince the entire Macedonian population to join the Greek Patriarchate.

Macedonian intellectuals and leaders responded to the “Greater” Greek propaganda with appeals to the Greek population not to support the illegal armed bands in Macedonia and to oppose Hellenism, their mutual usurper.

Supported by the Sultan himself, the illegal armed Greek bands escalated their persecution of the Macedonian insurgency and of prominent intellectuals. In the eyes of the Macedonian population the entire MRO was labeled “Bulgarophile”, a false claim which is spread to this day.

According to Richard Oppenheimer, an Austrian civilian agent sent to Macedonia on April 18, 1908 who dispatched information to Aloys Aehrenthal of the Austrian-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Greek bands in Macedonia killed 531 and wounded 175 people in the period from March 14, 1906 to March 14, 1908. According to the same information, MRO insurgents fought 12 battles with the Greek bands in the period from October 26, 1904 to June 27, 1905 in Voden Region alone. From January to October 1905, MRO insurgents fought 22 battles with the illegal Greek armed bands that had infiltrated Macedonia and 3 battles with locally hired Greek bands. Most battles took place in the Kostur, Kajlari, Drama, Lerin, Bitola and other Regions of southern Macedonia.

Greek-Ottoman cooperation contributed immensely to the Greek campaign in Macedonia and as the Greek armed bands kept growing the number of Macedonian insurgents kept dwindling.

Serbian political aims in Macedonia

Serbian propaganda activities in Macedonia began before the 1903 Ilinden Uprising. In fact the foundations for Serbia's Macedonian campaigns were laid in 1902 when a dedicated Committee for carrying out propaganda activities in Macedonia was established in Belgrade. Illegal Serbian armed bands began to infiltrate Macedonia while the Ilinden Uprising was still going on. In 1904 the number of Serbian armed bands operating in Macedonia increased significantly, especially in Ovche Pole, Azot and Poreche.

The Serbian sponsored armed bands in Macedonia also operated according to a Rulebook which listed the Serbian goals and objectives in Macedonia. According to the Rulebook Serbia's main goal in its campaigns in Macedonia was to minimize MRO influence on the Macedonian population by eliminating its leaders and insurgents. While doing this the Serbian armed bands were to avoid contact and conflict with the Ottoman authorities, including the army and police. These goals and objectives were regulated by Articles 17, 18 and 32 of the Rulebook.

In order to achieve their goals the Serbian armed bands, like the Greek and Bulgarian ones, used terror tactics including robbing and torturing the Macedonian population. Almost every village had agents and collaborators who supported the illegal armed bands by offering them intelligence information, food and sanctuary.

Many Macedonian intellectuals tried to persuade the Macedonians, who were recruited by these bands in various functions, not to offer the foreigners assistance and to stop fighting amongst themselves, but without much success. There were many letters written to that effect which clearly demonstrated that Macedonia's neighbours deliberately intensified fratricidal fighting and self-extermination in Macedonia. Their goal was to create conflict among the Macedonian

people, invade and partition their country and destroy the essence of the Macedonian nation, as events proved true over time.

Bulgarian political aims in Macedonia

Immediately after the 1903 Ilinden Uprising was suppressed, Bulgaria officially refused to bear responsibility for the dire events created in Macedonia. But the Macedonian Question remained a part of Bulgarian foreign policy. Besides being supported by pro-Bulgarian factions within the Macedonian Liberation Movement, at the beginning of 1905, the Bulgarian government created a second political department within its own Ministry of Foreign Affairs with a single objective; to deal with the Macedonian Question. The long term goal of this department was to overcome all factors that hindered Bulgarian influence in Macedonia and work towards giving Macedonia autonomy as a Bulgarian protectorate. Other goals included waging war against all who got in the way including those promoting foreign propaganda in Macedonia. Bulgaria's first priority was to infiltrate the MRO, kill off its leaders, insurgents and supporters and replace them with Bulgarian agents. This was to be accomplished through the assistance of the Bulgarian Exarchate churches and schools in Macedonia, which were financed and politically supported by the Bulgarian state and its various governments of that time.

2. Making Sense of the Modern Greek Mentality

As a Macedonian born in Greece I am well aware of Greece's denials of the existence of the Macedonian identity and language, something that has existed since Greece occupied and annexed Macedonian lands in 1912, 1913. I have enough examples in my own experience alone, to fill a book. Greeks did not only deny our existence but did everything in their power to discourage us from wanting to be who we are, Macedonians. Macedonians have been beaten, fed castor oil, slapped around, fined and even jailed for speaking Macedonian, the only language they knew. Macedonians have been jailed in concentration camps and even killed for having the courage to say that they were Macedonian.

The only place we, the Macedonians from Greece, could openly speak Macedonian and declare that we are ethnic Macedonians, was in the Diaspora, away from Greece. There too we were challenged and are continued to be challenges by Greeks with the infamous words "then iparhi tetio prama" (such a thing does not exist)!

Following are two articles that speak about the "Greek attitude" towards the Macedonians;

Wikileaks: Pangalos on Macedonia

<http://www.thepressproject.gr/cableg....php?id=109719>

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 000213 SIPDIS SIPDIS E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/14/2018 TAGS: PGOV, PREL, GR SUBJECT: CONTRARIAN FORMER FM PANGALOS ON MACEDONIA, EDUCATION REFORM, PASOK POLITICS Classified By: AMBASSADOR DANIEL SPECKHARD. REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

1. (C) In a cordial introductory meeting with Ambassador, former PASOK Foreign Minister (1996-1999) Theodoros Pangalos -- known during his tenure at the MFA for a sharp tongue and undiplomatic approach -- said he thought the name issue between Greece and Macedonia was "ridiculous" and a "disaster from the beginning." Now that the Republic of Macedonia had been created,

he argued, the Macedonians should be allowed to use whatever name they wished. Indeed, Greece should be honored by Macedonia wanting to use the name.

As for Greek fears of irredentism, these too were "ridiculous" and stemmed from the Greek right's memories of the civil war and fears of communist forces coming into Greece from the Slavic countries. As for the way out of the current impasse, Pangalos said the U.S. should not worry about Greece blaming the U.S. for not solving the problem (though he offered no reason to back up the assertion).

He said he thought the Nimetz proposal was a reasonable approach and noted that he had told FM Bakoyannis that PASOK would not "exploit the issue." PASOK would criticize the government for its handling but would not manipulate the substance of the issue to Greece's detriment.

2. (C) On education reform, Pangalos took a similarly maverick view. In contrast to his party's opposition to the ND government's efforts to change Greek law to allow private higher educational institutions, Pangalos said everyone knew the current system of public universities in Greece was "b.s." and that private institutions should be recognized. He noted that even his leftist professor second wife (he has been married three times and said his personal life was a "disaster") refused to send their son to a Greek university, opting instead to send the boy to the UK. He said Greece was number three in the world (after India and China) in terms of the number of students it exported. But the Greek left -- including his own party -- had hitched itself to the policy of opposing private universities. Particularly guilty was the Synaspismos party, which had taken a demagogic approach to the issue and was just inflaming the situation.

3. (C) Finally, Pangalos offered an assessment of the current political situation in Greece and the PASOK party's fortunes. He asked rhetorically why PASOK was doing so poorly even though, as opposition, its fortunes should be rising as the government increasingly got into trouble. Pangalos attributed PASOK's slide, first, to changing economic conditions. Since joining the EU, Greece had seen rapid economic growth, which created and benefited the

middle class, making them wary of changing political leadership. At the same time, the government -- beginning under PASOK PM Simitis -- had to limit deficit spending in line with EU rules. This hurt pensioners, new graduates, and others on the lower end of the economic ladder who were a natural PASOK constituency but were angered by what they perceived to be PASOK's complicity in cutting government support. PASOK also suffered from poor leadership and poor leadership decisions. George Papandreou was honest and direct, but he was a poor communicator and not a leader. At the same time, PASOK was doing a bad job in pitching itself to voters, who perceived PASOK and ND as the same. From that perspective, Pangalos argued, Greek voters saw little reason to bother switching governments.

4. (C) COMMENT: Pangalos avoided the sharp language that characterized his statements as FM, but he was not shy in taking positions at variance with his party and, indeed, most of the Greek political establishment. Our conversations with Greeks indicate that a very small percentage would agree with Pangalos on the Macedonia name issue. The overwhelmingly more common position is one of opposition to compromise. And Pangalos is unlikely to voice in public the opinions he voiced with us.

SPECKHARD

Macedonian Name for the Macedonians Only

By J.S.G. Gandeto

Greeks have nothing to do with the name "Macedonia".

As a matter of fact, until the late nineteen eighties in Greece, the name "Macedonia" or "Macedonians" was avoided like the plague; To the Greeks Macedonia did not exist. There was no Macedonia and there were no Macedonians. They felt that the ethnic cleansing of the ethnic Macedonians living in Greece was successful; the repopulation of Macedonia with recently transplanted Christians from Asia Minor was completed and the eradication of anything Macedonian from the newly acquired territory of Macedonia was an accomplished fact. Gleefully, they must have concluded that this

subject was dead and buried and there was no reason to dwell on this topic anymore.

I remember visiting a restaurant in Windsor, Canada in the late nineteen seventies, where we met a patron who was quite cordial and pleasant fellow at first, but as soon as we revealed our identity as Macedonians, this fellow abruptly became indignant; his facial expression changed and you could tell that he was brewing with anger inside and was visibly quite disturbed. He hurriedly got up, bolted towards the exit and as he was leaving the restaurant shouted: "there is no Macedonia; there are no Macedonians."

This illustrates that Greeks before the break up of Yugoslavia felt quite comfortably secured in the notion that Aegean Macedonia [Greek occupied Macedonia] was fully Hellenized and the file on "Macedonia" securely wrapped up and locked up inside their national archives. And as long as the other "Macedonia" (in the Yugoslav federation) was under the firm control of their 1912-13 partners in crime, the Serbs, they believed that they had nothing to fear about. The fact that one of the sixth constitutive republics of Yugoslavia was called "Macedonia" and her inhabitants called themselves Macedonians did not register any alarm in the Greek government. But as soon as the break up of Yugoslavia was imminent and the Greeks learned that Macedonia will become a separate country, they fetched an idea that the name "Macedonia" belongs to them and the real ethnic Macedonians cannot use it. Taking advantage of the difficulties and the precariousness of the position in which the Republic of Macedonia found itself, Greeks embarked on a campaign to prove to the world that the name "Macedonia" exclusively belongs to them since the ancient Macedonians, who conquered and enslaved Greece for centuries, became not just "Hellenes" but the champions of Hellenism overnight. The Republic of Macedonia, regrettably, did not put up a serious challenge to this Greek charade. Thus, Greeks, now emboldened by their initial success proceeded to push further. Desiring to destabilize the country to the point of disintegration, they imposed economic embargo hoping for administrative collapse of the country through economic strangulation. The fact that neither the ancient Greeks nor the ancient Macedonians ever considered each other as brethren was lost to them.

The fact that their own Greek 19th century historiographers rightly excluded the ancient Macedonians from the Hellenes and considered them as conquerors of Greece was dismissed in favor of the new political thinking that "Macedonians" and "Macedonia" were always Greek. Whence, we must ask ourselves the following: (a) why this sudden and highly speculative shift in Greek thinking (b) what is the reasoning behind such a highly unusual, politically unethical, conventionally immoral and historically unprecedented Greek request of the Republic of Macedonia to change its name and (c) do they think that the writings of the ancient chroniclers can be cooked and manipulated like they cooked and manipulated their financial disclosures to the EU?

Why all of a sudden were Greeks awakened with a desire to be called "Macedonians"? Why, indeed? Why go against their previously held 19th century position where they viewed the ancient Macedonians as people of a different nationality quite separate from the Hellenes? Why disrespect their own "Greek sons" who felt that Macedonians were a separate ethnic group of people who conquered Greece and did not share in the richness of the Hellenic nation? Why dismiss the works of their earlier Greek nation builders and historiographers like Paparrigopoulos, Gregorios Paljuritis, Iambros Antonijadis, Koubourlis, Politis, Oimaras? Why go against the proclamation of their first Greek President Yannis Kapodistria who called for a sovereign and independent Macedonian State? Why instead of "occupied territory" as King Georgios I called the Aegean Macedonia (which the Greeks received from the west as a gift, as payment for their services as bulwark against the "communists' advances" from the east), today they claim that Macedonia was always Greek?

For many people this issue about the name is a trivial and unimportant thing deserving neither time nor attention. For us, though, the ethnic Macedonians, it is of a pivotal importance. It is of pivotal importance because the name issue is just the tip of the iceberg. Underneath its apparent, innocuous name change demanded by the Greeks, lurk hosts of venomous implications with calamitous consequences for all Macedonians. The Greek plan envisions and hopes to accomplish the following objectives: (1) eradication of our

existence as people, (2) obliteration of our identity as Macedonians and (3) annihilation of anything Macedonian, including, most importantly, our Macedonian language. This is a well planned, methodically prepared and systematically executed Greek plan of action employed since 1913. With the acquisition of Macedonia, after the Balkan Wars, the Greek government embarked on Hellenizing the newly acquired territory. Willy-nilly, the population of ethnic Macedonians had to conform to the envisioned Greek doctrine -"they must be made Greeks" and so the brutal policy of forced assimilation began in earnest, sparing neither the rod nor the hand. This in effect is but a continuation of that policy.

The Greek "good neighborly behavior", preached by today's Greek politicians, is nothing short of a poisonous libation offered through and supported by the actions of the naive European bureaucrats and corrupt, forked-tongued politicians.

Let it be known that Greeks' objective is not the change of the Macedonian name.

The name is just the staging ground for their sinister attack on the ethnic Macedonians. It is the attack on (a) the Republic of Macedonia because of its citizens who claim and identify themselves as ethnic Macedonians and (b) it is an attack on the ethnic Macedonians who currently live in Greece. These people, these ethnic Macedonians who endured decades of persecution, state sponsored assimilation and persistent, degrading humiliation in the hands of the Greek authorities, have recently awakened and started to assert their identity as ethnic Macedonians. This is the crux of the matter. This is what Greece fears the most.

But Greece will not be in this position if not supported by some European nations. Some of these nations who support Greece in this irrational demand about the name of the Republic of Macedonia (there are 129 nations in the world who have no problem calling Macedonia by its constitutional name), have done it because of economic advantage. Greece has obliged to buy huge amounts of French weaponry and expensive German-built submarines for exchange of their support. Too bad that the forged financial reports on Greek economy got entangled in a web of perennial lies and

fabrications and did not pass the test. Greece's late engagement with communist China did not raise an eyebrow in the west either. Fact is that the massive financial help and political support Greece has received from the western countries in the past one hundred or so years, was, strictly speaking, because of her stand against the communists. The hypocrisy of these western European bureaucrats is overwhelming: they criticize other countries about human rights violations but remain conspicuously silent on Greece.

What puzzles me the most, though, are their constant deflections of the truth: instead of saying that Macedonia's accession into the European Union is delayed because of the Greek veto, they say that Macedonia's entry into the union hinges on the name problem. We have no problem with the name; 129 other nation in the world, among which are Canada, USA, China, Russia, India, just to name a few, have no such problem. Do the math; how many billions of people have no such problem? The problem is not the name of Republic of Macedonia but the Greek veto. Stop hiding behind your finger. Stop being a dull, unimaginative and recalcitrant pencil pusher. If you represent Europe and claim that you uphold all the conventions on human rights issues, then, stand up and be counted.

Do not be a hypocrite. Do not close your eyes on countries that implement bigoted policies and exhibit racist behavior. Nothing diminishes your integrity more than a hypocritical stand on important human rights issues. A wise man once said: pray not to be stronger than your brother but to fight the demons within you. Yes, the demons within us. That's the gist of the problem.

I couldn't agree with you more Joe and thank you for allowing me to use segments of your book in my articles.

So, after all that has been said and done, should we still be “negotiating” our country’s name with the Greeks?

J.S.G. Gandeto’s book “The Theft of a King Who Stole Alexander” is available through;

<http://www.outskirtspress.com/thetheftofaking>

This is a book that every Macedonian needs to own and must read. Since I purchased it I could not put it down.

J.S.G. Gandeto was born in Lubojno, Macedonia. Educated at Ss Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje, Republic of Macedonia. He immigrated to United States and continued his studies at Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan and Nova South-Eastern University in Fourth Lauderdale, Florida where he received his post graduate degrees. He recently completed his 29th year as an educator and has since retired and is continuing to pursue his passion in writing. In 2002 he published his first book Ancient Macedonians - Differences between Ancient Macedonians and the Ancient Greeks. In 2005 he published the romantic novels One Golden Ray upon the Rock and in 2007, The Wolves of Trappers Bluff.

In the Macedonian Language he has published the following novels: Spasa's Light in 2004, Saraf in 2009 and Rosamarina's Grave in 2010. Book of poems Muabeti in 2003, poemata Ko Jagne in 2005 and Majka -Egejka in 2009. Currently, he is preparing for publication his latest novel Folded Impressions.

3. The Name Game – Winners and Losers

One and a half decades later and no end to the name game between Macedonia and Greece. With more than 120 countries recognizing Macedonia with the name “Macedonia” it would appear that the Macedonians are winning. But what are they winning? The name which they already own?

The real winners of this game are the Greeks. Greece concocted the name game to stall the Republic of Macedonia from gaining its rightful place in the world and from joining international organizations and so far has succeeded but to what end?

In the end Macedonia may win the name game but on its way there it has lost many opportunities like entering NATO a decade ago, joining the EU five years ago, bringing stability to the region and attracting foreign investment years ago; assets which the country desperately needs to get out of its economic and security rut.

November 1, 2007 the “big day” for “final decisions” has come and gone with no decision on the name game. It appears no side is willing to budge; so what’s next?

I can understand why Macedonia wants to be called Macedonia and why Macedonia is caught in this position of having to “negotiate” for something “non-negotiable” but what I can’t understand is why Greece is so bent on forcing Macedonia to change its name?

All reasons to date given by Greece for this fixation don’t amount to a hill of beans so what is the real reason for this insistence? Greece has its own name “Greece” or “Hellas”, a name which it chose for itself which identifies it with its past. Macedonia has no other name to historically identify with so I can understand why it is fighting to keep it.

When Greece wrote its national myth about itself it left no room for the Macedonians, even though hundreds of thousands of its citizens felt Macedonian.

Mistakes were made on both sides. Macedonians made the mistake of agreeing to negotiate over something “non-negotiable” but I can

understand why. This agreement was made under duress when Greece imposed an economically crippling embargo on Macedonia demanding that Macedonia agree to this; “or else”! If given a choice of starving and freezing to death over “negotiating your name” which would you choose?

Greece on the other hand, picked this fight because it was sure it would win but surprise, surprise the world did not give in to Greek temper tantrums.

Greece may want to continue to play this game, may even want to up the stakes by getting involved in Macedonian affairs through outsiders or even through its neighbours, but Greece by now should have realized that when you pick a fight chances are you are likely to receive a few punches back or you may even lose the fight altogether. Also, one who picks a fight is less likely to receive sympathy from those watching.

Macedonia will join NATO as Macedonia because of its current contribution to NATO and because Macedonia has proven to be a loyal and reliable ally, an asset to NATO, something that Greece once was. So how long will Greece play the “name” card and what is Greece prepared to lose over it? Only Greece knows!

4. Macedonia and Greece – Not about ancient History! It's all about Human Rights

Macedonia is an ancient land with a unique and separate history from Greece that stretches back a thousand years before Christ. Best known of Macedonia is King Philip II who conquered the Ancient City States, expanded Macedonia's territory, unified the various tribes he conquered to the north and east and made great political, economic and military strides transforming Macedonia from an ordinary state into a super power. Then his son Alexander the Great made Macedonia into a great empire spanning from Eastern Europe to the western borders of China.

Macedonia like all Balkan states is also a land overrun by conquerors, adventurers and colonists including the Romans, Byzantines and Ottomans who dominated it for many centuries but could not erase its autochthonous name which has survived to this day.

Ever since Macedonia fell into Roman hands the Macedonian people have struggled to free themselves but never harder than in 1903 when the entire Macedonian nation rose against the Ottoman occupier in a glorious but disastrous fight. Failing to gain their independence, Macedonians fell prey to their ambitious neighbours the Greeks, Serbians and Bulgarians who in 1912 under the guise of liberation sent their armies to invade Macedonia. Then with the help of the Macedonian people they expelled the Ottomans but instead of liberating Macedonia they occupied it and fought one another for a greater piece of it.

The war between Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria ended with the 1913 Treaty of Bucharest. In spite of protests from the Macedonian people the three partitioned Macedonia into three pieces and annexed it for themselves.

Accordingly Greece took the lion's share of: 35.169 sq. kilometers (51%); the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes retained 25.774 sq. kilometers (39%); and Bulgaria was allowed to take, after minor revision, 6.798 sq. kilometers (10%).

During World War II (1941-1945) the Macedonian people in the entire geographical region of Macedonia took part in the anti-fascist coalition under the promise from the Atlantic charter that “all nations who take part in the struggle against fascism shall choose their own form of government and shall be afforded means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries, and which will afford assurance that all people in all lands may live out their lives in freedom”.

Only Yugoslavia kept its promise and allowed the creation of a Macedonian Republic within the framework of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia. Greece and Bulgaria ignored their promises and after the conflict they resumed their claims that Macedonians don't exist and as such refused to recognize the ethnic Macedonian minorities living in their respective states.

With the disintegration of Yugoslavia in the late 1980's, the Republic of Macedonia, through a referendum, declared its independence and in 1991 became a sovereign and independent state. The Macedonians in Greece and Bulgaria, on the other hand, are still not recognized and no rights have been afforded to them, not even the most basic human rights which are due to them in accordance with international norms to which Greece and Bulgaria are signatories and are obliged to uphold.

Since the Republic of Macedonia declared its independence in 1991, Greece has waged propaganda campaigns against the Macedonian people and has insisted that Macedonians not use the name “Macedonia” because the name “Macedonia” exclusively belongs to Greece. Without any shred of proof Greece is using this excuse to block the Republic of Macedonia from joining international institutions.

There is no justification or precedence for what Greece is doing because Macedonia historically never belonged to Greece.

Since the name “Macedonia” is tied to the Macedonian ethnic identity no one but the Macedonians have the right to decide what to call themselves.

Macedonia is a biblical land and has been known as Macedonia for three-thousand years since the beginning of the first millennium BC. Even though Macedonia today is divided between Greece, Bulgaria, the Republic of Macedonia and Albania, the indigenous ethnic Macedonians whose ancestors were born in Macedonia still see Macedonia, not Greece, Bulgaria or Serbia, as their homeland. All ethnic Macedonians living in Greece, Bulgaria, Albania, the Republic of Macedonia, the United States, Canada, Australia and the world over who have roots in Macedonia feel they belong to Macedonia and have the right to choose what to call their birthplace which ties them to their historic past. In other words, not Greece, not Bulgaria, not Albania, not even the Republic of Macedonia has the right to choose a name for the ethnic Macedonian people's homeland. Only the ethnic Macedonians themselves, as a whole, have that right.

The international community needs to be aware of this and of the international laws that afford the Macedonian people the right and freedom to self express and live as equals to all nations on this planet. Human rights for all Macedonians NOW!

No matter how hard Modern Greeks try to prove otherwise, the Macedonian issue with Greece today is about human rights and not about Ancient History!

5. How serious is Greece about the negotiations?

Almost twenty years have passed and Greek authorities are still blocking the Macedonian people from using the name “Republic of Macedonia” for their country.

So, on the surface it would appear that the Greeks in authority are pretty serious about the name and are hard at work “negotiating” with Macedonian authorities to find a “mutually acceptable” solution. At least that is my understanding according to an article published on January 25th, 2011 in the Macedonian online website which quotes Greece’s Prime Minister saying “I am not an optimist over the prospects for swift settlement of the name dispute with FYR Macedonia. The other side refuses to accept a name with geographical qualifier for all uses. The Greek positions and initiatives in the issue are stable and constant. We will not stop in our efforts to find a mutually acceptable solution. We have a national strategy and clearly drawn red lines,” said Papandreou while presenting the country's foreign-policy objectives.

If that were the case why then has a Greek Minister been quoted as saying something entirely different?

Here is what one of my readers sent me;

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200708/ldhansrd/text/80506-0016.htm>

Column 532 is part of an interesting Speech by Lord Robertson (former NATO General Secretary and UK Minister of Defense), somebody considered a political big hitter and the sort of person who would know exactly what happens in NATO summits. If he says Greece Vetoed Macedonia, I’d take it as certain that they did, despite what the official (public) reports said. As a Labour member he would have had direct access to the PM and Minister for Defense (two men actually in the room at the time of the veto).

http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm090326/debtext/90326-0017.htm#90326-0017.htm_snew1

Column 529. Not Lord Robertson as I wrongly remembered it, but Robert Walter MP. The Greek Defense minister he mentions could have been Spilios Spiliotopoulos, Yiannos Papantoniou or possibly (but unlikely) Akis Tsochatzopoulos. I imagine you know a lot more about Greek politicians than I do, so you would know who the more likely culprit (and private supporter of the Republic of Macedonia) is.

Either way, both documents are freely available on the Parliament website, and as such open to public scrutiny.

Yes, Greece Vetoed Macedonia FACT. Yes, senior Greek politicians don't actually care about the issue, and simply use it to score internal political points (votes) FACT.

Quoted here are the references given above;

6 May 2008 : Column 532

In the previous debate, and probably in this one as well, we will talk about the reality of what is going on. My noble friend Lady Ashton outlined a number of the areas where the common foreign policy is working and the noble Baroness, Lady Williams, mentioned a few areas where there is great potential for the future.

One experience during my time in NATO has almost disappeared from the scene. It was an insurgency in the small country of Macedonia—still obliged by the United Nations to be called the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. It was scandalously—and I say that with great deliberation—excluded from an invitation to NATO membership at the recent Bucharest summit because of an unreasonable and indefensible veto by Greece on that country, simply because it will not change its name. However, in 2001, it was beset by an insurgency and all of the agencies came together—the European Union, NATO, the OSCE, the World Bank, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the European Union's representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the noble Lord, Lord Ashdown. Everyone got involved.

Javier Solana and I went to Macedonia 11 times between March and November of that year. It got huge coverage and was the biggest story of that time. In the Times, Sir Simon Jenkins, wrote an article saying that it was an unmitigated disaster that we were getting involved in yet another Balkan swamp. The strap-line to his front-page article said, with the characteristic understatement for which Simon Jenkins is so well known, that I would not be content until the Balkans were aflame from the Adriatic to Istanbul.

However, all those agencies came together, worked together, on the ground at the highest and lowest levels. A peace plan was designed and, of course, Macedonia is now on the brink of both European Union and NATO membership. If people would like to learn a little more about it, the Royal United Services Institute has just published a small book by Mark Laity, who used to be my representative in Macedonia at the time, chronicling both what happened there and the lessons from it. It is well worth reading for those who would like to know, not about the scary prospects of European defense, but about how it works in action. I think that is of more relevance, frankly, than a lot of the scaremongering we have heard as each stage of the European integration debate has gone along.

However, I say, and I know that my successor would also say, had he been here in the House of Lords as well, that what the treaty proposes—the Berlin-plus arrangements and European defense as part of the common and foreign security policy—will strengthen and not compete with NATO. It will not duplicate NATO but provide assets that will be useful to NATO as a whole. Overall it will add to our capability as Europeans to be able to defend ourselves from the threats of the future rather than the enemies of the past.

26 Mar 2009 : Column 529

Robert Key: Will my hon. Friend share his perspective on the problem that Macedonia's name holds for the Greeks, who hold the right to block any progress for that new democracy because of the disputed name?

Mr. Walter: I thank my hon. Friend for that intervention and share his frustration about the Greek veto over Macedonia's participation

in NATO. If we can, we ought to knock some heads together. I remember being in Skopje not long ago with a former Greek Defense Minister, who as we walked into the meeting said that he could not give a stuff what they called their country, but as soon as we were in the meeting steadfastly defended the Greek line on the name. We have to move on, because such ridiculous problems—although the Turkey-Cyprus problem is not ridiculous to a Cypriot—are blocking the co-operation that is essential if we are to move forward. I understand where the political rationale for Turkey vis-a-vis the EU lies, but we all need to look at the bigger picture.

I believe Mr. Walter hit the nail on the head when he said “I remember being in Skopje not long ago with a former Greek Defense Minister, who as we walked into the meeting said that he could not give a stuff what they called their country, but as soon as we were in the meeting steadfastly defended the Greek line on the name.”

In other words the Greeks are “playing political games” with the Macedonians and not only “don’t care” about the “name” and what happens to Macedonia and the Macedonian people but at the same time hypocritically talk about “mutually acceptable solutions” and “good neighbourly relations”. What does this all mean?

According to my reader it means that the two large moderate parties in Greece almost always receive the same number of votes and are in balance and in order to “win elections” they need the support of the fringe, the nationalists and the extremists. So whichever party “panders” to the sentiments of these people usually wins the election. So, Macedonia has become a “whipping boy” for Greek politicians to score political points with Greek nationalists and extremists.

Here are some interesting links, courtesy of my reader - why wait for Athens wikileaks when UK leaks are just as informative.

[London Wikileaks Cables](#)

HMG LOOKING FORWARD TO BUILDING ON GAINS OF
NATO BUCHAREST SUMMIT

Passed to the Telegraph by WikiLeaks 9:06PM GMT 04 Feb 2011

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk:80/news/wikileaks-files/london-wikileaks/8305019/HMG-LOOKING-FORWARD-TO-BUILDING-ON-GAINS-OF-NATO-BUCHAREST-SUMMIT.html>

Ref ID: 08LONDON1017

Date: 4/9/2008 15:46

Origin: Embassy London

Classification: CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN

Destination: 08LONDON4|08LONDON845

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Tags: PREL,PGOV,NATO,EU,UK

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 001017 SIPDIS NOFORN
SIPDIS STATE FOR EUR/WE AND EUR/RPM E.O. 12958:
DECL: 04/09/2018 TAGS: PREL, PGOV, NATO, EU, UK
SUBJECT: HMG LOOKING FORWARD TO BUILDING ON
GAINS OF NATO BUCHAREST SUMMIT REF: A. LONDON
0845 B. LONDON 4/8 DAILY REPORT Classified By: Political
Counselor Rick Mills for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

1. (C/NF) According to FCO Deputy Director for Security Policy Chris Holtby, HMG shares U.S. views that the results of the NATO Bucharest Summit were better than expected going in, and looked

forward to working closely with us to move forward soon on the outcomes which fell short of expectations. At the top of the list for the UK is Macedonian accession. PM Brown was deeply disappointed that the Greeks would not move on a compromise name, and wants to re-energize UN, Brussels and bilateral processes. The UK agrees with the U.S. position that the invitation does not have to wait for another summit; it can be extended at any NAC as soon as the Greeks agree. HMG is also determined not to let the name issue interfere with Macedonian progress towards EU membership.

[London Wikileaks Cables](#)

HMG WILL CONTINUE TO ENGAGE WITH ATHENS AND SKOPJE ON MACEDONIA NAME/NATO ACCESSION ISSUE

Passed to the Telegraph by WikiLeaks 9:06PM GMT 04 Feb 2011

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/wikileaks-files/london-wikileaks/8305022/HMG-WILL-CONTINUE-TO-ENGAGE-WITH-ATHENS-AND-SKOPJE-ON-MACEDONIA-NAMENATO-ACCESSION-ISSUE.html>

Ref ID: 08LONDON1112

Date: 4/18/2008 14:00

Origin: Embassy London

Classification: CONFIDENTIAL

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Tags: PREL,NATO,EU,MK,GR,UK

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 001112 SIPDIS SIPDIS DEPT.
FOR EUR/RPM, EUR/SCE, EUR/WE E.O. 12958: DECL:
04/11/2018 TAGS: PREL, NATO, EU, MK, GR, UK SUBJECT:
HMG WILL CONTINUE TO ENGAGE WITH ATHENS AND
SKOPJE ON MACEDONIA NAME/NATO ACCESSION ISSUE
REF: STATE 40462 Classified By: Political Minister-Counselor
Maura Connelly for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C) HMG has been engaging, and will continue to engage with, senior Greek leadership to encourage Athens to be more flexible in its position on the Macedonia name issue. FCO Balkans Group Deputy Director Adam Bye said that the British Ambassador (HMA) to Greece had met with Foreign Minister Bakoyiani on April 14, stressing many of the points contained reftel. Bakoyiani's reaction showed little movement from that of the Greek position we have heard over the past few months - that it was Skopje refusing to be flexible, and that Greece has worked as hard as it could within the UN mediating process. According to Bye, Bakoyiani also added that progress was unlikely before the June 1 Macedonian elections. Bye said the FCO would summarize the points contained reftel for HMA in Athens, advise him of the other countries the USG has requested to assist, and ask him to approach the FM once again. HMA may also contact Ambassador Speckhard to discuss joint approaches to the Greek government.

2. (C) Bye underlined that HMG is as concerned as the USG about the Greece-Macedonia impasse, and its impact on the NATO Alliance and Balkan stability and in the longer term, EU unity. He shared a readout of an April 18 video conference which he attended and included representatives from UK Missions to Greece, Macedonia, NATO and the EU: the UK appreciates and will continue to support U.S. efforts to remove the Greek block on Macedonian accession to NATO; the June 1 Macedonian elections represent an additional challenge, and the UK will urge political parties on all sides not to politicize the name issue or appeal to nationalistic instincts to gain support; while the UK shares the U.S. desire that this issue be resolved within the next few weeks, it is more likely to require a "sustained push," at least until the Macedonian elections; and, the UK will lobby other EU members to

exert influence on Athens. Visit London's Classified Website:
XXXXXXXXXXXXX LEBARON

[London Wikileaks Cables](#)

**NATO MACEDONIA INVITATION: UK EFFORTS FAIL TO
MOVE ATHENS**

Passed to the Telegraph by WikiLeaks 9:05PM GMT 04 Feb 2011

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk:80/news/wikileaks-files/london-wikileaks/8305009/NATO-MACEDONIA-INVITATION-UK-EFFORTS-FAIL-TO-MOVE-ATHENS.html>

Ref ID: 08LONDON954

Date: 4/2/2008 15:29

Origin: Embassy London

Classification: CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN

Destination: 08STATE32646

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PRIORITYRUEHSQ/AMEMBASSY SKOPJE PRIORITY 0139

Tags: PREL,NATO,MK,GR,UK

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 000954 SIPDIS NOFORN
SIPDIS DEPT FOR EUR/WE, EUR/SCE AND EUR/RPM E.O.
12958: DECL: 04/01/2018 TAGS: PREL, NATO, MK, GR, UK
SUBJECT: NATO MACEDONIA INVITATION: UK EFFORTS
FAIL TO MOVE ATHENS REF: STATE 32646 Classified By:
DCM Richard LeBaron for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (C/NF) FCO Political Director Mark Lyall Grant told DCM that high-level UK intervention with Greece, including an appeal from FM Miliband to Greek FM Bakoyannis at the March 29 EU Gymnich, had failed to shift Athens off its hard-line position. Lyall Grant has been in close contact with Acting U/S Fried on this issue. The UK's view is that now that Macedonia has accepted a compromise name proposed by UN Envoy Nimetz, maximum pressure must be brought to bear on the Greeks.

2. (C/NF) Lyall Grant said that it was unclear whether Greece is using the name issue to block any Macedonian accession to either EU or NATO, or whether a modifier currently unacceptable to Skopje, such as "upper-Macedonia" or northern-Macedonia" would mollify the hard-liners in Athens. Either way, according to Lyall Grant, it will likely require head of government level intervention at Bucharest to move the issue. Lyall Grant said that Paris could also be problematic, given ongoing French-Greek military contract negotiations. He promised continued UK effort and coordination with the U.S. and other like-minded Allies. Visit London's Classified Website: XXXXXXXXXXXXX Tuttle.

Dear reader please take note of the following;

1. "he could not give a stuff what they called their country", and
2. "The UK's view is that now that Macedonia has accepted a compromise name proposed by UN Envoy Nimetz"

If this information is indeed true, and I have no reason to believe that it is not, then;

- a. The Greek side could not care less what the Macedonian people call their country, and,
- b. The Macedonian side has accepted to change the name which obviously is not what the Greek side wants.

So the million dollar question here is "What does the Greek side really want?" and what are the two sides "really" negotiating?

6. Is Greece forgetting something?

It has been seventeen years now since the Republic of Macedonia declared its independence from Yugoslavia and Greece is still tormenting the Macedonian people over idiotic issues such as ancient symbols, ancient flags and ancient names.

Even though the Republic of Macedonia is part of geographical Macedonia and by international rights has every right to call itself Macedonia, Greece is adamantly against it.

According to Greece, which has chosen to ignore historic evidence, “Macedonia is Greek” and only the part of geographic Macedonia now under Greece can rightfully call itself “Macedonia”.

Greece chose to ignore what was real when it went in pursuit of the ancient glory associated with Ancient City States and tried to portray itself as the New Athens, modeled after an Ancient culture that died more than two millennia ago. When Greece became a country for the first time in 1829, the only real and vibrant cultures living on its soil were Albanian, Vlach, Turkish and Macedonian but Greece ignored reality and opted for creating a brand new mythical culture totally alien to the people.

It seems that everyone in Greece today is suffering from mass amnesia and has forgotten how Albanian the Peloponnesus and Epirus were, how Vlach Thessaly was, how Macedonian Macedonia was and how Turkish Thrace was in the beginning of the 19th century when its capital was Naphplion and its parliamentarians required translators to understand one another. Yes, Greece was indeed a multiethnic state in its humble beginnings but today that is forgotten as Greeks clamber to claim descent from the ancient City States from 2,500 years ago.

Today’s Greece was created from the raw materials of the remnants of the Ottoman Empire from a people that were dominated by foreign rule since Macedonia’s rise to power in the fourth century BC. Greece was conquered by Macedonia, invaded and subjugated by Rome, the Byzantines, the Ottomans and every conqueror, invader and settler that set foot on that soil. Yet Greeks today claim

that their population is homogeneous consisting of 98% pure Greeks and 2% Muslim Greeks.

The truth is it doesn't matter to me what they think of themselves. According to international law, every nation has the right to self declare and so do the Greeks. What matters to me is the hypocritical attitude some Greeks, including all Greek Governments have taken and that is "while idealizing their mythical identity" they "ostracize that of the Macedonians" calling it "fake non-existent"!

Which culture is more genuine? The Macedonian or the Greek?
Let's examine some facts!

1. While the Macedonians make an ethnic distinction between the various ethnic groups living in Macedonia such as Macedonians, Albanians, Turks, Roma and others, Greece claims it has no other ethnicities outside of Greeks even though its composition at its inception consisted of Albanians, Vlachs, Macedonians, Turks, Roma and others. What happened to these people? How did they all become Greeks?

2. While the Macedonians make distinctions between traditions, songs, dances and clothing belonging to the various ethnic groups, Greece claims them all to be Greek including those belonging to the Albanians, Vlachs, Macedonians and Turks.

3. While Macedonia has toponymia that have existed for millennia, toponyms in Greece are no older than at most two centuries. Greece began renaming place names in the Macedonian territories it controls in the 1920's. There is no Greek history for these place names prior to the 1920's.

4. While Macedonians spoke many dialects of the Macedonian language, the vast majority of Greeks spoke Albanian, Vlach, Turkish and Macedonian as their mother tongue. Koine or Dimotiki as the Greek language is called today was learned in school.

5. While Macedonians created a literary language based on the most dominant Macedonian dialects Greece adopted the Koine (the ancient international language of commerce) for its people and later

tried to purify it by adopting an ancient dead Attic language (Katharevousa) and failed.

Comparing the Greek identity with that of the Macedonian, one can easily conclude that Macedonians are a lot closer to who they claim to be than the Greeks.

So really, what justification does Greece have for claiming “Macedonia is Greek” when modern Greeks have no connection to the ancient City States or to the so called “Ancient Greeks” and their Modern Greek-ness is dubious at best?

Can Greece reasonably and rationally explain why should “Macedonia belong to the Greeks” and not to the Macedonians? After all Greeks do live south of Mount Olympus, be it historically or today, and Macedonians live in Macedonia, the very same land they lived on more than a millennium ago. An answer to this question would be appreciated!

If I may add, according to history the vast majority of people who we define to be “Greek” or “Macedonian” today, are indigenous to the Southern Balkans and have lived on those lands without borders from 338 BC to 1912 AD. That is from the time Macedonia conquered the Ancient City States in 338 BC until Greece invaded, occupied and annexed Macedonian lands in 1912 AD.

So why is Greece calling its citizens “pure Greeks” and the Macedonians “fake” and non existent” since it can be proven that both countries have virtually the same ethnic composition of people (in different proportions)? What is Greece’s problem with the name “Macedonia”?

If Macedonia is Greek why didn’t Greece name itself Macedonia or even name its northern province that it occupied and annexed in 1912 Macedonia? Why did Greece call its northern province “New Territories” and later “Northern Greece”? Why did Greece wait until the late 1980’s to name its northern province “Macedonia” precisely when it was inevitable that a new Macedonian State was about to declare its independence from Yugoslavia? These are serious

questions that Greece needs to answer. It owes this to the Macedonian people and to the world.

Until Greece answers the above questions we will assume the following:

Ever since Greece occupied Macedonian territories in 1912 by force and without the consent of the Macedonian people, Greece is on the hook for illegal territorial grabs.

Since 1912 Greece has tortured, murdered and exiled Macedonians, including 28,000 Macedonian children, and illegally confiscated their lands. It has changed peoples' names and toponyms and has banned the Macedonian language in an effort to "Hellenize" Macedonia and the Macedonian people. Simply put, Greece made every effort to extinguish the Macedonian identity on the Macedonian lands it occupied, including the name "Macedonia" and turn it into Greek. Seeing that it was inevitable that a Macedonian State was about to emerge from the remnants of geographical Macedonia, Greece concocted the story that there was only one Macedonia and that Macedonia belonged to Greece.

Ever since the Republic of Macedonia's emergence, Greece has made every effort to negate it. Why? Because Greece is now afraid that since the Macedonian people created their own state they will start asking for rights of their brethren Macedonians living in Greece and in the Diaspora and will start asking Greece for the return of their lands and citizenships.

It has been almost 100 years since the Macedonian people witnessed their country liberated from the Muslim Ottomans only to be occupied and partitioned by its Christian neighbours the Greeks, Serbians and Bulgarians. In those 100 years Macedonians have witnessed their villages burned; their fellow Macedonians exiled and stripped of their lands. They have witnessed settlers take over their lands and occupy their homes, their language banished and punishments handed out for speaking it. Their names, surnames, names of their villages, mountains and rivers erased and replaced with foreign names. They have seen entire villages humiliated and forced to pledge allegiance to their occupier.

In 1949 a huge mass of the Macedonian population, including 28,000 children fleeing to save themselves from a war, was permanently evicted, their citizenship stripped and their lands confiscated.

In 1982 Greece passed a law (106841) allowing Greeks by birth to return to Greece excluding Macedonians, even though these Macedonians were born in Macedonia after 1912 and in fact were all Greek citizens. While Greece claims there are no non-Greeks living in Greece it does make a distinction between those of its citizens who support its national myth and those who don't.

With the emergence of the Republic of Macedonia, Greece again chose the path of self-indulgence refusing the Macedonians their due recognition and right to self declare which leads to the following question: "How long do Macedonians have to wait before they get justice and experience freedom in Greece?"

Where does Greece believe its actions will lead the Macedonian people? Will anyone blame the Macedonians if they start taking matters into their own hands and start looking for recognition elsewhere?

Why is Greece so surprised when yet another country recognizes the Republic of Macedonia by its proper name?

How long does Greece think it can push the Macedonian people around without consequences?

To this date Greece has broken every international minority law in the book. Has it not occurred to Greece that it is not above the law and someday soon these violations will catch up to it?

Greece had best soon start re-thinking its strategy towards its treatment of the Macedonian people because frankly, Macedonians have had enough of Greece. If Greece does not change its attitude and soon manage its Macedonian problem in a fair and equitable way, Macedonians will have no choice but to start very loudly calling for the re-unification of all of Macedonia or for the creation of a Kosovo like Macedonian state out of Greece.

If Macedonia is Greek why didn't Greece name itself Macedonia or even name its northern province it occupied and annexed it in 1912 Macedonia? Why did Greece call its northern province "New Territories" and later "Northern Greece"?

7. Greek-Macedonian Name Dispute

Ever since the Republic of Macedonia declared its independence from Yugoslavia in 1991 under the name “Republic of Macedonia” Greece has been waging a propaganda campaign against it promoting the idea that Macedonia is exclusively Greek and that no one except Greece had the right to claim its ancient heritage, including its symbols, flags and name. This is echoed, loud and clear both inside and outside of Greece. Greece’s basis for the so called dispute with the Republic of Macedonia is, according to Greece, “the Republic of Macedonia harbors territorial ambitions toward Greece’s northern province also called Macedonia”.

Even though the Republic of Macedonia made amendments to its constitution to disclaim any "territorial ambitions", removed all disputed symbols and changed its flag, the Greek State still stubbornly persists on its mission to prevent Macedonia from entering international institutions and from gaining world recognition.

The purpose of this essay is to provide the reader with relevant information that;

1. Proves that Greece has no basis for its arguments with Macedonia.
2. Proves that Greece’s arguments are a ruse to sidestep more important issues.
3. Highlight some very important issues that Macedonians living in Greece are faced with, which Greece has so far ignored.

ARGUMENTS

- A. *Greece claims that Macedonia is exclusively Greek because the ancient Macedonian heritage belongs to Greece but it provides no valid arguments to qualify its claims.*

The creation of the modern Balkan States during the 19th century was a result of (a), the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and (b) the introduction of nationalism in the region.

Throughout the later part of the 500 year old Ottoman occupation of the Balkans and up to the 19th century, national awareness did not exist among the Balkan people. The concept of “nationality” was unknown to the Ottoman citizen who at the time identified only by his or her religion be it Muslim, Christian, Jew or other.

It is also a well known fact that the Balkan region was without borders for more than twenty centuries and was conquered, invaded and settled by a variety of people.

When Greece became a state for the first time in 1829 it consisted only of the region today known as the Peloponnesus which was then populated by a majority of Albanian, Turk, Vlach and Macedonian speakers (there were no other ethnic indicators to distinguish the various language speakers from one another since ethnicity at the time was unknown to those people). Historically an organized and united Greek state never existed. The ancient world was never unified and existed not as one but as many states and worlds with varying governments, languages and cultures.

Over the years the Greek people, by war and imperial ambitions, incorporated more lands into their state including Epirus, Thessaly, Crete and Macedonia, which historically were never unified as a single state and never belonged to Greece. Further, the people on those lands were also not Greeks and linguistically belonged to the Albanian, Vlach, Turk and Macedonian speaking families.

So it would not be wrong to state that the entire southern Balkan Peninsula on which modern Greece is located today was populated by a vast majority of non-Greek people who spoke Macedonian, Albanian, Turk, Vlach and other non-Greek languages and who at the time had no national awareness and had only their religions in common.

It is also accurate to state that according to census reports compiled by the Republic of Macedonia after 1991, there are predominantly

Macedonian, Albanian, Turk and Vlach speakers living in the Republic of Macedonia today.

In other words, when the Greek State was formed in 1829 it consisted of exactly the same ethnic identities that the Republic of Macedonia had in 1991.

The reason there is a difference between the 19th century ethnic identities in Greece and those of today is that Greece has “Hellenized” them (mostly by force) and turned them into Greeks. In 1928 Greece declared that the population in Greece is homogeneous consisting of 98% pure Greeks and 2% Muslim Greeks.

Although Greece today claims that its people are the descendents of the ancient Greeks the truth is Greece has no basis for this claim. Its people are modern Balkanites similar to those who live in its neighbouring countries and nothing more.

In other words, a modern Greek making claims that he or she is a descendent of the ancient Greeks who lived on the same lands 2,500 years ago is equivalent to a modern Canadian making claims that he or she is a descendant of the ancient Canadians who lived on the same lands before the Europeans discovered them.

B. Greece claims that the name Macedonia belongs exclusively to Greece because Greece has a province with the same name. Greece however provides no valid arguments as to how it acquired that Macedonian province and why only “it” can be called Macedonia when that very same province belongs to a greater geographical and historical region called Macedonia.

Nationalism was imported into the Balkans in the early 19th century and took hold in Greece, Serbia and later Bulgaria. Macedonia being the most oppressed region in the Balkans stood at the center of the then Ottoman State and was less accessible to the outside world so naturally nationalism took longer to infiltrate Macedonia. This

however did not stop the Macedonian people from acquiring a Macedonian national consciousness, from making a bid to free themselves from the Ottomans and from attempting to create a Macedonian state that would have encompassed all of geographic Macedonia including the Republic of Macedonia and all the geographical Macedonian regions held by Greece, Bulgaria and Albania today.

The Macedonians are the only people in the southern Balkans who organized a massive national liberation movement and in 1903 rose up against the Ottoman Empire to free themselves without outside help.

Unfortunately the Macedonian uprising did not produce the desired results and opened up Macedonia to foreign intrigue and territorial ambitions especially on the part of its neighbours who in 1912 invaded, occupied and in 1913 divided Macedonia among themselves.

In other words, 51% of the Macedonian geographical territory which Greece today exclusively calls “Macedonia” or “Greek Macedonia” or the “Greek Province of Macedonia” did not belong to Greece prior to 1912 and was never Greek.

Prior to 1912 Macedonia was part of the Ottoman Empire and belonged to the people who lived in Macedonia, the true owners of Macedonian lands. Greece gained this territory through war and by evicting all those who opposed it including the legitimate owners of those lands. Greece invaded Macedonia in 1912 under the pretence of liberating the Macedonian people, occupied and partitioned it with its Serbian and Bulgarian partners against the will of the Macedonian people.

In fact Greece gained its part of Macedonia through deception and a force of arms without the consent of the Macedonian people.

Unable to free themselves from the Ottoman yoke the Macedonian people welcomed the Greek, Serbian and Bulgarian armies in 1912 as their liberators. But instead of being liberated they quickly found themselves occupied and their state partitioned.

As for the name “Macedonia” I would like to remind the reader that before 1912 there was one Macedonia, the entire region of geographical and historic Macedonia, the very same region the Macedonian people rose in 1903 to liberate and create a Macedonian State.

Therefore, the Republic of Macedonia has both geographical and historical rights to call itself “Macedonia” since that state belongs to geographical Macedonia and to the people who rose up in 1903 and during the Second World War to liberate it.

As for Greece claiming rights to the name “Macedonia”, here are some facts:

In 1913 after Macedonia was partitioned, Greece named its part of Macedonia “New Territories”. Later it renamed it “Northern Greece”. Then in the late 1980’s when it was inevitable that a new Macedonian state was about to declare its independence from Yugoslavia, Greece renamed it “Macedonia”.

Therefore Greece has neither historical nor geographical rights to the name “Macedonia”. Greece only uses this argument to sidestep other more important Macedonian issues and as a ruse to deflect attention from them.

C. Greece claims that there are no Macedonians living in Greece or in geographic Macedonia, only Greeks, Serbians and Bulgarians and that the Macedonian nation was created by Tito in 1945.

The ethnic mix of people in Macedonia prior to the 1912 Greek, Serbian and Bulgarian invasion consisted of a large ethnic Macedonian majority indigenous to the region, Turks, Arnauts (Albanians), Vlachs, Roma and other smaller minorities. In other words, the same mix of ethnic identities that exist today in the Republic of Macedonia (with the exception of the Turks who left Macedonia soon after the Greek, Serbian and Bulgarian invasion) was present in the entire region of geographic Macedonia prior to

1912. There were no ethnic Greeks or ethnic Bulgarians in Macedonia at that time, only ethnic Macedonians who served “Greek” and “Bulgarian” interests.

Most census statistics released before 1912 were compiled by Greek, Serbian and Bulgarian statisticians and were based on “religious affiliation”. As mentioned earlier, at the time there was no clear identifier to determine ethnically who was who except for language and religion. However, the vast majority of people living in Macedonia were Macedonian speakers. So the only option census takers had was to use “religion” as an identifier of ‘nationality’. Since most Macedonians were Christians the only difference between them was “whose” Church they were affiliated with. However the only churches allowed to operate in Ottoman Macedonia at the time were the Greek, Serbian and Bulgarian Churches. So the census statisticians used “religious affiliation” as the identifier to which “nationality” the people living in Macedonia belonged. In other words a person was considered to be a “Greek national” if he or she attended liturgy in the Greek Church, a “Serbian national” if he or she attended liturgy in the Serbian Church and a “Bulgarian national” if he or she attended liturgy in the Bulgarian Church. So naturally there being no Macedonian Church, statistics showed no Macedonians living in Macedonia, only Greeks, Serbians and Bulgarians.

Therefore it is not that Macedonians did not exist, as Greece likes us to believe, but it was the method that census takers and statisticians employed to represent the ethnic composition of the region that was incorrect. In fact the method was simply wrong and only served the territorial ambitions of the Greek, Serbian and Bulgarian states.

In 1991 the part of Macedonia that was originally occupied by Serbia, by referendum, declared its independence from the Yugoslav federation and became a free and sovereign state called the Republic of Macedonia. Upon its successful and peaceful separation from Yugoslavia, the Republic of Macedonia conducted its own census study and concluded that over 60% of its population was ethnic Macedonian.

As for Greece, it has yet to conduct a proper census and still relies on outdated methods such as “religious affiliation” to determine its ethnic composition. This way it can hide its minorities and pretend that 98% of its people are pure Greeks and 2% are Muslim Greeks.

D. Macedonians living in Greece are faced with a number of issues since the forceful invasion, occupation and illegal partition of Macedonia.

The Greek, Serbian and Bulgarian invasion of Macedonia brought catastrophic results to the Macedonian people. After driving the Ottomans out with the Macedonian people’s help, the three invaders Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria began to fight among themselves inside Macedonia for a larger portion of the Macedonian territory. In the process they burned down hundreds of Macedonian villages and murdered, tortured and exiled thousands of civilians including women and children as documented by the 1913 Carnegie Endowment Inquiry.

Finally when they stopped fighting they partitioned Macedonia between themselves under the 1913 Treaty of Bucharest where Greece received 51% of Macedonia’s territory, Serbia received 39% and Bulgaria received 10%.

In 1991 the part of Macedonia that was originally occupied by Serbia, by referendum, declared its independence from the Yugoslav federation and became a free and sovereign state called the Republic of Macedonia. The parts occupied by Greece, Bulgaria and Albania remain occupied to this day.

IMPORTANT ISSUES

There are many issues the Macedonian people deem “important”, which Greece “needs to deal with” but so far has refused to address. Some are listed as follows;

1. Greece refuses to recognize that it illegally occupied Macedonian territories in 1912 without the Macedonian people’s consent. Macedonians were lead to believe that Greece was entering the conflict in 1912 to liberate the

Macedonian people from the Ottoman yoke but through deception and intrigue Greece along with its partners, Serbia and Bulgaria, forcibly occupied and subjugated Macedonia.

2. Greece refuses to recognize that Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria under the 1913 Treaty of Bucharest partitioned Macedonia into three pieces without the Macedonian people's consent. Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria in 1913 occupied and partitioned Macedonian lands creating artificial borders that have divided families to this day.
What Greece calls liberation, the Macedonian people call occupation. Having one exiled from his or her ancestral home, having his or her lands confiscated, having his or her name changed, being forced to speak a foreign language, being publicly humiliated by being forced to denounce one's own identity and being forced to publicly pledge allegiance to a tyrannical occupier is no "liberation". It is subjugation.
3. Greece refuses to accept the fact that its army committed atrocities and genocide against the Macedonian people during the two Balkan Wars of 1912, 1913 as documented by the 1913 Carnegie Endowment Inquiry.
4. Greece refuses to repatriate the thousands of Macedonians who it evicted from their homes and forcibly exiled after 1913 simply because they were affiliated with the Bulgarian and Serbian Churches. Greece exiled tens of thousands of Macedonians and had their homes and properties confiscated simply because they, during the last years of the Ottoman occupation, attended liturgy in the Bulgarian and Serbian churches; not in the Greek Church.
5. Greece refuses to allow the return of the tens of thousands of Macedonians who it expelled to Turkey during the 1920's and had their homes and properties confiscated simply because they were of the Muslim faith.
6. Greece refuses to provide compensation to those Macedonians who's lands and homes it confiscated in the 1920's to accommodate the imported Christian colonists from Asia Minor and other places. During the 1920's Greece imported 1.1 million colonists from Turkey and settled most of them in Macedonia.
7. Greece refuses to reverse the imposed name changes the Greek State forced on the Macedonian people. During the

1920's Greece introduced assimilation policies in Macedonia to "Hellenize" every person by changing their first and last names so that they would sound Greek. Greece did this without the consent of those whose names were changed.

8. Greece refuses to reverse the imposed toponym changes the Greek State forced on the Macedonian people during and subsequent to the 1920's to "Hellenize" the region. Greece changed all Macedonian toponyms including cities, towns, villages, lakes, rivers, mountains, roads, etc. from Macedonian to Greek without the Macedonian people's consent.
9. Greece refuses to reverse the illegal abolition of the Macedonian language. During the 1930's the Greek state introduced anti-Macedonian laws banning the Macedonian language and ordering the destruction of every Macedonian inscription found on buildings, monuments, gravestones and religious icons that contained Macedonian writing. People, even those who spoke no other language, were heavily fined and forced to drink castor oil when caught speaking Macedonian. The Macedonian language is illegal in Greece to this day.
10. Greece refuses to abolish anti-Macedonian laws and discriminatory practices against the Macedonian people. Greece over the years has punished Macedonians for having Macedonian sentiments by public humiliation, beatings, imprisonment and murder.
11. Greece refuses to repatriate and return the properties and citizenships to those Macedonians expelled from Greece without a trial for being suspected of aiding the losing side in the Greek Civil War. Greece expelled tens of thousands of Macedonians and confiscated their properties and citizenship simply because they were suspected of aiding the losing side in the Greek Civil War.
12. Greece refuses to repatriate the 28,000 refugee children it expelled in 1948 whose citizenship and ancestral properties it confiscated.
13. Greece refuses to scrap the 1982 anti-Macedonian discriminatory law. Greece passed law 106841 in 1982 allowing Greeks by birth to return to Greece but excluded

Macedonians, even though these Macedonians were born in Greece and in fact were all Greek citizens.

14. Greece refuses to end systemic discrimination against the Macedonian people which is ingrained in the Greek government, church, media, schools and other institutions.
15. Greece refuses to recognize the Macedonian minority living inside Greece today even though it is required to do so in accordance with international agreements to which Greece is signatory.

In view of the above, which the Greek State refuses to deal with, past Greek governments have concocted less damaging issues such as the name dispute to:

- a. Lead the Macedonian people away from important issues and bog them down with nonsensical ones.
- b. Give the world the impression that the Greek-Macedonian dispute is really about unimportant “nonsensical issues” such as ancient history. By doing this Greece hopes to cover its misdeeds against the Macedonian people.

CONCLUSION

Greece has been very successful in its endeavour and has succeeded in painting the “wrong picture” about its “dispute” with Macedonia.

The Macedonian people do indeed have a dispute with Greece but it is not about historic names, symbols and flags, it is about equality, human rights and dignity.

Given Greece’s track record on its treatment of the Macedonian people, today’s Macedonians are left with the following options;

- I. Do nothing and accept Greece’s status quo. In other words, end the pursuit of human rights for the Macedonian people, which may be acceptable to Greece but totally unacceptable to the Macedonians.
- II. Lobby international bodies to pressure Greece into accepting its responsibilities in coming to terms with the Macedonian

issue. Pressure Greece to making amends to the Macedonian people. Force Greece to recognize the Macedonian minority living on its soil in accordance with international human right norms to which Greece is signatory and is obliged to uphold.

III. Start lobbying for the separation of the part of Macedonia under Greek control and call for its reunification with the Republic of Macedonia.

Greece had almost a century to correct the wrongs it committed against the Macedonian people. How much longer must the Macedonian people wait to receive justice from Greece before taking matters into their own hands?

NOTE: This essay was e-mailed to every member of the Canadian Parliament who has an e-mail address.

8. The name alone was never an issue

As much as I want to get away from discussing the so-called “name dispute” between Greece and Macedonia I am again drawn into it by “the Macedonian preoccupation” with this Greek-invented issue.

First let me say that there is no “name dispute” between Greece and Macedonia. The name “Macedonia” belongs to the Macedonian people and there can be no question about that. The problem here is that Greece has “invented” the so-called “name dispute” to divert attention from some “other issues” that it doesn’t want known, which I will talk about later.

Second, let me say that to this day I have not heard Macedonia complain about Greece using the name “Macedonia”. So where is the “name dispute”?

Greece claims that the name “Macedonia” is exclusively Greek and no one except Greece has a right to use it. If that were true then why hasn’t Greece complained about other countries, the USA for example, using the name “Macedonia” for several of its towns?

What Greece means is that “it doesn’t want the country Macedonia” to use this name. But if anyone has any right to use this name then, for obvious reasons, it should be Macedonia the country!

Aside from the fact that the name Macedonia was NEVER Greek, not in prehistoric, not in ancient, not in medieval and not in modern times, then how does Greece justify the name “Macedonia” being Greek? Well in this case Greece doesn’t have to justify anything; it only has to “declare” because that is how Greece has been operating over the last two centuries, unchallenged!

You see Greece has been “allowed” to get away with all sorts of things like declaring (not justifying or proving) that Greece is a homogeneous nation and all Greeks are descendents of the ancient Greeks. In this regard Greece has been “allowed” to push the envelope to the limit, bordering on the “bizarre”, without ever been asked to explain itself or justify these claims. So if Greece can claim it is a homogeneous nation of pure Greeks, descendents of the

ancient Greeks, without once being challenged, then why not “declare” that the word “Macedonia” is Greek and only Greek? Who is going to dispute that?

I am willing to let that go if Greece can answer why the name “Macedonia” became “exclusively” Greek only after it discovered that the Republic of Macedonia was about to declare its independence from the Yugoslav Federation in 1991? Why didn’t Greece voice concerns in 1945 when the Republic of Macedonia became a Republic in the Yugoslav Federation by using exactly that very same name. Why the concern now?

Was it by any chance that when the Republic of Macedonia declared its independence from the Yugoslav Federation, Greece was caught by surprise and didn’t know what else to do so it “invented” the name issue?

Greece, for almost a century, has been struggling to smother the Macedonian identity living on its own soil since Greece illegally invaded, occupied and annexed Macedonian lands. Then all of a sudden an entire nation of Macedonians gained their independence just next door. Panic stricken, not knowing what to do, Greece invented a problem in hopes of putting the Macedonians on the defensive.

What if these Macedonians started to complain about how their compatriots in Greece were treated over the years? What if those who were wronged, exiled, had their citizenship taken away, had their lands and properties confiscated, families and relatives jailed, abused and murdered, what if they start complaining? We can’t have the world know about that! So, what to do? Why not then “invent” a problem for the Macedonians to focus on; like they can’t have the name “Macedonia” because that name is exclusively Greek?

If Greece suddenly assumed “the victim role” and without being provoked declared, as it is used to falsely declaring, that “Big bad Macedonia” wants to usurp their so-called “Greek name” because this nation of bad people has “territorial aspirations” towards its own non-existent northern province also called “Macedonia”, then perhaps it could get some attention. Perhaps if it screamed “rape and

murder” long and loud enough then someone might hear and come to its rescue.

Greece could only have done this in panic mode and without thinking because it doesn’t take a genius to figure out that (1) Greece acquired these territories that it calls its “northern province of Macedonia”, which by the way did not exist as a province, illegally and by war and conquest, and (2) that these Macedonian territories never at any time belonged to any Greeks. Macedonia never belonged to the so-called ancient Greeks and Macedonia never belonged to the artificially created Modern Greeks.

Greece has successfully created a “distraction” for the Macedonian people, particularly for the Macedonian authorities, leading them to focus on non-issues like the so-called “name dispute” instead of focusing on the real problems that the Macedonian people have with Greece, that Greece is desperately trying to avoid and to cover-up.

And what may these problems be?

Well for starters not having recognized the Macedonian minority living inside Greece! Greece does not want to recognize a Macedonian minority because Greece’s aim all along has been to “eradicate” the Macedonian identity. Why would Greece want to recognize a people which, for more than a century, it has been bent on eradicating?

In its attempt to extinguish the Macedonian identity, Greece has illegally expropriated Macedonian lands and committed many atrocities against the Macedonian people. Greece, for example, has been exiling Greek citizens because they were Macedonians and for years has been expropriating their properties and lands without compensation.

So where does Greece stand with regard to the Macedonians?

One can’t trust what Greece says; one has to observe what Greece does and how it behaves around the Macedonian issue in order to understand what is going on! Who is better qualified to give you insight into Greece regarding the Macedonian questions than a

Macedonian who, as a Macedonian, has lived and experienced Greece first hand?

There is no doubt in my mind that Greece's aim is to eradicate the Macedonian existence once and for all. I base this fact on Greece's historic treatment of the Macedonians. It is not that Macedonians don't exist it is Greece's adamant wish that Macedonians do not exist that gives away its attitude towards them and its long term aim to eradicate them.

Since it conceived the idea of "acquiring Macedonian lands", Greece has been fanatical in its aim to deny the Macedonian existence. That fanatical attitude has not changed from the day it acquired Macedonian lands to this day. Today when Macedonians are recognized worldwide, Greece still aggressively maintains they don't exist. This is why I have no doubt that Greece's behaviour has nothing to do with the "name" and everything to do with the Macedonian identity. If Greece succeeds in removing the name from the Macedonian people it will be its first step in removing the Macedonian identity.

Again I will reiterate that there is no doubt in my mind that Greece is out to permanently destroy the Macedonian identity not only inside Greece but everywhere, including inside the Republic of Macedonia.

And now to discuss the reason why I was drawn into this embroilment!

Every Macedonian by now should have realized that Greece doesn't care about the name "Macedonia". It never did since 1913 when it acquired Macedonian lands right up until 1991 when the Republic of Macedonia declared its independence. Also, if Macedonians have been paying attention they would have easily discovered Greece's real aim, to eradicate everything that is Macedonian; the name, the language, the Macedonian ethnic identity, everything! Just as it had destroyed everything Macedonian inside Greece by denying the Macedonian existence, by changing peoples' names, by renaming place names, by erasing Macedonian writing, by destroying Macedonian monuments, Greece is now attempting to do the same

outside of Greece. By banning the Macedonian language, by assimilating the Macedonian population into the Greek fold and by exiling, torturing and murdering the non conformists, Greece has amply proven its hatred for the Macedonian people both inside its own borders and outside.

Every Macedonian by now should know that Greece does not want our name. It is bent on destroying us to the last one! Greece could have had the name Macedonia since 1913 but those who experienced life in Greece know first hand about Greece's hatred for that name and everything it represents. For almost a century Greece has desperately tried to bury that name in the darkness of hell. What would make anyone think now that "Greece is suddenly in love with that name?"

If it is clearly understood where Greece stands with regard to the Macedonian issue, it makes me wonder why there are so many Macedonians still preoccupied with the "name game" when they know very well that (1) Greece is not after the name. The name is only a ploy, a ruse to distract them from focusing on real issues, and (2) why are they negotiating something they know (a) Greece does not want and (b) the Macedonians CANNOT give up? What is the point of "negotiating" something we can't possibly "sell", "trade", or "give away"?

Don't we know how this appears to the outside world?

Negotiating our name? A name that has existed for over 3,000 years; a name passed on to us by countless generations? A name that is not ours to "negotiate", bargain with, sell, or give away? What are we thinking? If we continue to think this way of ourselves, what do we expect others to think of us? Have we paused for a moment, taken a deep breath and seriously thought about this? The very idea of even thinking such a thought is insane! Wouldn't you agree?

Why do I think the "name" issue is a ruse to distract the Macedonian people from real issues?

Because the Macedonians, particularly those in charge, have been blinded and deafened by this “name dispute” and forgotten the real issues like:

1. The name “Macedonia” is autochthonous and belongs to the Region and to those who lived in that region the longest. Only they have the right to call themselves “ethnic Macedonians”; not the recent settlers, invaders and conquerors who acquired it by force of arms.

2. Macedonia belongs to the Macedonian people. It is the property of those who live on it, own lands on it and pay taxes. It is not the property of the overlords who from time to time occupy it by force. Greece invaded, occupied and annexed those lands in 1912, 1913 illegally just as the Ottomans did 500 years earlier. So if after 500 years the Ottomans were considered “occupiers” then that is how the Greeks also should be considered.

3. On those Macedonian lands that Greece occupies today there live Macedonians who are neither acknowledged nor have any human rights. As I said earlier, their names were forcibly changed and their language banned. This is a “real” issue that Macedonian authorities should be “negotiating” with Greece. Forget I said “negotiating”; this is an issue that Macedonian authorities should be screaming about to the world!

4. There are 28,000 refugee children, now elderly men and women with families of their own, who were exiled by Greece in 1948 during the Greek Civil War and who are still not allowed to return to Greece because they are Macedonians. This is another “real” issue about which Macedonian authorities should be screaming to the world!

5. Since Greece illegally acquired Macedonian territories it has been exiling Macedonians and illegally confiscating their properties without compensation. This is not only immoral, it is illegal. By international law, no one has the right to confiscate peoples’ properties without compensation. This is yet another “real” issue that Macedonian authorities should be PUBLICLY pursuing!

6. Since the 1920's Greece has been "Hellenizing" Macedonia by destroying what was real and Macedonian and replacing it with "artificial Greek". The reason I call it "artificial" is because prior to the Greek occupation, be it a person's name or toponym, it never existed by that name. I have thousands of examples of this but I will demonstrate it with a single example, something that is near and dear to me, my own village where I was born! Up until the early 1920's my village, with a long history and tradition, was called "Oshchima". The Greeks renamed it "Trigonon". Oshchima, along with its long history and traditions, died when it was renamed; when it was given an alien, meaningless foreign name, a name to remind the people of Oshchima that they were now captives of a foreign overlord who neither had the decency nor the humanity to allow us to be who we are!

My wish, and the wish of so many thousands of Macedonians who lived and still live in Greece, is to see our own Macedonian language and Macedonian names reinstated; be it personal names or place names. This is a human rights issue that concerns thousands of Macedonians, a "real" issue that Macedonian authorities should be PUBLICLY pursuing!

7. The next time Greece claims "the name Macedonia is Greek" Macedonian authorities should be challenging that claim by asking for proof. (1) To which "Greeks" did that name and land belong? (2) How did these so-called "Greeks" acquire that name and land? (3) When did these so-called "Greeks" acquire the name and land? And (4) what do the artificial Modern Greeks have to do with it? If the Modern Greeks have the audacity to deny the existence of the Macedonian identity, surely Macedonians have not only the right to question the validity of these "Greek" claims but also the right to challenge the Greeks about their own identity!

8. The real bargaining chip Macedonian authorities have over Greece is what Greece fears the most; losing Macedonia to the Macedonian people (or should I say "giving Macedonia back to the Macedonian people")! Greece has a primordial physiological fear over this and it shows. In spite of the reassurances that the entire world gave Greece and despite the fact that the Macedonian national flag and constitution were amended by the Republic of Macedonia,

Greece still fears the Republic of Macedonia having “territorial aspirations” towards its so-called northern province also called “Macedonia”. This guilt and anxiety can truly be exploited. Greece is not afraid of Macedonia or of the Macedonian people over this. Greece is afraid that some Great Power, like the United States, might some day listen to the pleas of the Macedonian people and come to their rescue. I am sure more than any other country, the United States would love to see Greece parceled up into small pieces and Greece is well aware of this! Wasn’t it Kissinger who said “get rid of Greece if you want peace in the Balkans”? I am not suggesting here that Macedonians go to war over this, because this is the only way Greece would give up the Macedonian territory it occupies, but I am suggesting that it is something that Macedonians CAN “negotiate” with Greece. For example Macedonia can keep this issue to itself, for now, if Greece abstains from vetoing its entry into International institutions, like the United Nations, under its constitutional name.

9. Speaking of entering the United Nations by its constitutional name, why “negotiate” with Greece over a non-issue when Macedonian authorities could go directly to the United Nations and challenge the legality of their entry as Dr. Igor Janev has suggested over a thousand times? Why not withdraw from the UN and re-apply with the name “Republic of Macedonia” and see what happens?

10. When the Macedonian authorities entered into “negotiation” with Greece they legitimized the non-issue and made it into an issue. If something is mine then it is mine and only mine; not yours or ours! When I begin “negotiating” over something that is clearly mine then I give the impression that it “is not really mine” and give legitimacy to the other person’s claim. This is what Macedonian authorities have done with our name and this is how it is viewed from the outside world.

The “dignified” way to end this is by admitting that “we did not know what we were getting into” before we got into the “negotiating” process with Greece and to bow out of it once and for all!

That which we inherited is not ours to squander because if we do we will be known as the generation of “greatest traitors” in Macedonian history who “willingly” sold out our inheritance; an inheritance for which our forefathers spilled blood to pass onto us and we did this willingly and voluntarily with our eyes and ears open!

We have many options open to us; let us not choose the ones which will destroy our future!

Greece, for almost a century, has been struggling to smother the Macedonian identity living on its own soil since it illegally invaded, occupied and annexed Macedonian lands. Then all of a sudden an entire nation of Macedonians gained their independence just next door. Panic stricken, not knowing what to do, Greece invented a problem in hopes of putting the Macedonians on the defensive.

9. Greece: Name Dispute or Ruse to hide more serious problems?

No one expected Greece to block Macedonia's entry into NATO because no one believed Greece was that obsessed with the name "Macedonia". But lo and behold the impossible happened and Greece did block Macedonia's entry into NATO.

Was this simply because of the name? Or is there something more sinister Greece is trying to hide?

Let's face it; Greece was in possession of the name "Macedonia" since 1913 when it was awarded 51% of Macedonia's territory by the Great Powers. What did Greece do with the name? From 1913 to 1988 Greece tried to bury the name. In fact during certain periods between 1913 and 1988 the "M" word was a dirty word in Greece. People, even foreigners, were discouraged from using it and were punished when they were caught saying it. I should know, I am one of those Macedonians from Greece and I have been scolded on several occasions for saying the "M" word.

Why has Greece changed its attitude about the "M" word now? Obviously it doesn't want it for itself, it has proven that. Could it be that it doesn't want others to have it? But wait a minute, there are all sorts of places called Macedonia, I know of at least half a dozen places named Macedonia in the United States, yet I have not heard a single complaint from Greece? Could it be that Greece doesn't want the Macedonians to use the word Macedonia? BINGO! I think I am on to something.

But why doesn't Greece want Macedonians to use the name Macedonia?

I can think of many reasons. For starters, if Greece admits that there is a Macedonia that is not under its own thumb it will have to admit that there are Macedonians. But wait a minute hasn't Greece been saying that "Macedonians do not exist"? Lying is not a problem for Greeks they do it all the time so I don't think that Greece will have a problem with changing its mind and admitting that yeah there are Macedonians but they are Greek-Macedonians, Bulgarian-

Macedonians, Serbian-Macedonians, Albanian-Macedonians, Vlach-Macedonians, Slav-Macedonians, Turk-Macedonians, Roma-Macedonians and even Geographical-Macedonians but there are no Macedonian-Macedonians and darn it if they are going to let the non-existent Macedonian-Macedonians have the name “Macedonia”.

In all seriousness Greece is not interested in the name, it had almost one century to use it but instead it tried to destroy it. Greece is interested in keeping the truth from surfacing; the truth of what it did to the Macedonian people. The truth is Greece has committed horrible and malicious acts against the Macedonian people in order to make Macedonia Greek. Greece would love to permanently extinguish the Macedonian ethnic identity, language and name to keep these horrible secrets from surfacing. Greece will love to see the truth buried forever along with all the Macedonians who remind it of it. Greece will stop at no less than destroying the Macedonian ethnic identity so let's not fool ourselves into thinking that we can accomplish something here by negotiating our name away.

If people knew the truth about what Greece is up to they would not expect Macedonians to give up their name. They would even discourage Macedonians from negotiating with it. Unfortunately most people listen to Greece because Greece has been a country longer and wants people to believe that this issue is about history and not about human rights and the preservation of Macedonia, the Macedonian language and the Macedonian people.

10. More on the Name Dispute

Some of you have written to me and are upset because I have not taken a stronger stand against the so-called “name negotiations” between Macedonia and Greece. At the same time some of you have written to let me know that I should trust the Macedonian government because it has an agenda, knows what it’s doing and is only pressured by outside powers to continue to negotiate.

Well, you are all right! But then since you asked, here is what I think.

This is a multi-level problem that involves many things. First it involves me and my own desires and beliefs. It involves every Macedonian on the planet and their desires and beliefs. It involves the Macedonian government’s policies, agendas and outside pressure to continue the talks. It involves hidden agendas of individuals and groups. It involves loyalties, blind trust and some general confusion on the part of many people.

But what I believe “should happen”, and that applies to most patriotic Macedonians, has nothing to do with what the government or anybody else believes should happen. Let’s make that very clear!

Irrespective of the current situation of the so-called “name negotiations”, I ask myself “do I feel comfortable that the name of my country should be negotiated under any circumstances?” This is a personal question that everyone should be asking themselves. Irrespective of what the Macedonian government is doing or not doing and how well it is handling the situation, “do I want anyone to negotiate changing the name of my country?” My personal answer to this question is a big stern “NO!”. No one has the right to change my country’s name no matter what their reasons! This is my personal opinion which reflects what I believe and how I feel and has nothing to do with “trusting” the Macedonian government or any other body in “doing the right thing”.

Now as a single person I can neither influence nor stop the Macedonian government from negotiating our country’s name. But as a single person I am responsible to voice my real feeling about

the process. It is my duty to let the Macedonian government know exactly how I feel! This is the only way that the government will know and understand what I think and how I feel. If I place my trust in the government and think the government “knows what I think” and “knows what it is doing” and say nothing about how I feel then I am afraid I will have to live with the consequences of “having done nothing”, especially if the government decides to change the name. And why would the government change the name? Because like me everyone else trusted the government and allowed it to do the “right thing” and the right thing for the government of course was to take the path of least resistance. Not having told the government how we feel, the government would naturally assume that we all agree that our name can be negotiated and if it can be negotiated then it can be changed. How many times in history have Macedonians made this mistake; allowing governments to think for them?

Do you want to help the Macedonian government do its job? Then do the right thing and feel good about it by telling those in parliament exactly what you think and feel. Those people in parliament are the servants you elected to represent you and your interests. How will they know what you want and what your interests are if you don't loudly and clearly tell them? Do yourself a favour and do not confuse what the “government might do” with what “you want the government to do”. You want Gruevski “to get the monkey off his back” then tell him exactly how you feel! After all he is there to represent you and your interests! You are the boss!

I listened to one of Gruevski's speeches very carefully and he did hint that there is tremendous pressure for his government to continue the name negotiations. That is why I feel compelled to tell him what I think. The only way we can help the Macedonian government to fight off this “outside pressure” is by letting it know what we think and how we feel. Gruevski, we know you are doing an excellent job and we commend you for it. We also know you are under tremendous pressure to continue the negotiations. That is why it is our duty to remind you to tell those who pressure you that “we will never accept a name change”. We know you are conducting the negotiation, probably against your will, but also know this that “negotiating our name” is an embarrassment to us, to our nation, to our identity and to our ancestors who spilled blood to bring us this

far. You have to do what you have to do but please let everyone know how we feel!

Now there are also those who support the name negotiations thinking they are in support of the government. My opinion on this is twofold. One, these individuals are either confused or misinformed or two, they have a hidden anti-Macedonian agenda.

For those who truly “don’t know” and think “it is okay to give a little on the name” think of it this way. If some individual, who is probably your worst enemy and would rather see you dead than alive, comes to you and says “I demand that you change you last name because some person in my extended family has the same name”. Would you do it? Would you disassociate yourself from your own family and from your own past just to please this person who truly hates you? And what do you think you will accomplish if you do? Do you think that doing “harm” to yourself “voluntarily” will make this person like you and respect you? What will your family and friends think of you? Will you feel any better by doing it and will you gain the respect and understanding you seek from your peers?

No you will not! You will however become “the laughing stock of the neighbourhood”, a fool and a pushover who can easily be manipulated.

If you support a name change, please think about it very carefully and support it because you understand it and its implications.

There are also those who do have hidden agendas and are truly working diligently and patiently against the Macedonian cause who will tell you that it’s okay to “give a little” because of the “potential benefits” you will receive. These people are amongst us and very active in our communities these days; I will go as far as to say that some are highly visible, focused, vocal and appear to be very patriotic when they speak. They need to be in order to establish themselves as “the good guys” and gain the trust of the Macedonian people. I can’t tell you who they are but I can tell you that I have repeatedly seen them in the last century of our recent history. You will have to truly question the motives of today’s most patriotic Macedonians who only yesterday were the staunchest Grkomani, Serbomani and Bulgaromani! I will leave it at that!

For those who are loyal to Macedonia and want to help the Macedonian cause there should be no confusion as to what is right and what is wrong. Greece has stolen more than half of Macedonia from the Macedonian people. But above and beyond all that, Greece has done a lot of harm against the Macedonian people starting with several genocides, land confiscations, exiling of people, burning of villages and homes, jailing, name changes, forced assimilation, prohibiting the speaking of the Macedonian language, destruction of Macedonian cultural and other monuments, burning of books, etc. No other conqueror, except for Greece, has ever imposed itself so harshly on Macedonia and the Macedonian people to a point of not only wanting to conquer all of Macedonia but to forever extinguish everything that is Macedonian from language, culture, to the Macedonian ethnic identity.

Now that we are very clear and understand, as Macedonians, exactly where we stand with Greece why should we do anything to please Greece. Why should we place ourselves in an even more “compromising positions” than we currently are in just to please Greece?

I would also like to leave you with this warning! Greece will not relent no matter what we do and how much we compromise on the name or anything else for that matter. Greece’s aim is to conquer all of Macedonia and forever eliminate and extinguish everything that is Macedonian. If today’s powers want Macedonia to continue to negotiate with Greece, there must be a reason for it which we don’t yet understand. But at the same time those powers WILL force Macedonia to “compromise” if we all don’t stand up and speak our minds with a single voice and say “NO!” to any compromises. If we don’t tell them, how will they know?

Again for the record I need to remind you that Greece has concocted this “name issue” to confuse the world and the Macedonian people about what is really going on and to put the Macedonian government on the defensive. Any Macedonian who was born and lived in Greece can tell you “how much” Greeks love the name “Macedonia”. They love it so much they were willing to murder people for just saying they were Macedonians. They “loved it so

much” that the “M” word had become a dirty word NEVER to be spoken in public or in private.

Please do not allow others to speak for you, especially if you don’t know what they will say and for God’s sake don’t confuse what you want with what the government and other powers want.

Again, irrespective of your trust in the government “to do the right thing” you must let it know what “the right thing is” for you! I can’t emphasize that enough!

11. Why negotiating with Greece is bad for Macedonia!

First and foremost, Macedonia should not be negotiating with Greece over its own name even if Greece was its brother and best friend! But setting that aside, what message does Macedonia give the world when it willingly enters a process to negotiate a change to its own name to please Greece, one country which amounts to less than 1% of the world's countries and a fraction of the world population, so small that I don't even know how to describe it!

Let us pause for a moment and think about this. Who would willingly negotiate to change their own name?

1. A desperate person for whom life does not matter and has no future.
2. A completely ignorant person who knows not what they are doing.
3. A person who has something to gain that is worth more than his or her own identity.

Whether Macedonian authorities are prepared to change our country's name or not is unknown, but as long as these "negotiations" are going on there is a possibility that a name change will take place. The fact that we are allowing the negotiations to go on is demeaning, reckless and dangerous to Macedonia and to the Macedonian people.

The negotiations are demeaning to every decent Macedonian because of what they mean; to be put in a situation where Macedonians are expected to voluntarily negotiate their own sacred identity with their worst enemy, the same enemy who has been planning and executing their demise for more than a century.

The negotiations are reckless because there is no definition or limit to what is being negotiated. No one knows exactly what is negotiated and so far I have not seen any analysis or reports of what a name change will do to/for Macedonia if it is allowed to happen. Worse than that, by negotiating our own God given name, Macedonian authorities have given the world the wrong message about what Greece really wants from Macedonia and what

Macedonia is willing to give up for it. Macedonian authorities have failed to officially disclose where they stand with Greece and simply jumped into a trap from which they now find difficulty exiting.

The negotiations are dangerous because as long as they go on there is danger that Macedonia will be pressured to change its name and that will lead to greater consequences for the Macedonian people in the future.

To minimize this danger, Macedonian authorities must pull out of these negotiations now and face the fallout today before an even greater mistake is made. To eliminate this danger, Macedonian authorities must amend the Macedonian constitution to never allow anyone again to play with Macedonia's name. It is not a referendum that is needed to save Macedonia, it is a constitutional amendment so that no one ever again will have the right to negotiate Macedonia's name with anyone!

Personally for me and for thousands of Macedonians like me that originate from Greek occupied Macedonia, the name negotiations are more than an embarrassment, they are a total letdown, a disaster. To see our sacred Macedonian name, for which we fought and spilled blood, negotiated away with our oppressors and worst enemies is a crime of the worst kind. We are the people whose Macedonian identity has been forcefully ripped out of us. We are the people who lost everything to the Greeks; our freedom, our names, our language, our lands and our dignity. It is appalling for us to see our fellow Macedonians sit side by side with our worst enemies and willingly negotiate away something that belongs to all Macedonians and is not negotiable.

We the Macedonians from Greek occupied Macedonia place great trust in you to safeguard our God given name and preserve it for all time. We plead with you to immediately pull away from these negotiations because, from our experience, we can tell you with certainty that nothing good will come out of this for any of us! Do the right thing, call off the negotiations and begin a new campaign to force Greece, Bulgaria and Albania to recognize the Macedonians in their respective countries!

The only way to put Greece and Bulgaria in their place today is to demand of them that they give back what rightfully belongs to the Macedonian people; their human rights, their property rights and their rights to declare themselves Macedonian. Do that for us instead of negotiating away our name!

Another thing, besides the danger of losing our name, which worries me about these negotiations, is the message we are sending to the world. People don't know and for the most part don't care about what is going on between Macedonia and Greece and see the "name negotiations" as something the Macedonian people want. But is this what the Macedonian people really want? To capitulate to their enemies? To commit ethnic suicide? If this is not what the Macedonian people want then why negotiate with the Greeks? Better yet why hasn't anyone officially explained to the world what Greece is really asking us to do through these negotiations?

Are we a desperate people who have no life and no future and are willing to commit ethnic suicide to satisfy the Greeks who want nothing less of us than our total demise?

Are we a completely ignorant people who know nothing of what we are doing and is that why we are negotiating our country's God given name with our worst enemies?

Or do we believe that Greece, our worst enemy which wants nothing less than our demise, or someone else out there, will by some magical means give us something so great that it is worth more than our own identity?

If we are none of the above then someone please explain to me why we are still negotiating away our own country's God given name with our worst enemies who want nothing less of us than our total demise?

12. The Problem with Human Rights

Europe created Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria and Albania out of nothing and even though a Macedonia existed for over 3 millennium, Europe not only did NOT try to recreate it but it did its “best” to eradicate it, put it out of its misery, make it extinct. Was this done on purpose or were those in charge at the time ignorant of history? I would say it was a bit of both! But my experience tells me that there is always more to it than meets the eye.

Given what the Europeans have done to Macedonia over the last century and a half, who in Europe today would like to see history revised? And how will the role of those “Great Europeans” with their portraits hanging in the Great Western European Halls of Fame, who were involved in Macedonia’s demise, be explained in this “revised” history? Will they still be seen as “Great Humanitarians” who did “SO MUCH” for the world by eradicating Macedonia or will they be defamed and turned into something else?

How many careers in Western Europe have been “made” at the expense of the Macedonian people and what will these careers be worth when history is revised? How many halls of fame are occupied by people with such careers and how will they be viewed when the truth comes out?

So you can see why there is “Great Hesitation” on the part of Europe to “Embrace” Macedonia. And this is only the tip of the colossal iceberg.

I have been told to leave the past alone and let sleeping dogs lie, so to speak, but how can I? How can I remain silent knowing of all those injustices that were perpetrated against an innocent people? Besides, this “bright” idea about giving human rights to minorities in Europe is not mine; it was a Western European idea, an idea born from the same people, “same Greek gods” who not long ago decided the fate of nations; which nations would have their own countries and which would not. These are the same “Greek gods” who decided there would be no Macedonia and the Macedonian ethnic identity must die. Well I have news for you; like the weeds you

attempt to eradicate that come back year after year; the Macedonian ethnic identity is back and here to stay!

If Europe is not ready to get at the truth and liberate its minorities from their shackles then why dabble with the idea and tempt them with human rights?

Is Western Europe prepared to face the Macedonian people and the injustices it perpetrated against them? This is a “Yes” or “NO” question. If the answer is “yes” then why hesitate? Why is Europe, the same Europe which “created” Greece out of nothing at the expense of the Macedonians and others, allowing it to deny the Macedonian peoples’ existence? Oh don’t tell me, could it be for the same reason that Europe allowed the Macedonian people in 1903 to take on the entire Ottoman might on their own? Hoping that the Ottomans would destroy the Macedonian nation once and for all so they wouldn’t have to? If I am wrong about this then tell me so but please explain to me why after liberating Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria you left Macedonia alone to take the full brunt of a disgruntled Ottoman Empire? Were the Macedonians not Christians and people like the others? So what is it that you have against the Macedonian people? And why play with their emotions if you have no intention of fulfilling your promises?

Why tempt people with offers of human rights when you have no intention of delivering? Or is this another one of those offers where the privileged get something and those stomped on get nothing. Why on one hand offer human rights to all minorities living in the European continent and on the other pass resolutions asking the Macedonian people to voluntarily commit “hari-kari”.

Europe created Greece and the circumstances for Greece to acquire Macedonian territories, fully populated with Macedonian people. Europe sanctioned Macedonia’s partition by signing Treaties without guaranteeing protection for the Macedonian people. Europe watched Greece commit monstrous acts against the Macedonian population and said and did nothing. Now that there is a Macedonian state on the horizon, Europe is asking the Macedonian people to change their name, which will result in ethnic suicide. Where is the “right” in that? What are people expected to think of

such demands? What kind of human rights is Europe offering when it is asking people to voluntarily off themselves, erase themselves from the face of the earth? And why should they do that? To repay Europe for the kindness it has shown for them in the last century and a half?

It's time for all people around the world to learn that Western Europe has no intention of recognizing a Macedonian ethnic identity or offering the Macedonian people living in Greece and Bulgaria human rights.

Every European knows or should know that the so-called name dispute between Greece and the Republic of Macedonia is a ruse to side step real issues such as the cultural and ethnic genocide and other violent acts perpetrated by Greece and Bulgaria over the years against the Macedonian people. If Europe recognizes a Macedonian state then it must recognize a Macedonian people and everything that comes with it. If Europe does that then it must also come clean as to why over the years it not only refused to recognize a Macedonian ethnic identity but did everything possible to eradicate it. So is Europe really prepared to face the Macedonian people over this or is it just pretending to offer human rights to look good in front of the world? I guess time will tell!

But for now let us not fool ourselves into thinking that Europe has somehow changed and that is now more caring and gentle. Europe is still the same old racist place it always was but circumstances indeed have changed. Today, in spite of all odds, we have a Macedonian state in Europe and Europe must learn to live with it!

It seems that everyone, except for those who want to placate Greece and Western Europe, have no problem with the existence of a Macedonian state; judging by the number of countries that have recognized Macedonia by its proper name. Most countries that carry no past baggage would welcome another nation among the family of nations in this world. Because that is the proper thing to do. But even the most uninformed would have to wonder why would "nations on the same continent" and even in the same neighbourhood not welcome such a nation? It makes one wonder, doesn't it?

We can't change the countries that exist on our continent as much as we can't make our neighbours like us, when clearly they don't, but at the same time we can't afford to forever remain deaf and blind as to what is happening around us. It has become painfully obvious that Macedonia and the Macedonian people are not welcome in the European Union. This fact we must accept and stop negotiating with them, particularly our own ethnic demise, and move on. There are plenty of other continents, places and countries where we are welcome for who and what we are.

Greece does not hesitate to demand human rights for "Greeks" everywhere in the world, even though the so called "Greek ethnicity" is nothing more than a 19th century fabrication, and while it shamelessly promotes itself as "the cradle of democracy" it stomps on the rights of its minority citizens living on its own soil! What kind of democracy will not recognize its minorities and strip them of all their human rights? The so called Greek democracy does! There are people in Greece today who are Macedonians, Albanians, Vlachs, Turks, Roma and others who Greece adamantly claims do not exist.

13. Winners, Losers and the NATO Summit

It should have become painfully obvious to everyone by now that Greece is interested in one and only one thing and that is to destroy the Macedonian identity at any cost.

Macedonia can't negotiate its name because it is tightly connected with its identity and Greece will not accept a name that ties Macedonia with its identity so after 17 years of negotiations we are back to square one.

Macedonia cannot change its name because it would lose its identity and Greece will not accept the existence of a Macedonian identity because it will then be obliged to recognize the Macedonian minority living inside Greece.

So what are we to do? Well for one we must stop negotiating something that is not negotiable. By vetoing Macedonia's entry into NATO, Greece has in effect violated the 1995 interim accord. Macedonia must now seize this opportunity and rid itself of these endless negotiations without end.

Knowing that neither side is going to move in the negotiations, Greece is secure in the belief that as long as these negotiations continue the issue of human rights for the Macedonians in Greece will remain dormant. So it is to the benefit of Greece to continue to negotiate indefinitely.

From what I understand so far, in view of what transpired in Bucharest, the United States has offered Macedonia guarantees for its territorial integrity. I am sure Turkey will do the same and so will China. In fact if Macedonia plays its diplomatic card wisely in the long term it will come up a winner.

I hate to believe that France and its followers risked offending the United States and its other NATO allies by supporting Greece in its aims without a hidden agenda of its own. So I am inclined to believe that there are deeper issues within NATO, which I do not care to know. If that is the case NATO may not last long enough for Macedonia to join it. Putting it another way, why risk anything to

join a failing organization? If this is true and NATO will fail, (NATO functioned successfully in the same way since 1945), history will record Greece as the country that broke NATO.

14. What's Europe's Problem with Macedonia?

What's Europe's problem with Macedonia? Some people would say that most Europeans know so little, or next to nothing, about Macedonia how could they possibly have a problem with it?

By now anyone who has read my articles knows what I think so I will spare you the repetition.

More recently I received a letter from Australia from Vasil Bogov, the author of the book "Macedonian Revelation, Historical Documents Rock and Shatter Modern Political Ideology", who reminded me that there may indeed be "other reasons" why Europe has a problem with the Macedonians.

And finally in response to that very question another friend e-mailed me a link with an article entitled "The Macedonian Question" by the Foreign Relations Council for Research Into South-Eastern Europe; Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts, which I have included in its entirety further down the text.

And now I will begin with Vasil Bogov's compilations. Here Vasil draws on the words of others who shed a different light on European affairs regarding Macedonia and the Macedonians. The themes in the various sentences may seem to be out of context with each other which, by the way, is done on purpose, drawing the reader to form his or her own opinions. Do the Macedonian people deserve the "wrath" of Western Europe because of the historic influence of their Macedonian Church? Read and decide for yourselves! Here is what Vasil had to say;

"Panslavism was always primarily an instrument of Russian nationalism and politics, it never stood for Christian union. It is true there are a few Turkish settlements in Macedonia, which live by agriculture.

They are genuine Osmanly Turks, who are exiled from Asia, in order that they might be isolated. (1)

Many in Western Europe doubted whether Hellenism existed at all in Macedonia, and regarded it solely as the invention of the Greek press. (2)

Since nationality in terms of practical politics, was chiefly a question of ecclesiastical registration, more than ever the Macedonian struggle developed into a conflict over Macedonian churches. (3)

Hellenismos was chiefly a propagandist organisation. (4)

The modern Western influence that thus spread into the main body of Christendom, the Ecumenical Patriarch had transmuted their old dream of raising from the dead, the East Roman ghost of the Roman Empire, in to a new dream of solving the Western question, on a political plan, in making the Ecumenical Patriarch the official head of all the Eastern Christians, the Sultan had given this Constantinopolitan prelate, political authority over Christian peoples, that had never been under the rule of any Constantinopolitan Emperor. (5)

However, as soon as there were Turks in Europe, The Eastern Question was born, and one might add that:

As soon as there was an "Eastern Question" war followed. (6)

Turkey was the ally, throughout the years, of the great European powers, in turn exploiting their rivalries in her own interest; whilst the European powers made the best of this field, in the great Christendom of Macedonia, of constant intrigues and perilous successes. (7)

Their Catholic priest brought pressures to bear in their proselytising of the Greeks. (8)

Their power in Macedonia was reinforced by the Orthodox clergy. The new western "system of liberty", which at that time was being imported into the Christian world, not only contradicts the scriptures, but is really no more than a bastard freedom, allowing each individual to pursue his own most selfish interests and appetites. (9)

The spirit of western liberalism, was as alien to the Christian church in Macedonia, as the Sultan himself. (10)

Throughout the period of Turkish occupation the Holy Mountain was the great academy of Pravoslavni Christian Monasticism. (11)

It was here those monks above all others, who by their ardent and unswerving preaching, encouraged the customary to stand by their faith, and not abandon it in favour of Islam. (12)

But something had changed, by the middle of the 19th century, a Greek Bishop, as we call today, had been installed in Constantinople, to represent Roum Millet in the Balkans. (13)

His name was Melety, such Bishops are not only a burden to the Christian people, but also a sore wound of Christ's flock. (14)

The modern clerical members exploited the church, and between them, they set themselves to crush the Pravoslavni Christian faith in Macedonia, with the authority of the Turks behind them. (15)

It is from that egoistic standpoint that the "Greeks" hold themselves justified in combining with the Turks, to resist the old Christian religion in Macedonia. (16)

Greeks had never been a nation; it was doubtful whether they were even a race.

Greeks were not Hellenes, Romans, "Byzantines," nor Ancient Macedonians, as they are written in today's modern European history. (17)

Greek race is a mere invention of pseudo-science, and Greek language is another artificial invention. (18)

Greeks were loyal subjects to Abdul Hamid. (19)

What a land, then, is that comprised within the limits of the Turkish Empire that was Holy Mountain, with 64 monastic estates and monasteries in Macedonia. (20)

Out of its past speaks Christian faith, and material wealth, literature and art, philosophy and religion. (21)

And that land which today lies desolate, and its people, who were the glory of the past, repressed by injustice, cruelty, and tyranny – that land possesses today the same elements for material and spiritual greatness, that made it the first to develop a modern civilization. (22)

From whatever angle one views Macedonia, it beholds a land of extraordinary fascination.

To the historian, the archeologist, or to the geographer, it is a storehouse of wealth, worth a lifetime of exploration and study. (23)

Poetry and proverb are in the daily speech, while monasteries proclaim from every mountaintop, and market-place, that religion is a part of the very life of the Macedonians. (24)

The land of Macedonia looks out on the present from a historic past that is the study of all ages.

On the banks of the Dardanelles Constantine founded his world capital, and from that day Macedonian Christianity and the Macedonian city has figured in all great world movements. (25)

It has been the centre of intrigues and treaties, of councils and machination, around which have circled the policies of Europe for the last eighteen hundred years. (26)

If one could only turn aside from the horrors of misrule and injustice done to Macedonia, and out of a wonderful past could construct a vision of a more glorious future!

For, in spite of five centuries of retrogression under the rule of the Turks, there is promise of a golden age for the generation about to come.

The same broad plain that once fed and clothed a population of 40,000,000 beings, are waiting today for the plow to seed, and the reaper.

The mountains still hold riches of coal and iron and copper.
The rivers are potent with power to turn the wheels of industry.
The natural harbours invite the fleet of merchantmen, and the river valleys and mountain passes offer natural lines of communication and transportation, as in days when great caravans passed along these natural highways, bringing the merchandise of the East to the markets of the West. (27)

For centuries – a land, that modern exploration reveals as one of the richest in natural resources, and as unsurpassed by its geographic location, for being the trade centre of the world. (28)

However, in short the people of Macedonia become the victims of ruthless, unrelenting exploitation by a modern big idea of nationality.

If we take books, it was virtually nothing in Modern Greek, and naturally all Athenian periodicals and newspapers – save an innocent sheet published under the censor's eye in Smyrna (Asia Minor) are articles of contraband. (29)

It is that egoistic standpoint that the Greeks hold themselves justified in combining with the Turks to crush the Macedonian Christian church. (30)

The Patriarchate Greek priests were the tool of the Sultan. (31)

If one must balance criminality, the weight of horrors now rests with the Greeks.

And I am within the mark in saying that the Turkish authorities wink at the doing of the Greek "Bands" in Macedonia.

The Turk promotes and helps Greek propaganda in Macedonia – and this is the blunt truth – against the old and long established Christian religion. (32)

The Greek fails to notice that the whole proceeding is part of a scheme, by modern political powers in Europe, to keep the Christians at enmity in Macedonia. (33)

And now I offer you some of Henry Brailsford's wisdom on the subject of "the Greeks", quoted in square brackets, from his book "Macedonia Its Races and their Future". Here is what Brailsford has to say about the Greeks with regards to the Macedonians;

[It is a sorry transition to turn from this dream of a revived Hellenism which is to civilise the Near East once more, to the actualities of Greek politics. One may say of the Greeks with equal truth that they are capable of superb devotion to an idea, or that they are the ready victims of any catch-word or abstraction. "The Slav is the enemy" is a phrase which their journalists have been repeating to them for the last thirty years, and at length it has obsessed them so powerfully that they have almost forgotten their own past and their heroic struggles against Turkish tyranny. They have been taught to believe that all Turkey south of the Balkans is theirs by right, and they can think of the Macedonian movement only as a sort of invasion of their inheritance planned by the enemy in Bulgaria, if not by Russia herself. That it can be a spontaneous Macedonian movement, that it is a real revolt against Turkish tyranny, they will not for a moment believe. It is for them only a plot by the foes of Greece against the sacred cause of Hellenism. It is from that egoistic standpoint that they hold themselves justified in combining with the Turks to resist "the Slav." For them these miserable peasants, taking arms under any leader who will promise them deliverance from the tax-collector and the bey, have no concrete existence. They are Slav, and "the Slav is the enemy." It is part of the Greek temperament that it does nothing by halves. They flung themselves into the new alliance with enthusiasm. In 1903 deputations of Greek officers actually visited the Turkish Minister in Athens to offer him their swords, and the Greek press wrote of Abdul Hamid as though he were a philosopher-king and a pillar of Hellenism. Bulgarian refugees captured in Thessaly were handed over to the Turkish police to be tortured in Turkish dungeons. The Patriarch issued an encyclical ordering his Bishops and priests to denounce the insurgents and their sympathisers to the Turkish officials. Every Greek consulate in Macedonia became a department of the Turkish secret police, and the work of espionage went on unchecked, even while the Turks were slaughtering the Hellenised Vlachs of Kruchevo. For to the Turk all Giaours are one. "There are white dogs and red dogs, but all of them are dogs." In fairness to the

Greeks we must admit that this policy has been followed by their rivals in times past. M. Stambulov worked steadily for a Turco-Bulgarian entente, and undoubtedly he meant to use it against the Greeks. I have never heard that he carried it to such an extreme as this — the circumstances hardly arose — but there is a nasty story which accuses him of encouraging M. Tricoupis to develop his plan for a Balkan coalition against Turkey, only to carry the scheme to Constantinople on the eve of its execution. (34) No sense of chivalry prevented the Bulgarians from profiting by the reverses of Greece in 1897. But apart from the morality of this Greek policy or the amount of provocation which might be held to justify it, it is an extremely foolish venture. It had no doubt a certain brief and superficial success. It was easy to force a Bulgarian notable to call himself a "Greek" by threatening to denounce him to the Turks, and the Archbishop of Castoria won many villages for the Patriarch in this way. When that failed, a Bishop had only to go on tour among the villages with an immense "escort" of Turkish troops, as the Bishops of Serres and Florina did, "converting" them by force. As a last resort, in one case at least, the Bishop of Serres even arrested a Bulgarian priest and kept him a prisoner in his own palace, only releasing him when he renounced the Exarch. But these are ephemeral triumphs. The "converted" villages still maintain their sly commerce with the Committee, still harbour "bands," still talk Bulgarian. And assuredly they do not love "Hellenism" the more. Worst of all, the loyal Greek and Vlach villages are puzzled and impatient. They saw their Slav neighbours marching out to fight the traditional enemy, and they wished to join them. "You know we too have rifles, and we want to use them," said a young man of Klissoura to me one day. "Against whom?" I asked. "Why, against the Turks, of course. We are only waiting for Greece to tell us to move." And he went on, in the same tongue, the same accents that the mountaineers of Crete have used so often in my hearing, to explain how intolerable life was under Turkish rule. The policy which prompted Greece to use the occasion only to weaken Bulgaria while the chance of freedom slipped by, was quite beyond his comprehension. He, too, wanted autonomy, and he could not understand why Greece should claim it for Crete and oppose it in Macedonia. It is only the official or the educated Greek who prefers anarchy and the status quo to any surrender of the grotesque territorial claims of Hellenism over the Bulgarian interior. The

average Greek official vowing in one breath that all the Macedonians are Greeks, and declaring in the next that he would rather have them massacred than governed by a Bulgarian majority, is painfully like the false mother in Solomon's judgment, who was quite ready to allow the other woman's child to be cut in two. The immediate result of the Greek policy of espionage and denunciation, so lightly planned in Athens and Constantinople, was to expose the Greeks of Macedonia — or, to be more accurate, the villagers of the Greek party — to the fury and revenge of the Bulgarian Committee. If a Bishop had frightened a village into joining the Patriarchist Church by holding the fear of the Turks over its head, it was always possible for the next Bulgarian band which came that way to compel it to return to the Exarchist schism, by threatening to burn it to the ground. The one method was as legitimate as the other, and quite as efficacious. If a Greek priest in obedience to his Bishop's instructions had betrayed a group of insurgents to the Turks, there were always comrades left to come round and hang him from the nearest tree. The next stage in the evolution of party feeling was naturally that the Greeks came to think of the Bulgarians as wild beasts, who slaughtered from mere lust of blood. Legitimists always, they seemed to regard their own work of denunciation as an unexceptionable use of the weapons of law and order. The Bulgarians, after all, are rebels, and the Greeks as loyal subjects of Abdul Hamid were only setting the machinery of justice in motion. The Turks, however, have failed to protect them, and they had to devise some more effective plan for defending themselves. The scheme was to organise counter-bands to hold the Bulgarians in check. I had the chance to meet in Monastir in March, 1904, the emissary from the Greek Government who was preparing this scheme. He was travelling as a cattle-dealer under an assumed name, but I had known him first in a European university where we were undergraduates together, and again in the East. He comes of an influential family, and is himself a man of a certain magnetism and wayward talent, who has had some experience as a guerilla chief. The climate of Macedonia seemed to have transformed him. He talked his French, his English, and his German as fluently as ever, but the ideas he expressed — as far as the pale vocabulary of these languages would allow him — were the ideas of his Phanariot ancestors. In the name of Hellenism he proposed to make of Macedonia a shambles and a desert. Where the Bulgarians had

murdered one man, he declared, he would slaughter ten. He shrank only from one thing — he would not imitate what he described as the "anarchist" methods of the Committee. He would not arm his men with dynamite. But all manner of straightforward bloodiness with lead and steel came into his programme. And yet he was firmly convinced that he was fighting for "culture," for "ideas," for "a superior civilisation," against the Bulgarian "wolves." (35) The earth might be a very tolerable place to live in, if every abstract word could be eliminated from human speech. Mephistopheles must have been fresh from a visit to the Balkans when he told Jehovah that mankind have used the reason which He gave them to become more beast-like than any beast. (36)]

The Macedonian Question

The Macedonian question appeared in foreign relations in the 1870's during the great Eastern Crisis when armed uprisings for liberation of the subdued peoples started in the Balkans. The uprisings in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1875, in Bulgaria in April 1876 and in Macedonia in 1876 raised the question of the further existence of the Ottoman Turkish Empire in Europe. Following its current policy for the Balkans, Russia opposed the policies of the great Western European powers to retain the integrity of the Ottoman state, guaranteed by the Treaty of Paris concluded on April 15th 1856, and supported the fight of the conquered nations for liberation and independence. The Russian political programme devised several years before by counsellor Gorchakov was announced at the end of 1860 and included a solution to the Macedonian question.

The Russian plans for the Balkans anticipated a direct involvement of Russia in the liberation of the Orthodox Christian peoples and creation of national states: independence and territorial expansion for Serbia and Montenegro (in their ethnic borders), establishment of two Bulgarian principalities (north and south of the Stara mountain as counter-balance to the two Serbian principalities), and a separate, independent Macedonian principality. The Macedonian question divided the interests of Austria-Hungary and Russia. The Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Count Abrashi, requested establishment of an autonomous Macedonian state in

customs union with Austria-Hungary. Gorchakov in principle agreed to it, but it soon turned out that Russia could not accept it. In 1876-77 an Ambassadors' Conference of the great European states was held in Constantinople. It was expected to reach a diplomatic solution to the problems of the conquered nations within the Ottoman state and thus prevent further escalation of the crisis. The USA, which did not have any special interests in Macedonia, initiated an appropriate inquiry and solution to the Macedonian question. The American diplomacy in association with the American professors from the Robert College in Constantinople who were well-acquainted with the real situation, submitted to the Conference a proposition for the autonomy of Macedonia. However, the Conference failed due to the opposing interests of the great powers. Russia changed its policy on Macedonia and abandoned the plans for creation of a Macedonian state and started working in favour of a greater Bulgarian state instead. This happened after the secret negotiations on the Balkans among Austria-Hungary, Russia and Germany in April 1878 when Austro-Hungarian diplomacy renewed the question of the creation of an autonomous Macedonian state, i.e. Macedonian principality (with General Radich as its governor). On that occasion the Russian representative, General Ignatiev, did not oppose that solution, but in May 1878 Russian diplomacy refused to clarify its view on the question or support the Macedonian demands for an independent state submitted in Constantinople to General Ignatiev by Dimitar Robev, a Macedonian representative in the Ottoman Parliament.

On July 13th, the International Treaty of Berlin (Art.23), gave Macedonia a special autonomous status. The government of the Ottoman state was assigned to regulate the status of Macedonia and the other provinces with a separate Statute. However, as there was no international control to observe the implementation of these resolutions or authorize sanctions for their non-implementation, the government in Constantinople did not fulfil its duties. The Macedonian uprising from 1878-79 and the actions of "Edinstvo" ("Unity"), the Transitional Government of Macedonia (formed secretly at the meeting of the National Assembly held from May 21st to June 2nd 1880) renewed interest in the Macedonian question in the diplomatic circles of the Great European Powers. The Transitional Government sent an Appeal to the great powers

accompanied by a Protocol of the National Assembly for liberation of Macedonia and its constitution as an independent state.

Furthermore, on March 23rd 1881, it issued a Manifesto which was distributed among the diplomatic representatives in the Ottoman Turkish state. Macedonia became an object of special interest in the relations between Russia, Austria-Hungary and Germany. The agreement on a secret alliance of the emperors of these three states signed in 1881 included a separate stipulation for the protection of Macedonia from a possible attack by Bulgaria.

The beginning of the Ilinden uprising for national liberation of Macedonia in 1903, which the European diplomats called "The Macedonian revolution", marked the Macedonian question as an acute one for European diplomacy. The uprising and the creation of the so-called Krushevo Republic proved that the Macedonian people were ready to fight for their national freedom and the formation of their national state. At that time, the European powers were against the creation of a new state in the Balkans. European diplomacy had to intervene in order to calm the situation by proposing several projects for reforms among which were the Austro-Hungarian - Russian project known as the Murzsteg Reforms Programme and the British initiative that gave Macedonia a special status in its natural and ethnic borders. US diplomacy also became involved. The secretary of state and the USA president T. Roosevelt himself wrote to the British government acclaiming the British initiative for the autonomy of Macedonia.

As regards the reforms in Macedonia, American diplomats in 1907 suggested strict control of their implementation by the mandatory powers. In the beginning of March 1908 the government of Great Britain launched an initiative for the introduction of more radical reforms in Macedonia. This initiative was readily accepted by Russia. The two state sovereigns (British and Russian) met in June 1908 in Reval (Tallinn) and adopted a new proposal for reforms as a preliminary phase towards full autonomy for Macedonia."

Nevertheless, this initiative did not take place due to the revolution of the Young Turks which declared and introduced a constitutional order and democratization of the Ottoman Turkish state. However, the rule of the Young Turks with its Greater Ottoman politics

stopped the process of further democratization and of a peaceful democratic solution to the Macedonian question within the Turkish state for which there existed the necessary conditions. It only led towards further deterioration of the situation which was used by the neighbouring Balkan states to interfere in the internal affairs of the Turkish state and to manifest openly their expansionist intentions. Due to the worsening relations on the Balkans, in 1911 US diplomats undertook steps to influence the governments of the Balkan states to ease the tension and avoid the war they were preparing for, which could have led towards further involvement of the great powers in the solution of the eastern crisis. However, European diplomats showed no interest in preventing the military conflict on the Balkans. Moreover, they took part in its preparation governed by their original interests. At the time of the Balkan Wars when Macedonia was occupied and partitioned by the neighbouring Balkan states which was confirmed by the Treaty of Bucharest of August 10th 1913, European diplomacy had its own interest in accepting the partitioning as such. This could well have been predicted as the European powers, divided into two opposite blocks, started hasty preparations for the forthcoming Great War. Thus, the Macedonian question entered a new and extremely dangerous phase, not only for the future of the Macedonian nation, but for the peace on the Balkans and in Europe too.

These fears soon came true with the beginning of the First World War. At the end of the war the Macedonian question became a crucial problem in the negotiations and the plans for the post-war organization of Balkan relations. The high military and political circles of the Entente powers and the US diplomats considered the creation of an independent Macedonian state, under the protectorate of one of the great non-involved powers (having primarily in mind the USA) as an unbiased, just and permanent solution to the problem. The final aim of this idea was the establishment of radically new relations on the Balkans which would ensure permanent stability in that neuralgic region. Such a solution was also presented at the secret negotiations for separate peace between the powers of the Entente on the one side and Bulgaria on the other under the observance of the USA. The interest in the Macedonian question was renewed yet again in the official diplomacy of the USA, with President W. Wilson's peace programme. In the official

American interpretation of the "14 items!", the USA declared that they would support an objective and unbiased investigation of the problem. An American expert group studied the Treaty of Bucharest of 1913 and concluded that it could not serve as a basis for a solution to the Balkan problems because that agreement was "an act of the corrupted Balkan bourgeoisies".

At the beginning of the Paris Peace Conference, twenty- five renowned intellectuals from different European countries, Great Britain and the USA signed a Memorandum on the Macedonian question and sent it to the President of the USA. They demanded the formation of an autonomous Macedonian state in its natural and ethnic borders, which in the south would stretch from the Lake of Kostur to the Vardar estuary, thus leaving the towns of Ber and Negrita and the Halkidiki Peninsula to Greece. Furthermore, it was suggested that in the beginning the autonomous Macedonian state be under the protectorate of one of the great powers (the USA presumably). An unsigned Memorandum with identical contents was sent to Great Britain, too. The issue of the formation of a Macedonian state was the subject of an intense exchange of opinions and viewpoints among the members of the USA Peace Delegation, the American diplomatic representatives in the European states and the members of the American teams of experts. This was especially evident after the request of the Macedonians to be allowed a presence at the Paris Conference in order to present their demands. The member of the team of experts for Balkan questions C. Day informed A. Dulles in a letter about his numerous consultations with impartial experts on the Macedonian question who admitted the existence of problems arising from the issue, but were unanimously for the formation of an autonomous Macedonian state. The envoy of the American President, his personal friend and an expert on European relations, Professor George Herron urged President W. Wilson and the American Peace Delegation to put the Macedonian question on the agenda of the Peace Conference, supporting the integrity and independence of Macedonia. In a letter of May 26th to Colonel Haus, the leader of the American delegation and the most influential political figure after the President, Professor Herron wrote that the Macedonians were a separate nation, unified in their demands and wishes to form an independent state under the

protectorate of the USA. Col. Haus himself supported "the cause of Macedonian freedom".

Despite the favourable attitude of most of the USA representatives, the Macedonian question remained outside the agenda of the Peace Conference due to the categorical opposition of France and Great Britain who supported the aspirations of the Balkan Allies, Greece and Serbia (i.e. the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenians) to keep the occupied parts of Macedonia. At the Paris Peace Conference, when the peace terms were negotiated with the Balkan states, the Macedonian question was treated as a minority problem and discussed at the Committee for New States and the Protection of the Minorities. At its meeting on July 15th, 1919 the Italian delegation submitted a proposal for the autonomous status of Macedonia "within borders fixed by the Great Powers and their allies" with the highest possible degree of self-government, but within the borders of the new Kingdom of SCS. The meeting of July 18th discussed the stipulations which were to be introduced at the peace negotiations with the Balkan states concerning the protection of minorities. These stipulations also included the Macedonian minorities in the Balkan states, referred to as "Macedonians". At the meeting of July 30th the Committee discussed the Italian proposal for the autonomy of Macedonia and the British proposal for the establishment of League of Nations control over Macedonia. As regards this, it was suggested that the League of Nations be authorized to send its representatives to Macedonia. The following meetings discussed the same proposals in a somewhat modified form. Due to the opposing views on the question, it remained open till the beginning of November 1919. The text of the Peace Agreement on minorities and the obligations of the government of the Kingdom of SCS for the protection of the rights of minorities were then finally formulated. On November, 11th the Supreme Council accepted the proposed text of the document and obliged the government of the Kingdom of SCS to sign the agreement. The Committee for New States also prepared stipulations for protection of minorities in Greece where the Macedonian people were given minority status.'

The Committee informed the Greek delegation about the draft-agreement for the protection of minorities and the stipulations

included in it. The president of the Greek government and a leader of the peace delegation responded to this document issued by the Committee with a false statement that Greece had provided protection for the Albanian, Moslem and Slav minorities (the latter referred to as "the Slav communities in Macedonia") and claimed that Greece was ready to accept the agreement. According to this, the president of Greece recognized the existence of a Macedonian minority. The stipulations for the protection of minorities put Greece under an obligation to introduce minority languages in the state schools, but Venizelos resisted this and demanded reformulation of the decrees for the protection of minorities. At the meeting on September 18th the Supreme Council rejected all the Greek comments and on November 3rd ratified its agreement with Greece. Having imposed his plans for a reciprocal exchange of population between Greece and Bulgaria, the aim of which was only to conduct an ethnic cleansing of the occupied Aegean part of Macedonia with international approval, Venizelos presented himself as especially cooperative as regards the Agreement. Accepting his demands, the Committee for New States formed a separate Sub-Committee which prepared "special stipulations" for "voluntary emigration" of the citizens of these states during a period of four years after the effectuation of the Agreement. The Committee for New States only redefined this decree as an individual right for voluntary emigration, thus changing nothing essential in it. The suggestion of expanding these stipulations to refer to the Kingdom of SCS and Turkey was not accepted. The Committee prepared a separate convention for an exchange of citizens between Greece and Bulgaria on a voluntary basis. The Supreme Council approved of its text and obliged the Bulgarian delegation to sign it within 48 hours. The Bulgarian delegation signed the convention within the given period of notice. The stipulations for the protection of minorities which also referred to parts of the Macedonian people were not respected by the Balkan states. The Macedonian people was subjected to very severe denationalization and assimilation. Greece applied such means of violent pressure that it forced a great part of the Macedonian population to accept "voluntary" emigration.

By the Foreign Relations Council for Research Into South-Eastern Europe; Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts

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2. THE GREEK STRUGGLE IN MACEDONIA 1897-1913 by Douglas Dakin 1966
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4. THE GREEK STRUGGLE IN MACEDONIA 1897-1913 by Douglas Dakin 1966
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9. THE STRUGGLE FOR GREEK INDEPENDENCE by Richard Clogg 1973 Page 182
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27. “ “ “ “
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29. MACEDONIA by H.N. Brailsford London 1906 Page 203
30. “ “ “ “
Page 210
31. PICTURES FROM THE BALKANS by John Foster Fraser 1912 Page 181
32. “ “ “ “
Page 15

33.

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34 This tale may be a calumny. M. Tricoupis always denied that he had attempted to bring about an alliance with Bulgaria (see Nicolaidis, *La Macedoine*," p. 203).

35. As a matter of history the Greeks have been neither more nor less humane than other Balkan people. The War of Independence was a dialogue of massacre in which outrage answered to outrage. The Cretans perpetrated a wholesale massacre at the expense of the Moslem minority in the eastern (Sitia) districts of the island in 1897. I saw with my own eyes young Moslem girls who had escaped mutilated from these horrors. During the Thessalian campaign of 1897 I was present when an Evzone regiment strung up a Turkish prisoner by his heels from a tree, and proceeded to lay a fire of wood and straw under his head. Fortunately he promised to give them valuable information before the fire was actually lit, and at that moment some Italian officers of the Foreign Legion appeared on the scene.

36. *MACEDONIA* by H.N. Brailsford London 1906 Pages 210-213

15. The West we Trust?

Not so long ago I ran into a Macedonian who I have known for a while and in our discussions he mentioned something that stayed with me. He said he does not trust the Greeks, Serbians, or Bulgarians in being objective when writing about Macedonia. This was fine by me but when he said that he also didn't trust the Macedonians to do the same, I found that disturbing. This is not the first or only time I have heard this. In fact I myself am guilty of having such thoughts because some of the material I have read coming from Macedonians has left me disappointed.

No one knows or cares about Macedonia's narrative better than the Macedonians themselves. I too, not too long ago, thought that Westerners were better at "knowing our story" that is until I contacted a reputable Western historian and asked him why he hadn't written anything about the Macedonians?

To my surprise in a very terse message he said, "Why haven't you written about yourselves? When you write something about yourselves then I will write something about you! Where am I expected to find the information to write about you?"

I received a simple, honest, direct and eye opening answer, which not only surprised me but made me realize that no one was going to do my job for me and more importantly, how presumptuous of me to have such expectations of a stranger, who knows nothing about me or my history?

Anyway that was then, but unfortunately there are Macedonians out there who still to this day believe that Westerners, foreigners who know nothing about us are more knowledgeable about our history than we are! This is indeed disturbing!

How did Macedonians come to believe this? That "Westerners" are more knowledgeable than Macedonians and therefore more objective when writing Macedonian history?

Macedonians in Greece, Bulgaria, Albania and all over the world, outside of the Republic of Macedonia, were taught in foreign

schools and learned things about Macedonia and its history from a variety of non-Macedonian sources. Macedonians have also learned about Macedonia from their own relatives who had experienced turmoil and war in their lives. Unfortunately the things that Macedonians learned in school did not correspond with what they learned from their relatives.

Macedonians in the Greek occupied part of Macedonia were taught that Macedonians did not exist and that the people living in Macedonia were Greeks. Events like the 1903 Ilinden Uprising and Macedonia's invasion, occupation and partition not only were not taught in Greece, but people were not even allowed to mention them in private. Naturally what Macedonian children learned in Greek schools did not at correspond with what their relatives taught them.

Macedonians in the Bulgarian occupied part of Macedonia were taught that they were Bulgarians. They were also taught that Macedonians living in Greek and Serbian occupied Macedonia were also Bulgarians. Major events like the 1903 Ilinden Uprising were labeled "Bulgarian" and all those who participated in them, including the staunchest of Macedonians, were also labeled Bulgarians.

Macedonians in the Serbian occupied part of Macedonia, up until the mid 1940's, were taught that they were Serbians or Old Serbians. But afterwards, when Macedonia became a Yugoslav Republic, Macedonians were allowed to write their own history provided that it fit the Yugoslav model which claimed that everyone in Yugoslavia was a "Slav". Thus the young Macedonians in the Peoples' Republic of Macedonia were taught to believe that they were "Slavs" and that Macedonian history began in the 6th century A.D.! This however did not sit well with Macedonians from Greece, particularly those living in the Diaspora, who were familiar with a much different and much longer history.

Those Macedonians who could write well and wanted to write the proper Macedonian narrative had a hard time publishing their work. Only those who were in agreement with the "pre-prescribed" version of history were encouraged to write and had their work published.

But even they were alienated and their poor work reflected their disappointments.

So we have Macedonians in three parts of Macedonia with a common historic heritage who were taught three different stories about themselves; none of which corresponded with their personal Macedonian experiences.

It may be worth while at this point to explain that the vast majority of Macedonians living in the Diaspora originated from Greek occupied Macedonia. They were never taught to read or write in the Macedonian language and neither were the Macedonians living inside Greece. This is because the Macedonian language was outlawed in Greece. However even those in Greece who could read Macedonian would not bring Macedonian literature to Greece because such an offense would land them in very hot water. At a minimum they would be facing criminal charges and even jail time. So it was not worth it!

The only sources of so-called “Macedonian history” that the Macedonians from Greece could read and understand were Greek or Western. Since Macedonians definitely did not trust the Greeks, they became reliant on Western sources.

Now based on what the Western historian I mentioned earlier told me, that Macedonians need to write their own Macedonian history before they can expect outsiders to write about them, then where do you suppose the “material” to write these “existing” Western books came from and how accurate and representative of Macedonian history would it be?

Well here is where it becomes a bit “tricky”! Writing history about the Macedonians in the past had been delegated mostly to the Greeks, our enemies; the same Greeks who persistently have insisted that Macedonians do not exist. They have insisted that we, who call ourselves Macedonians, are not Macedonians at all but “Slavs” who came to Macedonia in the 6th century AD. The Greeks have written thousands of books full of such lies and misinformation and these are the very books that Westerners used as “sources” to write about the Macedonians!

The way I see it, a Western historian is an outside observer who we cannot expect to know the most intricate details about us or “our story” first hand.

A Western historian can be compared to a witness of an argument. Two men are arguing over “something” and both present valid arguments as to who this “something” belongs. This “something” however cannot exclusively belong to both at the same time, so obviously at least one of them is not telling the real story! But without knowing the details of the “real story” how can the outside observer tell which one of the men is lying and which one is telling the truth?

If one knows more about the subject then it becomes simple to tell who is lying and who is telling the truth. But when we have one party, Greece, representing both Greek and Macedonian interests and controlling the flow of information then we have a serious problem which has been the case for a couple of centuries.

Thus mainstream historians have accepted the Greek side of the story as the “defacto standard” and now that a Macedonian state has come into existence the Macedonian side is being questioned. This is because most mainstream historians have accepted Greek claims that (1) “Macedonians do not exist”, (2) “the Modern Greeks are the descendents of the so-called ancient Greeks”, and (3) “the ancient Macedonians were Greek” and have built reputations and careers on the foundation of these claims.

In addition to the above, mainstream historians have also accepted “unproven claims” that the Modern Macedonians are “Slavs” who came to Macedonia during the 6th century A.D.

Unfortunately all of the above claims are based on “false information”, a foundation of falsehood concocted during the 19th century for political purposes!

Today we can easily prove that (1) the Modern Greeks are not the descendents of the so-called ancient Greeks, and (2) the “Slav migration” is only an unproven theory and as such has no basis in

reality, especially for the Macedonians. In fact there is more evidence today to support the idea that a mass Slav migration “never took place” than there is to support the idea that it did. So we are faced with a serious problem, one which not only affects the Macedonians but a lot of other people including our neighbours the Greeks, Bulgarians and Albanians. By exposing the rotten foundation on which this modern historic model is built, we are bound to bring the entire structure down. This will definitely ruin reputations and careers.

The fact that the 1903 Ilinden Macedonian National Uprising took place only a century ago in full view of the world and as one Western historian put it, “it was the greatest revolution that Europe witnessed in the 20th century” and nothing is written about it in mainstream history proves that there is something wrong here!

Even though many other historic events have taken place in Macedonia involving the Macedonian people en masse, I have not seen much written about them in mainstream history. Most mainstream historians have either steered as far away as possible from this or have taken the Greek or Bulgarian side of either completely ignoring the Macedonians or labeling them Bulgarian.

The greatest revolution that Europe witnessed in the 20th century was the 1903 Ilinden Macedonian National Uprising and no Western mainstream historian, to this day, has taken the time to mention it in their Western school books. I wonder why?

How many books written by mainstream so-called “reputable” historians have you read that “truthfully” speak about the questionable Greek identity? I would say not many. Yet the truth is available from literally thousands of sources out there!

Thanks to TrueMacedonian’s diligent and tireless effort he has now identified more than 200 books that testify to the fact that the Modern Greeks are not the descendents of the ancient Greeks. But where is all this information in mainstream history? Why have “reputable” historians forsaken the truth in favour of writing Greek mythology?

How does this artificial creation called Greece compare to the existence of Macedonia and the indigenous Macedonians who have lived in Macedonia for thousands of years? How many books written by mainstream “reputable” historians have you read that truthfully describe how this artificially created nation called Greece invaded, occupied, partitioned Macedonia with their partners Serbia and Bulgaria in 1912, 1913 and literally stole it from the hands of the Macedonian people? Did these events not happen?

But let us not blame Western historians for not doing a job that Macedonians should be doing. As for the “erroneous” information being put out there, we have to blame the Greeks for that because they are the ones who have misled the world, not only about us but about themselves as well.

Therefore it is imperative that we write our own narrative and tell our own story the way we know it before we expect others, outsiders, strangers to write about us in an objective manner.

I guess not all Macedonians have discovered that Westerners are easily “turned off” by poor writing styles and by poor English, which sometimes not even God can understand! Westerners, particularly English speakers, are obsessed with “correct” grammar, spelling and punctuation marks and tend to be “turned off” by such errors. Spelling unfortunately is something that Macedonians are not familiar with and take for granted because the Macedonian alphabet is phonetic and words are written the way they are pronounced. For Macedonians there is no invested (wasted) effort in learning how to read and write, something Westerners could learn.

So in addition to writing our own narrative in Macedonian, we need to also write it in English and take special care to make sure it’s not only accurate but comprehensible. If we want our story to be read by the world we must also make it readable and easily accessible!

16. The so-called “Name Negotiations” MUST be ended now!

In spite of what has been said and done and the warnings and pleadings of so many Macedonian activists to Macedonian authorities to end the so-called “name negotiations” with Greece, the comical tragedy still continues. Almost two decades have now passed and Macedonians continue to endure this humiliation! So the question here is how long are Macedonian authorities prepared to go on bending backwards to please Greece?

Why are Macedonian authorities allowing “other people”, “outsiders” and particularly Macedonia’s enemies to dictate to them what they should or should not call their own country? This is unacceptable!

One country demanding a name change of another is not only unprecedented; it is chauvinistic! This kind of behaviour is unacceptable! That is why there are international laws in place to protect countries like Macedonia from countries like Greece! Unfortunately, Macedonian authorities, to this day, have not made use of such laws. They have chosen the “negotiating way” instead, which is unacceptable and will NEVER yield satisfactory results, only capitulation for the Macedonian side!

It is time for Macedonian authorities to investigate these laws and use them to end their “negotiations” with Greece! It has to be made clear to everyone involved that it is illegal to pressure and blackmail Macedonia into changing its name and on that note simply end the “negotiations”!

It is high time that Macedonian authorities explain their situation and formally complain to the United Nations for putting Macedonia into this predicament where it is forced to “negotiate” a change of its own name! This is illegal and a breach of international law!

If Macedonian authorities are not familiar with international law then they must seek professional legal advice from international lawyers and file a formal complaint against the United Nations for putting Macedonia in this predicament!

Macedonian authorities must be made aware that Greece is “not really” interested in Macedonia’s name, as history has proven. Accepting that, Macedonian authorities must then look for and expose the “root cause” of Greece’s behaviour.

If Greece is “not really” interested in “Macedonia’s name” then what is Greece “really” interested in? This is another issue Macedonian authorities must resolve and bring out into the open!

Another issue Macedonian authorities need to deal with and respond to is the advice they receive from “outside” sources. Such advice cannot be simply ignored; it must be weighed, analyzed and responded to. Macedonian authorities must explain to those “giving the advice” what is and is not “possible” for Macedonia, which brings us to the next issue!

If Macedonian authorities are “not prepared” to change “the Republic of Macedonia’s name” then why have these “negotiations” with Greece?

- (a) For no reason at all and to waste time and money?
- (b) Have no idea why; don’t have a clue what is going on?
- (c) Secretly planning something and don’t want the Macedonian people to know?

One can see how people can become suspicious if there is no clear and logical reason provided for why the “negotiations” are taking place. You can see how this can make anyone a nervous wreck!

Continuing the “negotiations”, especially with no end in sight, will only help Greece because Macedonia has nothing to gain by “negotiating” away its own name!

If Macedonian authorities are prepared to “change Macedonia’s name” then first they need to assess and publicize the consequences, fallout and damage from such a change and then announce their recommendations; i.e. what is an “acceptable” change and what are the tradeoffs for it! It does not make any sense to “negotiate” over something without clearly defining targets, limits and tradeoffs of what it is that is being negotiated. Then again if Macedonian authorities are not prepared to accept any change, then why

“negotiate”? As elected or appointed representatives working on behalf of the Macedonian people, Macedonian authorities are obligated to keep the people informed!

Given all this, what will Macedonia and the Macedonian people gain if they choose to “change their country’s name”, especially under these extreme circumstances, to please one country? Greece, after all is the only country in the world that is demanding this change. Responsible Macedonian authorities must make it clear to the Macedonian people that if there is a sacrifice what exactly will this sacrifice be for!

Is it for Macedonia to gain entry into the E.U. and NATO?

Let me say that, for all practical purposes, Macedonia is already in NATO; it is in fact the fourth largest troop contributor to NATO missions! When will Macedonian authorities remind NATO of this and ask them to acknowledge and accept the Macedonians for who they really are. If they cannot, then is it really worth making sacrifices for this organization?

And what of the E.U.? If the E.U. is such a great place to be part of then explain to me why so many countries, Greece being the first, are in such dire straits ready to collapse economically? Only fools would want to board a sinking ship, wouldn’t you agree?

We can blame the world for not understanding our problems and we can blame our imposition on Greece and Bulgaria. But most of our problems, I believe, we must shoulder ourselves. The world does not understand what is happening to us and the position we are in, with regards to Greece and Bulgaria, because we have hardly made the effort to publicize our plight. It seems we are afraid to tell the world the truth because deep inside we believe nobody will understand and we fear that if we speak of our rights as Macedonians too much or too loud we will be further tormented and more harm will come to us.

What is wrong with telling the truth and telling it loud and clear? After all, the whole crux of our problem stems from one thing; Macedonians keeping the truth to themselves. The root of our

problem with Greece and Bulgaria is the Macedonian land that Greece and Bulgaria occupy. As long as Macedonians exist they are a threat to Greece and Bulgaria losing those lands. And as long as Macedonians keep that secret to ourselves, Bulgaria and Greece will continue to deny our existence and torment us to no end. If that secret however comes out, Greece and Bulgaria will have no reason to deny us anything except for our lands!

Here are some facts to consider;

Macedonians over the centuries have fought to free themselves and to create a Macedonian state by the name “Macedonia”, which has existed from prehistoric times. Macedonian struggles for freedom are well documented in history and should be familiar to every Macedonian. Clearly this demonstrates that a Macedonian consciousness existed and has fought for the creation of a Macedonian state!

In 1903 the entire Macedonian population rose up as a nation and fought in a national uprising against the Ottoman Empire, which clearly demonstrated Macedonian desires for freedom and self rule. Many Macedonians willingly fought and sacrificed their lives in the hope of creating a free and independent Macedonia!

In 1912, 1913 Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria invaded, occupied, partitioned and annexed Macedonian lands knowing full well that the Macedonian people, only a decade earlier, tried to free themselves and create their own Macedonian state without success. Almost one century later in 1991, the Serbian annexed part of Macedonia became the sovereign and independent Republic of Macedonia. This clearly demonstrates that the Macedonian consciousness still exists and the Macedonian people are still striving to recuperate what once was theirs!

Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria, after annexing Macedonian territories, committed atrocities against the Macedonian people; including forcibly assimilating many Macedonians. This demonstrates that a Macedonian consciousness existed while Macedonia was partitioned and that Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria made attempts to forcibly extinguish it!

In its attempts to “Hellenize” Macedonia, Greece went a step further and renamed all place names and peoples’ names and banned the Macedonian language from use. This clearly demonstrates that Macedonians exist in Greek occupied Macedonia and have their own language and culture.

In spite of Macedonians existing and being recognized worldwide and Macedonian organizations being registered everywhere in the world since the 19th century, Greece and Bulgaria to this day still maintain that Macedonians do not exist. This clearly demonstrates that Greece and Bulgaria cannot accept the fact the Macedonians exist!

Both Greece and Bulgaria historically have shown desire to possess all of Macedonia, and, through their denials of the existence of the Macedonian people, are attempting to achieve two objectives;

(1) Continue to possess Macedonian territories that they are already illegally occupying (instead of giving them back to the Macedonian people) and,

(2) By attempting to destabilize the Republic of Macedonia (through fake disputes) they are both hoping to annex more Macedonian territories.

Greece has not given up on the “Megali Idea” or of possessing all of Macedonia, and Bulgaria has not given up on the “San Stefano” dream of a Greater Bulgaria which includes all of Macedonia. These are dangerous desires not only for the Macedonian people but for the entire world, as history has shown before!

Historically Greece was never really interested in Macedonia’s name and as MHRMI and AMHRC have put it; “The nonsensical name dispute was initiated by Greece in order to continue its policy of non-recognition and persecution of its large Macedonian minority. Former Greek Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis admitted in 1995, ‘My main aim was to convince the Republic (of Macedonia) to declare that there is no Slavomacedonian minority in Greece. This

was the real key of our difference with Skopje’.”

MHRMI and AMHRC also went on to say;

“Ironically, Greece claims exclusivity to the name Macedonia, but it was not until 1988 when Greece realized that independence for the Republic of Macedonia was imminent, that it renamed ‘Northern Greece’ to the ‘Province of Macedonia’.

Consequently, Greece imposed an economic embargo that crippled Macedonia's economy in 1992, it vetoed Macedonia's entry into NATO in 2008, and it has continued its decades-old policy of eradication and forcible assimilation of its Macedonian minority.

However, NATO and the European Union allow its member-states to be handcuffed by Greece's xenophobic policies. Despite overwhelming support for Macedonia's NATO membership, Greece was permitted to compromise regional stability and use its veto power against Macedonia for one reason - the name dispute.

Instead of reprimanding Greece, the Western world insists on a ‘solution’ to the name dispute. Would any other country negotiate its own name?

The name dispute is akin to the US state of Georgia demanding that the Republic of Georgia change its name or the Belgian province of Luxembourg demanding that Luxembourg change its name.

Furthermore, any proposals to change Macedonia’s international, bilateral, or constitutional name, or to add ‘qualifiers’ such as ‘Democratic’ or ‘Northern’, would change Macedonia’s identity everywhere and are completely unacceptable.

How can the European Union justify the violation of its own principles by asking Macedonia to change its name?

Greece is the only country that objects to Macedonia’s name. There is no need to find an international or bilateral ‘solution’ based on one country's irrational and nationalistic fears. Unfortunately, by continuing the negotiations, Macedonia is telling the world that it is

willing to compromise. Because of this, even countries that have recognized Macedonia would use any new name that is reached in a bilateral agreement. Macedonia can end the name dispute now and the calls for compromise by ending negotiations over its own name.

MHRMI and AMHRC call on:

Macedonia to stop the negotiations immediately and tell the international community that it is not willing to compromise its name and identity.

The rest of the international community, and EU in particular, to join the 127 countries that have recognized Macedonia, including 4/5 UN Security Council members, and to finally put an end to the irrational name dispute and immediately recognize Macedonia under its constitutional name.”

How well do “outsiders” understand Macedonia’s problems?

Most outsiders, including foreign politicians and high ranking diplomats, don’t know much about Macedonia and its problems with Greece and Bulgaria. Also what little they do know comes from propaganda propagated by Greek and Bulgarian lobbyists.

Most of what “outsiders” know about the so-called “name dispute” is the “Greek spin” on the issue which claims that it is “a dispute between two nations wanting the same name”. Mainstream media always quote the “Greek position” on this calling it a “dispute” when in fact it is not!

If it is a dispute then it is totally one sided and has nothing to do with Macedonia’s name but has everything to do with the Macedonian identity. Most people don’t know that since Greece occupied Macedonian territories in 1912 it had many chances to “use” the name Macedonia but as MHRMI and AMHRC have pointed out “Ironically, Greece claims exclusivity to the name Macedonia, but it was not until 1988 when Greece realized that independence for the Republic of Macedonia was imminent, that it renamed ‘Northern Greece’ to the ‘Province of Macedonia’”.

In fact, by accepting to “negotiate” what cannot be negotiable, Macedonian authorities have legitimized Greece’s claim to the name. As a result, Macedonians feel “deeply hurt” when outsiders ‘unwittingly” support the Greek side. But what Macedonians have not realized and cannot understand is that outsiders only know the Greek side of the story. In reality “outsiders” don’t know the Macedonian side because Macedonian authorities have not done their job well to publicize it! And if outsiders don’t know what is really going on then how can we blame them for doing us wrong?

That is why it is very important for Macedonian authorities to pull away from these bogus negotiations and begin an information campaign to let the world know what is really going on with Greece.

It is very important for Macedonian official channels to immediately react and respond to every comment and every press release, such as the one from Philip Reeker for example, and make the Macedonian side of the story well known.

With regards to the “name dispute” Macedonian authorities must make it very clear to everyone why Macedonians cannot accept a name change and must settle on “Republic of Macedonia” as the official name of their country!

For once let us separate facts from fiction; Greece and Bulgaria took Macedonian lands away from the Macedonian people. This is a fact! And this is the crux of the entire problem between us and our neighbours!

There will be no peace and our enemies will not cease to torment us until all the facts of what has been done are out in the open, well understood and acknowledged by the world. The onus, to make this happen, is on the Macedonian authorities who as representatives of the Macedonian people not only have the right but are obligated to serve the Macedonian people and work for their interests! So please stop “negotiating” away our God given name and start working for our rights!

Practical or not, achievable or not, harmful or not, when it comes to the situation with our neighbours, Macedonians must learn to

dispense with political correctness and start telling the truth the way we see it! Macedonians need to start telling the world their side of the story!

Macedonians must also learn to stand up for ourselves and vigorously respond, without exception, to all those who belittle and trivialize our predicament; something we have not done well in the past!

One last thing regarding the so-called Treaty of Friendship Bulgaria offered Macedonia. One of the pre-conditions in this Treaty, I believe, is that Macedonia should give up its right to pursue human rights of the Macedonians living in Bulgaria? How can this be a “treaty of friendship” when it calls on Macedonian authorities to do harm to their own people? This is not a “treaty of friendship”. This is a stab in the back!

In spite of what has been said and done and the warnings and pleading made by so many Macedonians to end the so called “name negotiations” with Greece, the comical tragedy still continues to unfold for almost two decades now. How long are going to allow it to go on? How long are we Macedonians going to bend backwards to please our enemies?

17. Macedonia's Recognition what will it mean to the world?

For the sake of curiosity let us look into the future and try to imagine an all out unconditionally "recognized" Macedonia and what it will mean to the world.

We already know what an "un-recognized" Macedonia means! It means "status quo" for the world. Nothing needs to change! Macedonia's existence in the past, Macedonia's contributions to world civilization and Macedonia's history will continue to falsely remain part of the Greek contribution. The Modern Greeks, whose very identity is questionable, will not only get to call the ancient Macedonian heritage and Macedonia's history, Greek, but the Macedonian lands they illegally expropriated by force in 1912, 1913 will also remain in their hands.

But on the other hand, if the world decides to unconditionally recognize Macedonia for what it is then someone will have to explain how this Macedonian state and people came into being! And who will the world ask for such information? Naturally it will ask the Macedonian people! It has always been done this way! It is the only logical thing to do! Who knows Macedonia's "story" better than the Macedonians themselves. And what will the Macedonian people say then?

Whatever the Macedonian people say will have to be accepted as part and parcel of the unconditional recognition. That's how it works. No country or people appear out of nowhere. So the world will have to accept that Macedonia and the Macedonian people came from somewhere and who better to explain where they came from than the Macedonians themselves! I will tell you that it will not be the Greeks doing the explaining or their sycophant supporters; people who in the past have misled the world! Not if Macedonians step up to the plate and take matters in their own hands!

If I were given the task of speaking on behalf of the Macedonians I would tell our story the way I see it, the way it is, as I am sure every loyal Macedonian would do, no matter how much grief it causes the Greeks, Bulgarians and their western European patrons!

As for the Greeks, let me say that they willingly chose to build their identity on a false foundation and as such they should not be surprised when one day their entire structure crumbles before them.

When a country and a people are unconditionally recognized so will their history be unconditionally recognized! That's how it works.

Whether Macedonia's neighbours like it or not, Macedonia and the Macedonian people have their own history, their own story to tell which does not include Greece, Serbia, or Bulgaria.

So what will the Modern Greeks say when the Macedonians stand up and tell their own story, a story that contradicts theirs? What will the Modern Greeks do when the Macedonians say that the ancient Macedonians and every generation after that were not Greeks and that as far as the Macedonians are concerned there never was a Greece up until 1829 AD?

How will the world respond to Macedonian charges that Greece's sole interest in Macedonia is to expropriate Macedonian land and rob the Macedonian people of their heritage?

History says that the ancient Macedonians fought the City States, won and subjugated them, a subjugation from which the City States never recovered. For a couple of centuries after their subjugation the City States remained under Macedonian rule and belonged to the Macedonians. Historically, therefore, Macedonia never belonged to any of the ancient City States and thus Macedonia was never Greek until it was illegally taken from the Macedonian people by force in 1912, 1913! This is how history explains it and this is how the real Macedonians see it!

Some people say that modern Macedonia is made up of a hodge-podge of ethnicities and it is difficult to figure out who is who. A mix of people which inspired the French to name their mixed vegetables/fruit salad "macédoine"! Are these people for real? Are they truly incapable of figuring out who is who in Macedonia? They went along with calling Greece "pure" and "homogeneous" knowing full well that Greece was never pure or homogeneous and have the nerve to call Macedonia a mixed salad? Give me a break!

Are people so misguided that they believe Greece is pure and homogeneous, considering the many ethnic groups that existed there prior to and during the so-called Greek War of Independence? How could they not see the “mixed salad” in Greece but could see it perfectly in Macedonia; two Balkan countries existing side by side without borders for more than two millenniums?

If we are to believe all this then we need to ask ourselves who decides these things? Who decides that Greece is pure and homogeneous with a 4,000 year old “continuity” when history itself says differently? Who decides that Macedonia is a mixed salad of ethnicities, difficult to identify? The French? The Greeks?

The truth is each country decides these things for itself. Greece decided for itself to take the “pure”, “homogeneous” route and was unconditionally recognized as such by the rest of the world! So why can't the world treat Macedonia with the same courtesy?

Foreigners, particularly the French, are either deliberately confused or are simply ignorant of Macedonia; in both cases playing a dangerous game with the lives of the Macedonian people. Had they asked the Macedonians themselves who lives in Macedonia there would have been no confusion. But instead they relied on the “Greeks” to misinform them. No wonder there is confusion! But then as long as there is “confusion” the Greeks and Bulgarians and their patrons will continue to exploit Macedonia and mistreat the Macedonian people without any fear of being discovered!

As one can appreciate by these arguments there is a wide gap in Macedonia's story between what has been told by others and how Macedonians see themselves.

Macedonia's true story can only be told by the “real” Macedonians. But when it is told it will create a great controversy. Greece and Bulgaria know this and that is why to this day they have been negating the Macedonian identity and obstructing Macedonia's recognition.

Europe's foundation as a modern civilization is based on the assumption that the ancient Macedonians were Greek, otherwise there would be no so-called "Greek continuity" from ancient times to today. If there is no continuity then there can be no foundation for Europe to build its civilization! If the ancient Macedonians were not Greek then all of Europe's assumptions will be false and the European civilization would have been built on a false foundation. This would be a very hard pill for Europe to swallow!

If it is found out and admitted that the modern European civilization is based on a false foundation it will be the greatest European scandal since the Flat Earth controversy!

There never was a Greece in ancient times. There was only a miniature world of independent City States about which we know through the writing they left for us on stones. If it was not for that, we would not have known that such a world ever existed.

But there was a state, not a city state, but a genuine large kingdom with a large population which lived in many, many cities. This state was called Macedonia. Macedonia at one point grew into a powerful empire and conquered the then known world. It then, through its conquests, was the first empire to bridge three continents together forming the first ever communication and transportation lines which are used to this day. This vast Macedonian empire was the first to explore the entire known world and to make maps, record geography and history and to carry out scientific expeditions. The discoveries it accumulated were stored in the vast libraries it built, like the one in Alexandria and Antioch, rivaled by none in their time and for many years to come. This was a Macedonian contribution in ancient times.

During Roman times the Macedonians were instrumental in introducing Christianity to Europe and later spread it to the furthest northern reaches of Eastern Europe.

It was the Macedonians and not the "Greeks" or "Bulgarians" who introduced Christianity to the Slav speakers in Eastern Europe and enriched their world with the word of God, gave them their alphabet and taught them how to read and write.

These are only small examples of the Macedonian contribution, much of which today is claimed by others. How will this be handled when it becomes public knowledge and is accepted by the world?

We need to realize here that Macedonia's narrative will cause problems for some people. We must also realize that these problems are not the Macedonian peoples' problems and the Macedonian people can no longer hold back or hide the truth for the mistakes of others. Macedonia is Macedonia and nothing can be done to change that.

Macedonians should not be asked or expected to change their country's name to hide the fact that Greece and Europe have made many embarrassing mistakes. It is not the Macedonian peoples' fault that Modern Greece chose a fabricated identity and has used Macedonia for its personal gains.

The Macedonian people are not to be blamed for Greece's invasion, occupation and illegal annexation of Macedonian lands. Macedonians should not be made accountable for Greece's expropriation of the Macedonian heritage and its declaration that the Macedonian people do not exist. Why should the Macedonian people have to change their God given name to cover up Greece and Western Europe's crimes?

The world can and will accept Macedonia and the Macedonian people for who they are because it's a worldly thing to do. But this will only happen if the Macedonian voice is heard loud and clear over the noises made by those who negate it.

But in order for that to happen the Macedonian people must accept the truth about themselves and show the world who they truly are. That unfortunately is made difficult when some Macedonians are willing to negotiate their own country's name away.

Negotiating one's own country name gives the world the wrong message and the wrong impression of who the Macedonians are! That is why it is very important for the Macedonian side to pull away from these so-called "name negotiations" with Greece and formulate a new strategy. The new strategy should be about

informing the world about who the Macedonians are and what Greece has been doing to them!

By the way I don't believe, not even for a moment, that Greece and Bulgaria, as long as they occupy Macedonian lands and hold on to the Macedonian heritage, will ever recognize a Macedonian identity. Neither will western Europeans who put Macedonia and the Macedonian people in the predicament they find themselves today. This is a reality that Macedonians will have to accept and move on.

18. Thank You Canada Day Celebration

Organized by the Macedonian Community of Canada

On Sunday November 4th, 2007 the Macedonian Community of Canada held a special celebration to honour Canada's recognition of the Republic of Macedonia by its constitutional name which took place on September 20th, 2007.

The Thank You Canada event which lasted from noon to six pm, took place at Toronto's St. Clement of Ohrid Macedonian Orthodox Cathedral.

Activities began inside the great hall with speeches delivered by the organizers and guests and were followed by music and dancing. The group Rumba played outdoors while Sonja and Oliver Band provided music inside. Performances were also provided by the St. Clement and St. Ilija Macedonian folklore dance groups.

The Thank you Canada Day Celebration was organized by the Macedonian Community of Canada's executive committee consisting of Steve Saragil, Bill Pavlovski, Jim Sarkovski, Dragi Stojkovski and Nick Kuburovski. Peter Petkovski, Boris Stoikos, and Steve Stojanovski also contributed to the organization and execution of the event.

It was a crisp and sunny November Sunday morning when cars began to arrive presenting a parking challenge for the organizers but thanks to their perseverance parking spaces for thousands of cars were found.

By noon St. Clements's great hall was filled to capacity as people waited to meet guests and listen to the speeches.

"Many things had to be done in a space of a couple of weeks but the community worked feverishly as a team and got things moving" says Nick Kuburovski. Much of the publicity was done through the local Macedonian media while the preparatory work was done by the four Greater Toronto Area Macedonian churches and other local organizations. The food and baked goods were prepared by the

Ladies Auxiliaries of the various Church organizations. “This was a total community event” says Nick Kuburovski. “Our first task was to get the community’s support. The four churches, organizations and Ladies Auxiliary Groups. Then we asked for volunteers to help out with food preparation and assistance during the event. We got all that and we are grateful to everyone who helped and made this event a success.”

At about half past noon the special guests began to arrive. They had to be escorted via the back stage doors because the great hall and hallways were jam packed with people waiting for their arrival.

Among the guests sitting at the head table included were the Honourable Jason Kenney, Secretary of State (Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity), Mike Wallace, MP for Burlington, Lazar Elenovski, Minister of Defense of the Republic of Macedonia, Sasko Nasev, Ambassador of the Republic of Macedonia in Canada, Metodij, Metropolitan North American Macedonian Orthodox Diocese, Dragi Stojkovski, President of the United Macedonian Organization of Canada, Sasho Popovski, President of St. Clement of Ohrid Macedonian Orthodox Cathedral and Jovan Boseovski, Conservative Party Candidate for Willowdale, Macedonian liaison between the Conservative party and emcee for this event. Included among the special guests were other Conservative MP’s and future candidates.

After the introductions the first to speak was Metropolitan Metodij who among other things thanked the Canadian government and people for recognizing Macedonia by its constitutional name and for planting the seeds of good will and democracy.

The next to speak was Jovan Boseovski who delivered the following speech:

“This is a special occasion because this really marks the first time that the Government of Canada affirms and respects the identity of Macedonians, not only living in Canada but also our family members living back in the Republic of Macedonia. Our government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Harper and the Conservative Party, has corrected a longstanding error of previous

governments. Canadians can now refer to our ancestral home by its rightful name; The Republic of Macedonia. By recognizing Macedonia by its constitutional name Canada joins over 120 countries such as the US, China and Russia in recognizing the injustice of a country being forced to accept the name it did not choose.

So on behalf of Canadians of Macedonian descent I would like to express our great appreciation in thanks for having the courage to do what's right in correcting a politically motivated error of our past Canadian leadership. We will never forget this gesture towards the Macedonian people and the Republic of Macedonia.

We have fought for recognition since 1991 and in Stephan Dion's Canada he would still refer to Macedonia as FYROM. We have the ability to make sure this never happens and as a community Macedonians must remember this for the next election."

Jason Kenney Secretary of State (Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity) was next who spoke and among other things, delivered the following:

"Ladies and gentlemen it is a distinct pleasure to be here on behalf of my boss The Right Honourable Stephen Harper, our Prime Minister; a man who has made us all proud to be Canadians.

For too long Canada was a country that followed and did not lead. For too long Canada was a country that didn't live up to its potential or its highest and truest principles but we have in this Prime Minister a man who is once again asserting Canada in the world as a champion of principle, as a champion of freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The decision he made in naming The Republic of Macedonia by the name that belongs to it was a reflection of that principal policy of the Prime Minister.

Let me tell you it wasn't an easy decision because, for all the warm reception that you reflect here today, as you know there were others on Parliament Hill last week led by Member of Parliament Jim Karygiannis and others who were there to attack our government

and to promise if we lose the next election they will reverse this decision.

I'm here to tell you that we have no intention of losing that election. But I want to be clear to my friends in the Greek community and in the government of Greece that Canada is also a friend of Greece and the Greek community is a tremendous community much like the Macedonian community and has made great contributions to Canada and I think we should all recognize that as well."

Mike Wallace (MP Burlington) was next to speak and among other things he said:

"The real congratulations should go to your leadership. I think you should know that I attended a meeting with your community leaders [September 17, 2007], absolutely fantastic. I am new to this issue and in a short time your leaders made it perfectly clear and I understood the need and desire of you as a people to have your own country recognized as it should be as The Republic of Macedonia. So when you see those folks, your community leadership, make sure you thank them as well. It is because of them that this happened." (Mike Wallace is referring here to a meeting that Jovan Boseovski organized between the Conservative Party and the Macedonian Community on September 17th, 2007 during which ideas were exchanged and the foundation for the recognition was laid. I was invited to that meeting but I regretfully was unable to make it on time).

The next to speak was Dragi Stojkovski who delivered the following:

"This is a festive occasion for all of us. This is the time when we can proudly say thank you Canada for recognizing the Republic of Macedonia by the constitutional and historical name The Republic of Macedonia. After 16 years of lobbying the Canadian governments and the politicians it finally came to this Canadian Government, to Prime Minister Harper and the Conservative Party to finally recognize the Republic of Macedonia. The way we remember our ancestors from antiquity we will remember you (the Conservative Party) in the next election.

Traditionally Macedonia and Canada have been allies not just Canada and Macedonia but the Canadians and Macedonians as people. Canadian soldiers fought on the Macedonian front during the 1st World War. During the 2nd World War both Canada and Macedonia, the Canadians and Macedonians fought together on the same side and many Canadians of Macedonian origin joined the Canadian Armed Forces that fought in Europe. After Macedonia's independence from the former Yugoslavia, Canadian soldiers or peace keepers were instrumental in keeping the peace in Macedonia and the Balkans for which we are always thankful. And now for the last, I think, 3 years Canadian and Macedonian soldiers fought alongside each other in Afghanistan. It is our hope that very soon Macedonia will also join NATO so we can be equal partners with Canada in NATO.”

Lazar Elenovski the Macedonian Defense Minister spoke next and among other things he delivered the following message:

“It is a great honour for me to salute you the Canadian-Macedonians. You are the bridge between our two great nations. You are the most important component in Macedonia's friendship with Canada. We will never forget your contribution in the Canadian Government's decision.

Minister Kenney I would also like to thank you, your government and the Honourable Prime Minister Stephen Harper for your decision in recognizing our state by its proper name.

Canada is a close partner and ally of ours in the building of democratic values throughout the world. I wish to underline that we greatly value our friendship and partnership.”

Lazar Elenovski also had some good news for Canadians wishing to travel to Macedonia. The Macedonian government is in the process of discussing ways to eliminate the need of visas for Canadian citizens who wish to travel to Macedonia.

Among the guests who attended the event were also three Macedonian army officers who are currently training at Base Borden.

After the speeches the celebration continued both inside and outside with much singing, dancing and flag waving.

The organizers would like to thank St. Clement of Ohrid for providing their facilities and venue, the Ladies Auxiliaries for preparing and serving the food, the parking attendants, the speakers and special guests, the media, the helpers, and most importantly all those people who attended the event and made it a smashing success.

19. It is time to End the Name Game

Now that the Republic of Macedonia has been recognized by its constitutional name by more than 120 countries including the USA, Russia and China, it is time for the Republic of Macedonia to explore all of its options.

With almost 2/3's of the world nations on its side, Macedonia must end its fear of repercussions and start taking the offensive in settling the name dispute with Greece once and for all.

If I were to do this I would call on Greece for a face-to-face meeting PM to PM or FM to FM mediated by a number of human rights and other international organizations and point blank ask the Greek government: **“What is it exactly that Macedonia has done to cause Greece to act this way towards it?”** Pending this outcome from such a meeting, we will all know **“exactly what Greece’s problem is with Macedonia”**.

In the meantime, since more than 120 countries have recognized Macedonia, I would explore my options as to: “How many more countries will it take to recognize Macedonia before a vote can be taken at the UN to get rid of the so called “interim label” and to register Macedonia in the UN by its constitutional name?” If there is such an option then it is time the Republic of Macedonia exercises it and soon. If more countries are needed to recognize Macedonia in order to reach such a threshold then it’s time for the Macedonian Prime Minister or President to take a trip abroad, Asia, Africa or South America if need be and do some lobbying to get the numbers up.

There is another option. The Republic of Macedonia can challenge the legality of the United Nations registering its name by a “label” which, according to Dr. Igor Janev, is not only unprecedented and wrong but illegal. From what I understand the UN defied its own laws when it accepted Macedonia’s entry by use of a “label” instead of its constitutional name.

If that were so, then Macedonia had better talk to the UN and have this matter sorted out or failing that, hire a team of good lawyers familiar with international law that can point at the UN's mistake.

Based on the number of countries that have already recognized the Republic of Macedonia, the UN or any other international institution has no reason not to accept Macedonia by its constitutional name. You can't have 2/3 of the membership recognizing Macedonia by its constitutional name while the organization itself does not recognize it. It defies logic.

However, nothing is going to happen unless the Republic of Macedonia makes its move.

20 Greece blocks Macedonia from entering NATO

It is not new news but here are my two cents worth! It should have become painfully obvious to everyone by now that Greece is interested in one and only one thing and that is to eliminate the Macedonian identity at any cost.

Macedonia can't negotiate its name because it is tightly connected with its identity and Greece will not accept a name that ties Macedonia with its identity. Is there then any wonder why we have no progress on the name issue after 17 years of negotiations?

Macedonia cannot change its name because it would lose its identity and Greece will not accept the existence of a Macedonian identity because it will then be obliged to recognize the Macedonian minority living inside Greece.

So what are we to do? Well, for one we must stop negotiating something that should not be negotiated. By vetoing Macedonia's entry into NATO last April, Greece has in effect violated the 1995 interim accord which releases Macedonia from its obligation of having to negotiate with Greece. Macedonia must now seize this opportunity and rid itself of these endless negotiations from which it cannot possibly benefit.

Knowing that neither side is going to move in the negotiations, Greece is secure in the belief that as long as these negotiations continue the issue of human rights for the Macedonians in Greece will remain dormant. So it is to the benefit of Greece to continue to negotiate indefinitely.

From what I understand so far, in view of what transpired in Bucharest, the United States has already offered Macedonia guarantees for its territorial integrity. Turkey and China have warmed up to the idea of offering economic ties so in fact if Macedonia plays its diplomatic cards wisely in the long term it will come up a winner.

I hate to believe that France and its followers risked offending the United States and its other NATO allies by supporting Greece in its

aims without a hidden agenda of its own. So I am inclined to believe that there are deeper issues within NATO, which I do not care to know. If that is the case then NATO may not last long enough for Macedonia to join it. Putting it another way, why risk anything to join a failing organization? If this is true and NATO will fail, (NATO functioned successfully in the same way since 1945), history will record Greece as the country that broke NATO.

By the way, if Greece blocks Macedonia from entering the European Union and the EU does nothing to stop it then joining that organization is also not worth it. If International organizations allow their member to place their personal interests ahead of their objectives then they are not worth joining.

21. How to End the “Name Game”

Almost two decades have passed and there is still no sign of a resolution being reached in the so-called “name negotiations” between Greece and the Republic of Macedonia.

In this article I will attempt to define what Greece is asking for and the compromises that the Republic of Macedonia has already made.

Greece’s opposition to international recognition of the Republic of Macedonia is based on the following;

1. The name “Macedonia” is, was and will always be Greek.
2. The 16 ray sunburst, symbol of the Macedonian royal family, is also Greek on account of “Macedonia” being Greek.
3. Possessing the name “Macedonia” and the 16 ray sunburst constitutes reason that “Skopje” harbours irredentist claims on Greek territory. As evidence of this Greek governments have cited passages from the 1944 ASNOM resolution calling for the “unification of the entire Macedonian nation” which was to be achieved by “the liberation of Greek and Bulgarian occupied Macedonia”.
4. International recognition of the Republic of Macedonia would lead to destabilization of the Balkans.
5. Article 3 of the Macedonian constitution which stated “the borders of the Republic of Macedonia may be changed only in accordance with the constitution” Greece interprets as legitimizing efforts to “break off and annex Greek territories”.
6. Article 49 of the Macedonian constitution which stated that the Republic of Macedonia “cares for the status and rights of Macedonians living in neighbouring countries”, Greece interprets as legitimizing efforts to “liberate enslaved Macedonians living in Greece”.

7. Greek governments deny the existence of Macedonians living in Greece.

8. Using the name “Macedonia” by the Republic of Macedonia may cause confusion internationally because Greece’s “northern province” is also called “Macedonia”, therefore the Republic of Macedonia cannot use the name “Macedonia”.

Now let us have a look at what the Republic of Macedonia has done to alleviate Greek concerns;

a. In response to a European Commission request made on December 16, 1991 by the Council of EC Ministers, the Macedonian parliament, on January 6, 1992, adopted two amendments to the Macedonian constitution. Amendment 1 stated that the Republic of Macedonia had no territorial claims against its neighbouring state and that the boundaries of the Republic of Macedonia could be changed only in accordance with “generally accepted international norms”. Amendment 2 stated that the Republic of Macedonia would not interfere in the internal affairs of other states.

b. The Republic of Macedonia, on many occasions, offered to sign a bilateral agreement with Greece affirming the permanence of the borders between Greece and the Republic of Macedonia.

c. The Republic of Macedonia changed its flag and removed the 16 ray sunburst from circulation.

d. An EC arbitration commission, after its investigation, ruled that the use of the name “Macedonia” did not imply territorial claims towards any of the Republic of Macedonia’s neighbouring states.

At this point the Republic of Macedonia made it clear that bargaining over the name of a state as a condition of its recognition was contrary to the principles of international law, citing that such precedence does not exist.

Now let us review what has been done and what, if any, remains to be done to address Greek concerns.

Item 1 of the so-called “Greek concerns” can be removed from the list because (1) Modern Greece has nothing to do with Ancient Macedonia, its territory, or symbols and (2) the Republic of Macedonia, being located inside geographic and historic Macedonian territory, has the right to that name and the territory it currently occupies.

Item 2 is no longer a concern for Greece since the Republic of Macedonia abandoned that symbol when it changed its flag as per item “c” above.

Item 3 is no longer a concern because the Republic of Macedonia amended its constitution as shown in parts “a” and “b” above. Also as stated in “d” above, the EC arbitration commission, after its investigation, ruled that the use of the name “Macedonia” did not imply territorial claims towards Greece.

Item 4 above should not be a concern for Greece because the Republic of Macedonia has over the years (1) proven to be a peaceful state and (2) does not have the economic or military resources to be a threat to any of its more powerful neighbours.

Items 5 and 6 above have been taken care of with the Republic of Macedonia’s constitutional amendments mentioned in item “a” above and should not be of concern to Greece.

Item 7 above is an internal Greek problem which Greece has to deal with on its own. It has nothing to do with the Republic of Macedonia. This item is also covered by the second constitutional amendment in part (a) above; Amendment 2 stated that the Republic of Macedonia would not interfere in the internal affairs of other states. This includes Greece.

Item 8 above can be addressed by Greece using the name “Province of Macedonia” for its northern province while the Republic of Macedonia uses “Republic of Macedonia” to denote the Macedonian state. A state always takes precedence over a province or territory. Clearly, anyone can tell the difference between “Province of Macedonia” and “Republic of Macedonia”. Even if they can’t, what harm will it do?

In reality all of Greece's concerns, as stated up to this point, have been addressed by the Republic of Macedonia.

Since the Republic of Macedonia has made no demands of its own from Greece, the so-called "name negotiations" are now and have been for the last decade a non-issue.

If Greece, however, continues to make further demands of the Republic of Macedonia to "change" its name without producing "legitimate" reasons as to why, then either Greece has not made it "perfectly clear" as to what it wants from the Republic of Macedonia, or Greece has secretly widened its original scope.

If that is the case then this opens the door for the Republic of Macedonia to (1) withdraw the compromises it has already made, (2) walk away from the talks, and (3) make demands of its own. For example, the Republic of Macedonia can make a case for examining history and determining the legitimacy of Greece's historic claims to Macedonian territories. The Republic of Macedonia can also sue Greece for compensation for the damages that the unfair February 1994 Greek imposed embargo caused to the Republic of Macedonia's economy.

It is now time for Greece to come to its senses and recognize the Republic of Macedonia by its constitutional name. I believe this is Greece's last chance where conditions are most favourable for Greece to end the "name negotiations" and Recognize the Republic of Macedonia. This is the time where Greece has most to gain by exiting the negotiations. Putting more demands, using blackmail and delay tactics clearly show that Greece is not interested in a "fair resolution" and therefore is working under a hidden agenda, which in time will become obvious to everyone who will then side with the Republic of Macedonia.

Almost two decades have passed and there is still no sign of a resolution being reached in the so-called "name negotiations" between Greece and the Republic of Macedonia.

In this article I will attempt to define what Greece is asking for and the compromises that the Republic of Macedonia has already made.

22. Is Greece planning to annex all of Macedonia sometime in the future?

The “Megali idea” died with Greece’s failure to annex Turkish territories in the 1920’s but did it really die or did it just go into hibernation waiting for the right time to come about?

Since 1991 when the Republic of Macedonia declared its independence from Yugoslavia Greece has been acting kind of strange. For example it has been saying Macedonians don’t exist, Macedonia is Greek, Skopjans have territorial pretensions on the so-called “Greek-Macedonia”, Skopjans are trying to steal Greek history and so on. We all know that most of what the Greeks are saying is not possible but none the less Greeks are still saying them but are we interpreting them correctly?

When the Greeks say “Macedonians do not exist” what do they really mean?

If Macedonians don’t exist then what are the majority of people who live in the Republic of Macedonia? We have been thinking that the reason Greece says Macedonians don’t exist is to cover up the fact that Greece does not want the world to know that Macedonians live in Greece. But what if that is not all the Greeks are saying?

When the Greeks say “Macedonia is Greek” what do they really mean?

We all know 51% of geographical and historic Macedonia was annexed by Greece in 1913 and no one has any doubt that Greece has a pretty strong grasp on it today. So when Greeks say Macedonia is Greek do they really mean the part of Macedonia they already have is Greek or 49% of the part they don’t have is Greek? When the Greeks say Macedonia is Greek we think they mean the part they already have but what if we are wrong and the Greeks really mean the part that they don’t have, especially the Republic of Macedonia? Besides why would they say anything about a part that is already Greek?

When the Greeks say “Skopjans have territorial pretensions on the so-called Greek-Macedonia what do they really mean?”

As JS Gandeto puts it in his article “Anatomy of a bankrupt ideology” published in the American Chronicle on November 11th, 2008 at this link; <http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/81091> “For example they [Greeks] claim that Republic of Macedonia, with 7,000 lightly armed soldiers, has territorial aspirations towards Greece with more than 250,000 soldiers armed with the latest military hardware, purchased from Russia and France with European dollars, when in fact it was the Greek army displaying her military might by holding military exercise in Northern Greece where the predominant population of the region is ethnic Macedonians”. We say that’s impossible! But what if the Greeks really want to annex the Republic of Macedonia and are using this as an excuse, a pretext if you like to strike at Macedonia first presumably before Macedonia becomes powerful and strikes at Greece first?

The above mentioned Greek claims may not mean much separately and one by one but when you put them together then a pattern begins to emerge.

“There are no Macedonians therefore the Skopjans are not Macedonian and if the Skopjans are not Macedonian they cannot lay claim to Macedonian lands.”

“Macedonia is Greek therefore the only Macedonians that exist are Greeks and since part of Macedonia is Greek then it only makes sense that all of Macedonia is Greek and should be annexed by Greece.”

If I were selfish and well versed in “Greek logic” I too would not be beyond in thinking along these lines.

So what does this really mean?

The way I see it today Greece is at the crossroads of its existence. The rebirth of a Macedonian state has placed it in an awkward position. It’s only a matter of time before the world finds out that the creation of the Modern Greek state was based on a myth and at the

expense of other ethnic groups; one being the Macedonians. If Greece recognizes the existence of a Macedonian ethnic state and a Macedonian ethnic identity its own fabricated identity will unravel. So Greece has two choices; (1) allow itself to fall apart, which I am sure is unacceptable to Greece or (2) take measures to prevent its secret from being discovered. Time will tell which way this will go but we cannot preclude the possibility that Greece will not give up without a fight. My guess is Greece will attempt to save itself by endeavoring to silence the Macedonian people.

Its first attempt at silencing the Macedonian people, which is currently ongoing, is to prohibit them from naming their state Macedonia. Greek logic dictates that if there is no Macedonia there can be no Macedonian ethnic identity! Thus the reason for the so-called “name dispute”.

Failing that Greece will attempt to annex the Republic of Macedonia (Mitsotakis almost did it if only Milosovich agreed) and do to the Macedonian people there as it did to the Macedonian people inside Greece by first prohibiting them to speak their Macedonian language and then by renaming every Macedonian person’s name and every place-name with Greek names. Several generations later the Republic of Macedonia will be Greece and inhabited by pure Greeks, descendants of the Ancient Greeks. Greece is an expert on doing this. It has done it before and it will do it again. Those who don’t agree with Greece’s policy can leave and go to Canada, the USA and Australia. But before Greece attempts to exercise this option I hope it will remember the outcome of its first attempt at the “Megali idea”. Then it lost the war and the lands it never had but this time it may lose more.

Desperate people will do desperate things at desperate times and some Greeks are not beyond that! So what are we to do?

One thing we can do is be very vigilant and never take things for granted, even when they sound ridiculous.

23. Letter to Nimits from – OMO ‘Ilinden’ - PIRIN

Blagoevgrad 29.02.2008, Bulgaria

To Me Matthew Nimitz,
Special Representative of the Secretary General of the UN
United Nations, New York

Dear Mr Nimitz,

OMO ‘Ilinden’ – PIRIN is a party one of which main goals is to protect the rights and identity of the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria . Therefore we always follow with great interest the so called ‘dispute for the name’ of Republic of Macedonia started years ago by Republic of Greece .

Let us briefly to share our position on that matter which was again actualized after your latest proposal.

1. The dispute was initiated by The Republic of Greece in its intentions to establish exclusive right upon the name ‘Macedonia’ and all its derivatives. These intentions are obvious even by the simple fact that while Greece itself named three of its regions Macedonia as well one of its ministries, is disputing the same right to the R Macedonia. The latter insists on disputing the change of the name of Republic of Macedonia but not on the names of its own regions.
2. Considering that only part of historical Macedonia is located in Greece and the ‘rights’ of Republic of Greece on the Macedonian heritage are at least disputable from scientific point of view and non-existent according to the international law and politics, we think that the engagement of UN with this dispute is alarming. With allowing this dispute to engage its institutions UN actually institutionalizes the ambitions of the nationalistic mythology and enhances the arguments of the ethnic nationalism on international level.
3. We believe that the dispute was not initialised by any practical and real need of Republic of Greece but to use the ethnic nationalism for certain, daily inner political goals. This has been

proven by the fact that the Macedonian state existed for 47 years in the Yugoslavian federation under the name 'Macedonia' and that never caused any complaints or has been disputed by Republic of Greece (talking about that it must be said that the Republic of Macedonia uses the name 'Macedonia' way too longer than the Republic of Greece in its administration!)

4. We think that the dispute which the Republic of Greece leads does not consider just the right on the name, besides the official declarations of the Greek Government. The fact that Republic of Greece does not object any use of the names 'Macedonia' and 'Macedonian' (including that of Alexander the Great and Philip of Macedon) by third parties or other countries speaks for itself. Such example is Republic of Bulgaria where the names 'Macedonia' and 'Macedonian' are very common and widespread because of hundred of thousands refugees and their relatives who live in Bulgaria and were driven away from their homes in nowadays Northern Greece by the Greek Governments during 1912-1913, 1922-1930, 1940-1946 in 20th century. Thousands of streets, squares and other public places are named 'Macedonia' or bear the adjective 'Macedonian' or are named after kings, heroes or places from ancient kingdom of Macedonia. There are hundreds of cultural and political organizations which name consists the word 'Macedonian', there is even a party represented in the Bulgarian parliament - Inner Macedonian Revolutionary Organization-BND. We have to conclude that the real reason for the undertaken activities of the Greek Government against the name of Republic of Macedonia is to dispute and undermine the Macedonian national and ethnic identity. There are the following proves for this:

- The denial of Greece of the existence of the numerous Macedonian minority on its territory;

- The dispute of the right of using the name Macedonia and its derivatives, as well persons from the past who are part of the cultural and historical heritage of Macedonia, only to Republic of Macedonia – the state founded by the Macedonian nation and not to any other country.

Therefore we think that for Republic of Macedonia is much more important to preserve its name rather than it is for Republic of Greece to change it, because the change intimidates the core of the Macedonian identity but not the Greek one.

5. We believe that the dispute conducted by the Republic of Greece directly affects the Macedonian minority in Bulgaria and its national and ethnic identity and the fundamental right of self determination.

6. We believe that the tolerating from UN of the absolutely groundless claims of Republic of Greece causes more intolerance, encourages the ethnic nationalism on the Balkans and also those who deny the Macedonian identity in this number – the government's politics of denial of the Macedonian minority led by the Republic of Bulgaria.

7. We believe that the dispute from the beginning is placed incorrectly – it has always been focused on the claims of Republic of Greece towards the Republic of Macedonia and all the proposals including your last one discuss what Republic of Macedonia must change but not even slightly consider what Greece should do to stop the suspicions from itself for the claims towards Republic of Macedonia and the Macedonian nation. We assume that it is absolutely necessary in these negotiations Republic of Greece to be asked the followings:

- The Greek government to declare officially that it recognizes and does not dispute the existence of Macedonian nation, language and identity;

- The Macedonian minority in Greece to be recognized;

- To allow the Macedonian refugees from the civil war to go back or visit their home places in Greece;

- To resolve the question about the confiscated property of the Macedonian refugees;

- Greece to regulate the names of its regions so not to cause a suspicion for claims towards neighbouring countries in which there are also parts of Macedonia .

8. The claim that Republic of Greece is threaten by territorial aspirations from its Macedonian neighbour is absolutely groundless nonetheless because the military and economically power of the latter is far less beyond the capacity of the Greek Army and economy. But the entire nonsense of that claim is becoming obvious through the obstacles which the Greek Government puts on the way of the integration of Republic of Macedonia in NATO and EU, beside the fact that only full integration could erase any fear or danger of future irredentism.

9. The lack of respect from Republic of Greece to the international law was already seen by the single fact that this country uses all its influence to establish double standards in UN in the accession of new members and mostly in the two year economical blockade which it imposed on its northern neighbour in order to make it give up its name. Now we are alarmed by the threads coming from Republic Greece that it will impose a veto on the accession of Republic of Macedonian in NATO. This will not only prevent the whole integration of the Balkan Peninsula in NATO but also creates a risk for the peace in the region in such a sensitive moment of declaring the independence of Kosovo.

10. The lack of respect for the standards of the international law and also towards the interests of the neighbouring countries in the region, using power for imposing nationalistic points of views from Republic of Greece should not be encouraged by UN and any other international institution.

11. We believe that it is undesirable, not useful, neither rightful to be imposed any change in the name of Republic of Macedonia what so ever, which was democratically chosen by its own citizens, neither to be implemented limitations or to be given exclusive rights for the use of the name 'Macedonia' to any one.

Giving briefly light to our point of view on this dispute we kindly ask you to keep in mind in its resolution as well the interests of the Macedonian minority in Republic of Bulgaria.

With respect,

Stoyko Stoykov
Botyo Vangelov
Copresidents of OMO "Ilinden"-PIRIN

24. Letter to Nimits from Risto Stefov

February 17, 2008

To: Ambassador Mathew Nimitz

From: Risto Stefov

Dear Ambassador Nimitz,

I have been following your progress as mediator of the name dispute between the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Greece for several years now and I have some questions for you.

If it is truly a compromise that you are seeking from these states then why not demand that Greece give up something in exchange for what Macedonia has already given up? Why not ask Greece to recognize the Macedonian minority in Greece as a good will gesture for Macedonia's relinquishment of its national flag and addition of items to its constitution? In other words why are you proposing alternatives that suit Greece but ask for nothing in return from Greece?

Greece is already a well established State with a name that defines its historical place in this world. You know that Greek claims on the Macedonian heritage are dubious at best since they are based on historical assertions and you know that historically Macedonia never belonged to Greece until as recently as 1913 when 51% of its geographical territory was awarded to it by the 1913 Treaty of Bucharest.

The Republic of Macedonia on the other hand, all of which by the way is inside geographical Macedonia, is struggling to establish itself under a name which clearly and appropriately defines its people and their place on the map.

Clearly Mr. Nimitz you cannot possibly see Greece's assertions as more valid than those of Macedonia. Yet based on your effort I cannot help but feel that your proposals are one sided. You must understand that the Macedonian people are fighting for their identity which is of paramount importance to them yet you continue to support the "dubious" Greek position.

Mr. Nimitz have you ever asked yourself this question: “What will Greece lose if it accepts Macedonia by its rightful name?” Have you asked yourself: “What will Macedonia lose if it is robbed of its identity?” As a mediator you are expected to be fair and impartial. Do you believe Mr. Nimitz your proposals are fair and impartial? How can you ask the Macedonian people to give up their identity and lose their existence and ask nothing from Greece?

So, Mr. Nimitz while you are asking me and my people to give up our identity and vanish from the face of the earth what could you possibly offer us in exchange?

Thank you for your consideration. I anxiously await your response.

Best Regards,
Risto Stefov
rstefov@hotmail.com

No response was ever received...

25. Macedonian is not Greece's business

By J.S.G. Gandeto

Once again, the forefront for dissemination of the Greek version of history in Australia, the so-called Advisory Council, who are neither Macedonians nor have any clue about advising, have managed to show their ugly head by attacking Victor Friedman, a prominent and well respected academic scholar from University of Chicago, for speaking the truth about the Macedonian language.

Their attempt to denigrate and insult anyone who disagrees with their artificially created and hysterically defended mythological nation is nothing new; Greeks have a long list of "national enemies" whose views are regarded as "dangerous" to the Hellenic Republic and must, at all cost, be suppressed or eliminated. Here, without much consternation, the names of Anastasia Karakasidou who wrote/admitted that "ethnic Macedonians exist in Greece", Ernst Badian who stated that "Ancient Macedonians neither viewed themselves as Greeks nor were they viewed by the ancient Greeks as such", Eugene Borza's statement that "Ancient Macedonians were a distinct and separate people from the ancient Greeks", their own son Caragatsis who stated that "it is an illusion to think that Ancient Macedonians were Greeks" and professor Friedman's views on the Macedonian language as separate and a uniquely different than either Serbian or Bulgarian language and many more, can be mentioned as such examples.

Their xenophobic attitude towards scholars, whose knowledge and analysis of history markedly differs from their own, stems from the fact that some Greeks in general and ultra nationalist Greeks in particular, have a distorted perception of "selves". Any uncovered truths about their highly checkered past, for which they have failed to adequately "create" a timely saleable version of the historical events, presents an unbridgeable gap and is perceived as dangerously calamitous for the well-being of their nation. Perhaps, their knee-jerk reaction to anything that runs contrary to their own school-imbued and preachers-enforced education is a result of their insecurities about their own nation-building process.

When one is constantly reminded about its own nationality, when one is being measured on the values of Greekness and is being graded on perceived adherence to these nationally prescribed norms, then one is being weighed and evaluated on the retention of those "learned" parameters. Thus, the perceived or imagined erosion in the strengths of these national "pillars" triggers periodically enforced teachings and timely disciplined reminders. This, in the final analysis, reminds one of the weaknesses and the porosity of the Greek position: They have to invent national enemies in order to maintain structural cohesiveness in their artificially created state. Without such national enemies the apparent Greek unity will easily dissolve. Their historiography resembles a chameleon; it changes colors with the political winds of the time. The lies propagated for so long have finally reached the crashing end; the new lies that need to replace the original ones (whose usefulness the Greek state fully exploited for many years), need to be much more sophisticated, highly polished, firmly planted and more encompassing in order to be able to withstand much more vigorous scrutiny and do their intended job. However, creating bigger lies entails rewriting history and any attempt to redefine historical events and finagle empirical data is a treacherous business wroth with danger.

There is too much literary evidence available to be successfully manipulated and an overwhelming body of incontrovertible knowledge at public disposal that cannot possibly be overlooked. The task is monumental even for such skillful fabricators as the Greeks themselves. The end is fast approaching and with it comes unforeseen consequences. Certainly, the rules under which the Greeks operated in the past have changed, so have the players. The truth, as a useful currency, has been devaluated to such an extent that the Greek government must now create a new divergent counterfeit currency in order to successfully steer public opinion in a new direction. Greece sees Macedonia as such a ploy where Greek passion for the "motherland", cultivated and nurtured for decades, can once more be played out and used as a political catalytic converter.

But even Macedonia is not such a sure bet anymore; there are numerous dissenting opinions within Greece itself; the ethnic Macedonians whose existence Greece openly denies, are becoming

emboldened in their fight for basic human freedom. Europe is becoming much more receptive to the plight of these "unrecognized" minorities and many informed Europeans are getting frustrated with Greece's bullying tactics and irresponsible behavior. The global economy tends to deemphasize the existing borders and fosters greater openness and cooperation between nations. New archeological artifacts bring new evidence to the forefront and compel scholars to reexamine their conclusions. The spotlight is on Greece and she can choose to come out clean, grant full human rights to the ethnic Macedonians within her border and allow them to speak and study under their maternal tongue or hide under the veil of new lies and fabrications, alienate herself from the modern democracies in Europe and thereby sink deeper into the darkened abyss.

Greece has no right to deny the ethnic Macedonians living in Greece their basic human rights as people. Greece can not stake a claim on the name Macedonia with which she got connected to as recently as 1912 with the spoils of the Balkan Wars. Greece has no right to claim the ancient Macedonians with whom she has no connection at all. The ancient Macedonians enslaved Greece and kept it under their rule until the coming of the Romans. When Rome defeated the Macedonians, Rome liberated the Greeks. Greeks cannot claim the Ancient Macedonian greatness; literary evidence cannot support such an elusive act. Ancient Macedonian greatness does not belong to them. Greeks should educate themselves first and foremost before passing judgment on others. Listening to the ancient Greeks can do wonders for their inflated and empty ego. The ancient Greeks left a plethora of incorruptible evidence of who was Greek and who was Macedonian in antiquity. The statements from the ancient Greeks and the ancient Macedonians speak much louder than today's Greeks convoluted interpretations and self-centered opinion. Greece's crocodile tears for Macedonia are too salty for her own palate. Greece should leave the Republic of Macedonia alone to pursue her own European integration unimpeded. Greece should not dig a grave for the Macedonians. The cultural genocide they have inflicted on the Macedonians living in Greece will never be forgotten.

The Macedonians though, will prevail with her or without her. She should focus on her own destiny as a nation and stop its

irresponsible, virulent attack on anything Macedonian. Greece's position is whimsically constructed, rests on precarious constructs and cannot withstand an iota of historical scientific scrutiny. It seems that all foreigners know Greece's history except the Greeks themselves. I presume artificiality breeds insecurities and thus by implication, nervousness and fear and that is a sure sign of a thieving nation.

Instead of focusing on distorting the truth about the Republic of Macedonia they should worry about their own historiography which resembles a coat of many colors. Theirs is a history invented to serve a political purpose which eventually will succumb under the weight of its own artificially created shield. It contains too many large gaping holes for which the creators have no plausible explanations; one cannot hope to go the distance on borrowed time. Ideological platforms based on historical cover-ups and nurtured with distortions and half-truths are bound to suffer a premature and an unwanted end. Manipulating public opinion for political gains is as collusive as is treacherous, and at the end is perilously dangerous. This Australian front that propagates this kind of nonsense is nothing but "Aristotelis" in disguise whose function in Aegean Macedonia, (yes, the occupied part of Macedonia) was to spy on ethnic Macedonians and suppress their ethnic aspirations. Their actions are transparent and their aim is pathetic. Their writings are venomous and lack cognitive substance. It is disgusting to see them evoke the passage written by Schlesinger: They wrote:

"Unfortunately many of the authoritative views of the American academic establishment do not follow Arthur Schlesinger advice about the purpose of history in their writings:

Schlesinger wrote:

"The purpose of history is to promote not group self-esteem, but understanding of the world and the past, dispassionate analysis, judgment and perspective, respect for diver- gent cultures and traditions, and unflinching protection for those unifying ideas of tolerance, democracy, and human rights that make free historical inquiry possible."

How pitifully hypocritical it sounds coming from a Greek group who disseminates lies, fabrications, uses malice and promotes hate. You have the audacity to quote a person who writes about respect of divergent cultures and traditions, while you and the government you write for denies the existence of the ethnic Macedonians in Greece. You who have forbade the Macedonians living in Greece to use their own mother's tongue and persecuted them for even uttering a word to their domestic animals in Macedonian. You accuse others for lack of tolerance and democracy and of human rights? Do you even know how abhorrent it sounds coming from you? I wonder where it starts. Where are the logic and the common sense? Is it your inability to comprehend the written word or is it your negligence to consider others as your equal that drives your arrogance and pomposity? If the truth were a runaway locomotive and bears straight at you, would you be able to recognize it?

Instead promoting KKK ideology, you should turn around and embrace the Republic of Macedonia. She is the only true friend you have in the region. Think again and envision what would be like for Greece if Macedonia becomes what you wished her to become; you will be surrounded by your worst nightmare. Cherish the fact that you have the ethnic Macedonians in Greece still peaceful and civilized. Extend to them what is only theirs to begin with; their human rights as citizens of Greece. After all, your house is not made of glass, is it?

I will leave you with this passage in hope that it may elicit some sobering thoughts:

Why would the ancient Greeks not agree with your lies?

Read:

“When the news of his death reached Greece, revolts against the Macedonian authority broke out everywhere. Theban exiles in Athens organized a force of patriots and besieged the Macedonian garrison in the Cadmea. In Athens itself where many had prayed for an end to Alexander; the anti Macedonian party, feeling that its prayers had been heard crowned themselves with garlands and feasted over the death of him whom they had courted as a god --

singing, says Plutarch, "triumphant songs and victory, as it by their own valor they had vanquished him".

The very last sentence is terribly telling:

"Triumphant songs and victory, as it by their own valor they had vanquished him".

Well, then, would you say that Alexander was a Greek king?

Why would his loyal subjects exult and feast, singing adorned with garlands upon the news that "their" king has died?

Is there any similar example in the annals of the recorded history where a nation goes into a wild celebration upon hearing the news that their king has died?

Aren't you the only country in the world that celebrates its conqueror?

Does it make any sense to sing triumphantly when your leader, the king who would "secure the frontiers for Greece", vanquishes from the face of the earth?

Final question; How come we did not find any similar celebrations in any Macedonian cities at the time?

Memorable encounter (36):

"The Colonels, as it happened, promoted Alexander as a great Greek hero, especially to army recruits: the Greeks of the fourth century BC, to whom Alexander was a half-Macedonian, half-Epirote barbarian conqueror; would have found this metamorphosis as ironic as I did." (Peter Green *Alexander of Macedon 356- 323 B.C. A Historical Biography* xv).

The Theft of a King – Who Stole Alexander

ISBN: 978-1-4327-6856-0

Publisher: Outskirts Press, Inc.

By Gandeto, J.S.G.

1. What is the book about?

The book centers on Alexander the Great and the Ancient Macedonians' ethnicity. It elaborates topics related to the differences between the ancient Macedonians and the ancient Greeks and attempts to dispel the modern notion – one originating in the 19th century and thereafter propagated by some western authors – that ancient Macedonians “were” Greeks. Also, in the book the reader will find glimpses of today's dispute between the Republic of Macedonia and Greece regarding the name of the Republic of Macedonia, in essence, what lies hidden behind this carefully orchestrated Greek problem with the name. Readers will have a chance to get acquainted with modern-day Balkan politics where deep-rooted historical intrigues, stereotyping and ingrained prejudices do justice for tolerance and rational thought.

The book offers glimpses into our continuous struggle to return Alexander to his rightful place - among his Macedonian kinsmen. Yes, it is a feeble voice in the dark, but a voice nevertheless, that isn't going to die any time soon. Through the topics discussed in the book, the reader will have a chance to see and understand the other side of the story. In the words of Marquez Garcia, "Our enemies have crushed many roses before but they haven't succeeded in stopping the spring from coming."

Compelling questions:

..If Alexander the Great was a Greek king, why would he dismiss his own "Greek" troops in the middle of his Asian campaign in 330 B.C.? (Arr. III.19.6-7; Plut. Al. 42.5; Diod. XVII.74.3-4; Curt. VI.2.17).

Why would Greeks in the mainland, supposedly his own people, rebel against him?

Why would the Greeks call the Lamian War a "Hellenic War" if they were fighting the Macedonians?

2. Why did you decide to write it?

My main objective was twofold: to bring to the forefront the differences between the ancient Macedonians and the ancient Greeks and to shed some light on much overlooked and, by some authors largely ignored, facts about the ethnicity of the ancient Macedonians.

I could no longer stay silent in lieu of such incontrovertible evidence left to us from the ancient chroniclers that clearly distinguished and separated the ancient Macedonians from the ancient Greeks. I felt compelled to respond to the blatant and dishonest manipulation of historical evidence in order to circumvent and subvert the universally declared human rights covenants and obligations.

3. How did you get your book published?

A friend of mine suggested Outskirts Press as a reputable vehicle to reach my audience; I'm glad I did.

4. What types of readers will be interested in your book?

I would be happy if today's younger generation gets a "whiff" of the twisted political winds in the Balkan and understand how distortions and manipulations of historical facts can be used for political gains.

5. What is special about your book? What differentiates it from other books in the same category?

What separates this book from other books in the same category is the blunt straight forward – no gloves – attitude. There is no glossing over, no need to look for clues hidden in between the lines or sugar-coating politically correct terms. If I have perceived historical distortions being sold as fact, I have described them as lies; if unsupported of evidence claims are propagated as truths, I called them fabrications; if historical injustice has been committed, I find no acceptable reason to remain silent regardless of socio-political consequences. Conscience compels me to act and stand against all social injustices.

If modern day Greeks succeed in their diplomatic offensive to convince the world that Alexander the Great and his Macedonians were actually Greeks, then such a verdict may accomplish two things: (a) prove that historical evidence can be ignored (and in this case it would be), that records can be manipulated and subverted, and (b) inflict irreparable damage to the confidence and the faith entrusted in the hands of scholars and academic institutions world wide. Such a verdict will amount to nothing less than the theft of a king. On the other hand, if justice prevails, as it should, then we may safely conclude that Alexander and his legacy would continue to rest among his Macedonians whom he considered his natural kinsmen and with whom he shared his troubles, setbacks, sufferings and pain as well as jubilation in his victories.

6. Have you published any other books? Do you plan to publish more?

Yes, I have. In 2002 I published *The Ancient Macedonians – Differences between the Ancient Macedonians and the Ancient Greeks*, *One Golden Ray upon the Rock*, a novel in 2005 and *The Wolves of Trapper's Bluff* in 2007.

I most certainly will continue to write.

The book is available through most of the book stores;
<http://www.outskirtspress.com/thetheftofaking>

J.S.G. Gandeto was born in Lubojno, Macedonia. Educated at Ss Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje, Republic of Macedonia. He immigrated to United States and continued his studies at Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan and Nova South-Eastern University in Fourth Lauderdale, Florida where he received his post graduate degrees. He recently completed his 29th year as an educator and has since retired and is continuing to pursue his passion in writing. In 2002 he published his first book *Ancient Macedonians - Differences between Ancient Macedonians and the Ancient Greeks*. In 2005 he published the romantic novels *One Golden Ray upon the Rock* and in 2007, *The Wolves of Trappers Bluff*.

In the Macedonian Language he has published the following novels: *Spasa's Light* in 2004, *Saraf* in 2009 and *Rosamarina's Grave* in 2010. Book of poems *Muabeti* in 2003, poemata *Ko Jagne* in 2005 and *Majka -Egejka* in 2009. Currently, he is preparing for publication his latest novel *Folded Impressions*.

26. Response to “What's in a name? Blood, if it's Macedonia”

http://www.theglobeandmail.com//servlet/story/LAC.20070716.CO_MACE16/TPStory/Comment/

Response by Risto Stefov

ANDRÉ GEROLYMATOS, Chair of Hellenic studies at Simon Fraser University on Monday, July 16, 2007 on Page A13 wrote:

“Last month, Liberal MP Lui Temelkovski introduced a private member's bill that called for Canada to recognize the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as the Republic of Macedonia. This seemingly innocuous bill raised nary an eyebrow in Ottawa. Yet, the name change is a potential source of regional conflict. For 16 years, Canadian governments have stayed clear of Macedonian politics and avoided contributing to such a crisis.

Not long ago, the Balkans conjured images of mass killings, terror and armies of refugees after Yugoslavia's disintegration. The wars in Bosnia, Croatia and Kosovo gave us the term "ethnic cleansing," as organized killing symptomatic of the Second World War returned to Europe. Remarkably, the Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia managed to quietly separate in 1991 and, for the most part, avoided the bloodshed that swept the other republics. In fact, the only crimes against humanity were committed against history by weapons of cultural destruction and historical parody, a circumstance not exclusive to the Balkans.

According to some voices from Skopje, all Slav citizens are descendents of Alexander the Great and of the ancient Macedonians - everyone, of course, with the exception of as much as 40 per cent of the population that is Albanian. Airports, schools, buildings and bridges are named after Alexander, Philip or other historical figures whose names provide an instant link with antiquity. The Greeks, however, do not like the hijacking of what they believe is their monopoly of classical Greece and its symbols. The Bulgarians are disenchanted with the notion of a Macedonian identity that is not Bulgarian, and the Albanian minority still feels excluded.”

Mr. Gerolymatos unlike the modern Greeks of Athens and the world over who believe they are the descendents of the so called “Ancient Greeks” the vast majority of Macedonians are in touch with reality and believe they are the product of evolution and mixing of all the conquerors and settlers that set foot on Macedonian soil, including the Ancient Macedonians.

“During Tito's heyday, the Macedonian republic constituted a small part of the federation, a reminder of the brief flirtation with a greater Yugoslavia that would have encompassed western Bulgaria and Greece's northern province of Macedonia. To this end, Tito armed and trained Greek Communist insurgents who waged a destructive civil war in Greece from 1946 to 1949. Concurrently, he stocked the fires of a distinct Macedonian nationalism that would serve as a fig leaf for the Yugoslav dictator's Balkan ambitions. The idea was that, under the label of pan-Macedonia, the Yugoslavs could absorb parts of Greece and Bulgaria.”

Mr. Gerolymatos, perhaps those were Tito’s ideas, but to the Macedonians it did not matter what Tito or Stalin wanted, their dream was to form a united, free and independent Macedonia. Tito, Stalin and the communists created the conditions for the Macedonian people to yet again strive to achieve their rights as human beings in this world. They did not need Stalin, Tito or any other communist to tell them who they are and what to want. Macedonians have a long history of struggle for independence and the need to form their own state, which is a constant reminder for them.

“Tito's dream never became a reality because Stalin would not countenance a rival Communist strongman in southeastern Europe. As a result, the Macedonian republic was left to languish in obscurity - the dream of a greater Macedonia was confined to history books, maps and storytelling. The Greeks occasionally protested, but the United States and NATO were far too content with Tito's anti-Soviet policies to take it seriously.”

Again Mr. Gerolymatos, what you fail to mention here is the means by which Greece acquired its Macedonian territories. Let me remind you that Greece along with its partners Serbia and Bulgaria,

invaded Macedonian territories in 1912 under false pretenses. Any history book can attest to the fact that Macedonia was brutally occupied and illegally partitioned by Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria during the Balkan Wars of 1912, 1913. All the Macedonians want is to be given back what was already theirs.

Again Tito may have had his dreams about Macedonia but the Macedonian people had their own dreams about uniting and freeing their ancestral lands. Macedonia belongs to the Macedonians; that is what they fought for in World War II and later in the Greek Civil War, not to fulfill foreign imperial desires.

“But, despite the outward appearance of a prosperous and multicultural Yugoslavia, the forces of extreme nationalism lay just under the surface. In fact, one reason why Yugoslavia began to unravel in the 1980s was because it could not reconcile Serbian predominance and the latent nationalism of the constituent republics. Regional identities supplanted federalism and common sense. Overnight, Slobodan Milosevic set in motion the process for a greater Serbia that, inevitably, led to civil war.”

Despite their common ancestry, Serbs, Croats, Slovenes and Bosnians had different memories of the past and saw themselves as distinct peoples. The Macedonian problem, to some degree, is not only a mirror image of Yugoslav religious and cultural divisions but also complicated by the Albanian factor. The Slav extremist's insistence on a single ethnic Macedonian identity within a unitary state will further alienate the Albanians and encourage them to seek separation.”

Mr. Gerolymatos, who are these so called “Slav” extremists living in Macedonia and how many of them are there? So, in spite of the fact that the Republic of Macedonia is a multi-ethnic state with established multi-ethnic institutions recognized by the entire world, do you still believe that extreme “Slav” element who will insist on a unitary state with a single ethnic Macedonian identity, exists in Macedonia today? Mr. Gerolymatos, are you not aware that the Republic of Macedonia has recognized all of its minorities and has awarded their rights as such? Are you not aware that ethnic Albanian parties exist and participate in the Macedonian Parliament? Are you not aware that every minority has the right to

speaking its language and practicing its religion in Macedonia? Can you say the same thing about Greece?

Mr. Gerolymatos, unlike Greece which refuses to recognize its non-Greek minorities, Macedonia has removed all tensions by doing exactly the opposite and recognizing them.

“This potential new Balkan crisis will also be fuelled by granting independence to Kosovo, a move that will act as a magnet for Albanians in the Macedonian republic. In the ensuing civil war, the Yugoslav horrors of the 1990s will once again plague the region.

This is not to say that a private member's bill in the House of Commons will be the catalyst for a new Balkan conflict. But if it succeeds, it will cast Canadian foreign policy alongside that of the U.S. and Britain, whose short-sighted advocacy of Kosovo independence could trigger another crisis. Ultimately, it would be a very high price to pay for the few votes the bill would generate.

The solution to the Macedonian issue is not facile arguments over who is related to Alexander the Great or what the republic's name is, but rather the admission of this small state into the European Union.”

André Gerolymatos is the author of *The Balkan Wars: Conquest, Revolution and Retribution from the Ottoman Era to the Twentieth Century and Beyond*.

27. What does Europe have to do with the Greek-Macedonian Name Dispute?

By now we all know Greece's story with regards to the Greek-Macedonian so-called "name dispute" and as JS Gandeto puts it in his article "Anatomy of a bankrupt ideology" published in the American Chronicle on November 11th, 2008 at this link; <http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/81091> "In fact, they [Greeks] not only diffuse and distort the plight of the real Macedonians but go as far as to portray the Macedonians as "usurpers" of Greek history. This is a classic example of a thief's mentality; in order to deflect attention from the crimes he has committed, the thief assumes the role of the victim and he cries foul".

What got my attention about the European involvement in the so-called "Greek-Macedonian" name dispute is an article I read entitled "No Macedonians in Macedonia, says Brussels" published by Makfax on November 13th, 2008 at this link: <http://www.makfax.com.mk/look/novina/article.tpl?IdLanguage=1&IdPublication=2&NrArticle=131761&NrIssue=819&NrSection=10>

The article goes on to say: "More shameful is the paragraph speaking about minorities in Serbia, in which the European Parliament uses the name Macedonians. This means that all Macedonians living outside Macedonia's borders can choose what to call themselves, while the Macedonians in Macedonia are still subjected to experiments of this type," Utrinski Vesnik's Brussels correspondent said in the front-page story with a headline "Brussels Renames us FYROMacedonians".

Why is this happening? Is Brussels trying to placate Greece or is there something deeper to this?

As I am in the process of doing research for my next book "Macedonian Struggle for Independence" I found some information that might explain why some European Union countries are behaving the way they are.

The Macedonian people's problems are not new nor do they exclusively have to do with Greece. The Macedonian people's problems began in 1878, first with the Russians and then with the Western Great Powers mainly Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, Italy and Great Britain.

Even though Macedonians fought on Russia's side in the Russian-Ottoman War of 1877-78 expecting Russia to help them liberate themselves, Russia sold them out by creating a greater Bulgarian state and handed Macedonia to the Bulgarians.

Then when the Western European Great Powers became involved and met at the Berlin Congress in 1878 the Macedonians were certain that their situation would be well looked after and Macedonia would be given autonomy just as Bulgaria was given autonomy. Unfortunately that did not happen. But worse than that the European Powers ignored the Macedonian people's pleas and gave Macedonia back to the Ottomans. Even worse than that, knowing that the Ottomans would retaliate against the Macedonians, none of the Powers made sure that the Macedonians would not be harmed.

The Russian-Ottoman War was an absolute disaster for the Macedonian people especially for those who sacrificed their lives and died helping Russia. Instead of being grateful for the help they received and allowing the Macedonians to create a Macedonian state, the Russians sold them out to the Bulgarians. By signing the San Stefano treaty Russia agreed to the creation of a greater Bulgarian State which was to include Macedonian lands and people. Then as the Western Power intervened in the Berlin Congress, instead of sorting things out and giving Macedonia autonomy as they did to Bulgaria they gave Macedonia back to the Ottomans.

Instead of granting Macedonia real autonomy like they did for Bulgaria, the Great Powers offered empty words that lead nowhere. According to articles 23 and 62 of the Berlin Congress the Macedonian people were to receive political and religious autonomy within the Ottoman Empire. They were also promised political, religious and educational reforms which never materialized. Given that Macedonia was handed back to the Ottomans to do as they

pleased, the situation was further aggravated by the Ottoman decision to bring Muslim settlers into Macedonia. Macedonia in fact became the dumping ground for renegades from the Ottoman army and for Muslims who escaped from Bulgaria, Bosnia, Serbia, Herzegovina and other regions from which the Ottomans lost territories. More than 60,000 Muslim families were dumped and disbursed in Macedonia to be accommodated in Christian homes and to become an economic burden of the Macedonian people.

After the Berlin Congress those Macedonians who stubbornly fought against the Ottomans fled to Serbia and Bulgaria, in fear for their lives. More than 200 Macedonian villages were emptied of their inhabitants. The ones that remained unfortunately fared the worst as the Ottomans hit them with new taxes to pay for the war damages and to supply the fast growing Ottoman military machine which by now numbered 80 battalions. The devastation in Macedonia was further exacerbated by the arming of Albanian Militias and allowing them to settle in Skopje and establish their own rule in Macedonia.

There was also a matter of the huge debt of money which the Ottomans had borrowed from the Western Powers that the Ottomans now had to pay back which again became a burden on the Macedonian people. By now Macedonian villages were paying over thirty different taxes which became a struggle for survival. It was during these times that Macedonians found themselves wishing to be liberated or dead because life the way it was, was not worth living.

Even before the Berlin Congress and before their fate was sealed by the Western Great Powers, leading Macedonians could not accept the idea of a Macedonia unified with Bulgaria so the decisions of the San Stefano Treaty were opposed. But after the Berlin Congress Macedonians were in disbelief and horrified by the actions of the Western European Great Powers especially when they gave Macedonia back to the Ottomans without any guarantees that the population would be protected from retaliation and harm.

In the eyes of the Macedonian people the Great Powers committed a cardinal sin. They sold out Macedonia and their Christian brothers for profit. No wonder some European Union states today are

intolerant of the Macedonians. How could they recognize Macedonia and Macedonian people today when they were guilty of selling them out in 1878? To recognize the Macedonians today would mean that they would have to admit that they made a grave error in 1878. An error on the side of the Western European Great Powers however was no small disaster for the Macedonian people who a century and a quarter later are still fighting for their rights and freedoms.

But that was not the first time the Macedonian people were betrayed by European countries. In spite of the Macedonian people's attempt to again liberate themselves in 1903 and create their own Macedonian state, they were again betrayed by allowing Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria to partition Macedonia by the 1913 Treaty of Bucharest to which the European Powers were signatories and again in 1919 after European borders were again recognized.

In 1945 the Macedonian people living in Greece, after helping to expel the Fascists and Nazis from Greece, came close to being recognized as Macedonians and here again none of the Western European states supported their recognition.

In 1991 when the Republic of Macedonia declared its independence most Western European states again voted against the recognition of a Macedonian state.

Now we hear certain Western European states will not recognize that Macedonians are living in the Republic of Macedonia even though they recognize the Macedonians that live outside of Macedonia!

Does anyone really know what is going on?

It appears, at least to me, that Western Europe has a grudge against the Macedonian people. The sixty-four thousand dollar question however is why? Is it because of what Europe did to the Macedonians over the last century or so? Could Western Europeans have a guilty conscience which is manifesting itself in a negative way? There is but one solution for that, recognize Macedonia and the Macedonians and I am sure they will forgive them!