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HISTORY OF THE MACEDONIAN MOVEMENT OF BALKAN PROSPERITY (MA.KI.B.E. – RAINBOW)

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PROLOGUE - INTRODUCTION

Story in the neo-Greek language means narrative, story, in the macedonian of Pella, means the occurred. To be precise, it means that which happened, took place, (se storia=happened, took place, occurred). When the prefix is exists before the verb, it means an accomplished fact. Namely, those facts that happened in the past and are finished we say “se-is-storia”. Those that were done, we say “se pravia” (it has the same root as the Greek prato - I do).

Story, according to the neo-Greek version, could be an imaginative narrative. It, too, is a story. That's why many ancient myths are part of neo-Greek history. Istorya (history) in neo-Macedonian means the recording of what's occurred, happened, took place... Therefore it cannot include myths and imaginary events. It can, though, record what's occurred selectively, in ways that the reader won't have a wholesome and clear picture of what took place, happened.

Experience teaches us that many have written history subjectively and not objectively. We know, also, that history is written by the victor and he writes it as he wants it to be known by the defeated and obeying subjects. But the defeated and disobeying can also write history subjectively and selectively. The subjectivity of anyone, irrelevant of their good intentions, can, to a point, be influenced by various factors; therefore the reader must have the capacity to know who wrote each historical textbook. To know his relation with the facts had taken place, from what viewpoint he sees them, his motives, his sentiments and his sources of information from which it all derives. This is the reason that although I don't like it at all, I feel I owe it to the readers to present myself. Also, because I participated partly in what took place, I feel I can often write in first person, at times in present tense, at other times in plural. I consider important, also, to record historical elements of my village and the surrounding area. Similar is the history of all the other Macedonian villages and neighboring areas.

By descent, I am an indigenous Macedonian. My place of residence is Aridea, Pella, but I was born in the village Pozartsko or “Pozar”, as my forefathers called it, “Loutraki”, as it was baptized by some bureaucrats in 1926, without asking my forefathers. About 1.250 people live in the village today and almost as many live also in the Republic of Macedonia, expatriated during the Civil war, 1945-1949. They belong to the segment that the state of Athens won't allow repatriation or a mere visit because they are not considered “Greeks by descent”. Therefore, I am not “Greek by descent”, either. During the Balkan wars and the First World War almost 25 families were forced to flee to Bulgaria, to avoid being liberated by the “liberators” knives. Some Pozarites were forced to flee abroad after the Ilinden uprising in 1903, to save themselves from the Turkish army and the so called in Greece “Makedonomachoi” (Macedonian fighters). Pozar was part of the villages that participated in the Macedonian Liberation struggle and had joined the Exarchia, “schismatic” then. It had joined the Exarchia because it allowed the rituals to be conducted in the mother-tongue, Macedonian, and the writings were in the local Cyrillic alphabet, against the Patriarchate which imposed Greek which was absolutely strange to us. A madhouse. For the very same reason Vlachs (their language was Latin in origin) of the area joined the Exarchia as well. They also were called “schismatic” Romanizing or Bulgarian.

As they wrote in their memoirs and were confirmed by the texts of the Greek Consulate of Thessaloniki, the mercenaries of chieftains Volanis and Karavitis in 31-5-1908 surrounded the village and killed 15 of my co-villagers. As the Consulate informs us in its report: “... and negotiations begun for joining of the village Pozar (*to the Patriarchate*) and also of the village Tressino, simultaneously, which would have been of great importance, if successful. Unfortunately, on the 31st of May, a misfortunate event took place: the attack at Pozar by a 60 member force, the arson of about 20 houses and the killing of 15 villagers. Revenge for this was, two days later, the invasion of a Bulgarian gang (from the villages of the surrounding area Sarakinovo, Krontselovo, Rontivo, under the leadership of Golimanis) in Tressino, the arson of the school, of two houses and the murder of three men...” Of course, the event was passed to me by the elderly Pozarites.

The same event is described by I. Karavitis in his memoirs, having participated himself in the murders and burnings of my village (editions Petsivas 1994, p. 783-789 where the consulate reports also appear). Karavitis says that he burned houses and killed komitatzides.

I am a descendant of these “komitatzides”. We call them komites. The word derives from the

European “committee”. So is the Commission, which in Greek is called Epitropi. The “Komitato” in Greek would be “Epitropato”. The Komites, namely, were the people of the Commission. And I am not only a descendant of komites. I am also a komita, as I participated in contemporary committees of struggle myself. Komitatzides is the Turkish version of the word “komites”. Greeks prefer the Turkish version. They do the same with the name of the area of Almopia, which they call Karatzova like the Turks did and not Meglen or Moglena, which are the Macedonian and also the Byzantine names. The mountain Nitse (Macedonian-Byzantine) they prefer also to call Kaimaktsalan (Turkish). The Byzantine (empire), but more correctly Roman, is not only Greek, as they tell us, but also Latin, Albanian, Macedonian, Armenian, Pontian, etc. Byzantium was a multiethnic and multi-cultural empire. Cyrillic was actually a byzantine writing, created in Macedonia by Cyril and Methodius from Thessaloniki. It is the writing of the Macedonian language. The name Almopia is ancient Thracian. According to Herodotus, the Macedonians occupied Almopia and dislocated the Thracian Almopians. According to the neo-Greek logic, besides the “skopian” Macedonia, Almopia doesn’t belong to Macedonia, either.

The province was mentioned by the Byzantines as Moglena, Meglena. There exist also records of a settlement Meglen or Meglenia. It derives from the word magla that in local Macedonian means fog. It was an Episcopcy seat that until recently was called “Moglenon”. The byzantine castle, of which the ruins can be found even today, was named the “Castle of Moglenon”.

Right above today’s village of Pozar there was the castle of Ostarni. It extended from the foot-hills of the mountain to the peak of Debela Stena and the passage of Mala Porta. The word mala (small) is slavic while the word porta (door, gate) is Latin. Similar is the gate Kerkoport of Constantinople from which, they say, its invasion started. Kerka in Macedonian means daughter, kerkoport means “daughter’s gate”. Obviously, the name is Byzantine and not Greek. Remains of the Ostarni castle still exist today. In the very same place today exists a guard house (military). When in 1970’s the bulldozers started leveling the ground, medieval graves were discovered, marble columns, and huge stones, ancient coins, clay pots, bronze ornaments. The villagers were forbidden to approach. Some of the graves, with big flat stones covering them, revealed graves of Bogomiles. So, the bulldozers covered them all under huge amounts of soil. They kept some marble columns that, after a little while, disappeared.

The last ruler of the Ostarni castle was Mantsoula. He was under Krali Marko’s rule, whose seat was in Prilep. These were the hegemonies that resisted against Ottoman invasion in the area, and not the Greeks (Romioi). The epic saga of hegemone Mantsoula who resisted the lengthy siege of the castle, has reached up to our days. Tradition says that the Ostarni castle surrendered because of treachery. The water of the well, which even today is called Mantsoula, was brought to the castle by underground clay-pipelines. After the occupation, the Ottomans destroyed the castle and burned the settlement of Ostarni. Its residents took refuge in the neighboring mountains and, later, created the village of old Pozar.

Po-zar, in exact words, means the remains of burned wood or coal. Tradition says that the name Pozar was given by the inhabitants because of the burning of the village. It also says about the siege of their settlement and the Ostarni castle. At the beginning, the besieged Pozarites settled very high and far away, at Vetko Selo. Afterwards, they descended southwards, at Upper Pozar and finally settled again at the very place they had resided at the very beginning. Others say that Pozar was named so because of the volcanic lava that existed in the area, in the past. They support it on the existence of petrification of the area, which is volcanic and on the hot springs. It so happens that the village on the other side of the ravine of the hot springs is called Tressino. Tresse means shake. Tressina means shaken. Therefore they connected it with the seismic activity observed in volcanic areas.

The hegemonies of the castle were Roman at first, Bulgarian and Roman-Bulgarian later (during King Samuel’s reign), then Romioi and Serbian. Meglen wasn’t taken by the Turks from the Romioi or Greeks but from Serbian hegemonies. Possibly, some were Macedonians, subordinates to

Serbian kings. Hegemons changed but everything shows that all else and the residents, in their majority, remained the same. Historians of the feudal hegemons and bishops, though, named them and made of them Romioi, Bulgarians, Roman-Bulgarians and finally Romioi and Serbian, depending on the background of each hegemon. The Ottomans called them Roum-milliet=Roman nation. In 1903 they revolted to liberate themselves and to establish an autonomous Macedonian state. We, the pre-centuries indigenous Macedonians of the area, are experiencing the last one hundred years our conversion into Greeks, due to the imposed hellenization.

In macedonian we used always the term “Gr-k” and “Gr- tsia” “Grekos” and “Grekia”. I use the same terms myself. The term “Hellenas” means “hellenophone”. I am also a “hellenophone” (hellenic-speaking) but I am not a Grekos. Thus, when I use the term “Hellenes” (Hellenic) in my descriptions, it could mean that I, too, have participated in the chase against the Macedonians. The same applies to the Greek-speaking Sarakatsanoi that always befriended us. Because I want and I owe to be precise, I use the term “Greeks”.

Moglena is described as the largest concentration of Bogomile communities in the Balkans, during the first period of Bogomilism. The Bogomiles (in macedonian, Boga=God, mili=beloved) were a religious dogma -an heresy according to the “orthodox” - which during the 10th to 14th century had grown to large proportions, for whom I will write in another chapter. They were persecuted by the hierarchy of the Patriarchate, the feudal lords and emperors, because it disputed their God-given rule. God, they claimed, makes all men equal, communicates with everyone directly and doesn’t have representatives or intermediaries on earth. Kings, feudal lords and bishops claimed to rule the earth and people by God given right. Therefore bogomilism had also political characteristics.

Pozarites, together with other Megleniotes, had become bogomiles. Their habits and morals, and remnants of graves reveal it. The politico-religious powers, of course, persecuted and chased them, but there are no indications of arson of villages like in 1908 or the Mantsoula period.

Upper Pozar was burned by the Ottomans, once more. It was one of the disobeying villages. It was semi-autonomous and paid a yearly tax. Pozarites once paid their yearly tax to the tax collector but, on his way back, the Pozarites tseta of kapetan Tane ambushed him and took back the tax-money. Unfortunately, they had to kill the tax collector and the gendarme who accompanied him. The elder Pozarites would tell us stories about the revolutionary actions of kapetan Tane. In his tseta (paramilitary group) participated also men from other villages, but their base was Pozar. Therefore the Ottomans, with a large force, went to Pozar and burned it.

George Tousimis from Edessa writes that the burning took place in 1877. The yearly tax was 17.000 grosia and the Turkish force consisted of 50 horseback gendarmes and 770 Bachibouzouks. The event was written on the newspaper *Neologos* of Constantinople (2446-18-4-1877). It is also mentioned in the reports of the consulates of Thessaloniki. It was the year of the Russian-Turkish war of 1877 that was followed by revolts of many Balkan people. It is of no coincidence the fact that in July 1880 the Macedonian national assembly of the Gramos-Tekes took place. In the official protocol of the assembly, that was sent to the consulates of Thessaloniki, the main slogan was “Macedonia for Macedonia - equality”. Among the 32 committee members of the assembly there were hellenophone, slavophone, latinophone, albanophone, and turkophone Macedonians. In their proclamation they speak of Macedonians, Macedonian people and independent Macedonia (Zora 9). This is the reason why it is not mentioned in the Greek and Bulgarian bibliographies. For Pozar being burned during that period, it means it had developed revolutionary activities.

In my village they erected a statue of “kapetan Garefis”. The so called “makedonomachos” (Macedonian-fighter) who chased schismatic Macedonians of the area of Moglena (now Almopia) that dared to leave the dominion of the Patriarchate. When we were students in the elementary school, they would take us to the statue to pay our respects and honor him. The elders, though, called him chicken thief. We’d be wondering why but the elders, at that time, wouldn’t solve our wonder. When we grew up, we discovered why. If they had told us back then, maybe due to childish naivety, we could have mentioned it to our teachers or the priest and this t would’ve created a lot of problems to them.

Garefis was from Milies of Volos and was a mercenary of Mazarakis corp. As written in

Mazarakis memoirs, after the disembarkation in the coast of Katerini, they climbed on the Pieria Mountains. There were woodcutter huts and wood-coal producers. Mazarakis writes: "They had to disappear, be terrorized". To justify the punishment of these unarmed woodcutters he writes "they constitute the network of communication between Macedonia and Greece, by which secretly they transport Gra guns, thus arming the bulgarizing schismatic.[...] We surrounded the huts (the three closest ones) and arrested thirteen, with awful appearance". Namely, they arrested 13 woodcutters at random. They proceeded northwards "with the prisoners, in the middle, tied in lines of two" and reached the river Aliakmon. "We are passing the river at the crossing. We left Spiromilios with Garefis to decide with the last route of the raft, which was pulled by a rope from one bank of the river to the other. Kostas Garefis didn't hesitate to do what he had to. We had gone far ahead and fast because daybreak approached and in order to distance ourselves from the place of crossing where, for certain, the Turks would return, when Kostas Garefis, gasping out of breath, reached us and told us: "the job is done: the last boat load has drowned". He had thrown them, with their arms tied, in the deep waters of Aliakmon River. The event is mentioned and written in the consular reports of Thessaloniki. Pozar is a woodcutters' village.

They named after Garefis the Almopia's village of Tsarnesovo, that is next to Bachovo (Promachoi), in the mountains of which Garefis was killed during the murderous attack against the resistance corps of Louka and Karatasos from Ostrovo (Arnissa) and Tsotsos (of the Veskides clan) from Bachovo. Bachovo hadn't left the Patriarchate, but many Bachovites, like Tsotsos, participated in the struggle for liberation. These "Bulgarians" were the ones Garefis was persecuted and also terrorized the local villages in our area. Tsarnesovo, Bachovo, Pozar are villages with many woodcutters. So, today's woodcutters of these villages honor in his face, the murder of the thirteen innocent co-nationals colleagues of theirs. That's why the victors erected his statue in Pozar. But the elder Pozarites, even today, call him a chicken thief. The erection of the statue was done by action of my elementary school teacher, St. Kanelos, who was from Volos. He actually erected the statue in my village of his co-patriot. Together with my other school teacher, who was from Pontos (Eliades), they taught us and forced us to honor the murderer of the thirteen innocent woodcutters and the persecutor of our forefathers.

The church of new Pozar was built in 1916 by the Serbian army that during the First World War participated in the *Macedonian front*, together with the French. They wanted us to become Serbs. Precisely on the mountain peak above our village there was the front of Bulgarians and others (Dobro pole-Koziak-Nitse). The Serbs did not complete the decoration on time, but they put some of the icons. They were in Cyrillic writing. My father was a church cantor. When I started to speak openly about the issue, they had already stigmatized me enough, thus I wasn't afraid it could get any worse and so he revealed to me: the icons with Cyrillic writing were gathered in the sanctuary. At some point, the priest Philipos called him and they carried them outside in the yard, to be burned. As my father hesitated, the priest told him that it was an order by the bishop. Because of the Cyrillic writings on them, they ceased to be holy and were put into the fire. Tragic irony: Cyrillic that was created by Cyril from Thessaloniki in Macedonia was and still is under persecution by the "orthodox brothers". The church was completed by the Romeo-Orthodox. In one of the murals where St. Peter is shown as guarding the other world, all writings are in Greek. On it, though, there is a dark painted Satan holding a two piece plaque. On these, there are some letters in Cyrillic writing. The message perceived by the faithful is obvious - Greek are the letters of Christ, Cyrillic of the devil. This is a really satanic conception!

In our eparchy, during the Ottoman rule, almost half of the Macedonians had converted to Mohammedanism. Thus, Mohammedan Macedonians were expelled against their will from their homes during the exchange of populations in 1923, as Turks. The exchange was "necessary" and based on their religious belief. These were the ex-Bogomiles and I will refer to them later on.

This is the way Greece uprooted Macedonians from their land, sometimes as Bulgarians (exarches) and some other times as Turks (Mohammedans) or, later, as E.A.M.-Bulgarians or communist-bandits (non religious). I call them non-religious, and not atheists because it seems to me that the non-religious have much more of their God in them than the religious ones that don't seem to

have their God anywhere. The biggest crimes have been performed by religious people in the name of their God. They destroyed us, in the name of the orthodoxy, despite being Christian ourselves. I also am one of the countless Macedonians raised with Greek-Christian ideals. For a whole year, when I was in high school, I received an economic grant from the Royal Providence of queen Frederica. Later on, though, I was introduced to the real face of Greek-Christianity. That's the reason why I will be referring to it extensively.

My first meeting with this matter was in elementary school. Our teacher scolded and beat us up, so we won't speak our mother tongue. I learned to speak Greek when I was five years old, in kindergarten. And it wasn't only that. It happened during a period of numerous changes of the language: purified, archaic, demotic, and spoken. Thus, I use a bit of them all. I finished the six grade high school and I have no more academic education. In literature exams I barely reached the basic rating. And now I'm writing a history essay. Of all our teachers, almost no one befriended us the locals, and never helped us. Up to 1970, locals were not hired in public-state jobs and there were no Macedonian teachers. During all my school days, I would hear about the "foreign, Slavic bad idiom". I wasn't allowed to speak because it would have affected negatively my career. Finally they taught me a Greek language, but it seems they didn't Hellenize me quite enough. My Pontian teacher in elementary school acknowledged this when, together with other Macedonians, I prevailed in our struggle for our rights. He declared his great disappointment and stopped talking to me, altogether.

When I was in the army as a soldier, an order came for someone to be appointed as clerk "on the undisclosed" files. My commanding officer didn't appoint anyone to the post and did not reply to the order, something that surprised me. The other clerk was a communist and thus unqualified, but I was a village boy, apolitical, whose parents voted for the right wing political party. The commander officer, with whom I had a very good personal relationship, made sure to solve my wondering and in a very appropriate manner. One night he gave me an order to clean up the desk that contained all the confidential files of the soldiers, something that he did for the first and last time. "Dusting-off" my file, I read "E3 - bilingual - Slav-Macedonian - speaks slav-macedonian - relatives in the "iron curtain". I wasn't "clean" and I wasn't appointed to the post "on undisclosed", but I couldn't care less. I cared, though, about my relatives in the "iron curtain".

In 1980 I became a member of PA.SO.K. (Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement). Together with a small group of co-villagers, we were struggling for the thermal spa of Pozar to be granted to our community. The Pontian exploiter of the thermal spa, with help from the police, wouldn't allow us to rent rooms or even sale tomatoes, figs, eggs, etc. nowhere near the springs. As we had discovered that he had strong ties with the New Democracy party, we figured that it would be advantageous for us to enroll in PA.SO.K. party. I became a member and very soon I was elected in the Prefectural Assembly of PA.SO.K. - Prefecture of Pella. In 1984, the thermal spa were granted to us and our goals were partly achieved, but with a differentiation. Almost all of the thermal springs, everywhere in Greece, were granted to the cities and villages sometime around 1955, but not to our village. They sold them to us, 30 years later. We took a 20 years loan, so we could buy the land of our grandfathers.

In 1983 the problem about the return of the political exiles arose. Everyone could repatriate except Macedonians. They weren't classified by law as "Greek by genus". As it's obvious, a new struggle begun to which many members of Macedonian descent participated. I felt it as my obligation to take part. We pressured "our party" to cancel the racist discrimination. But it pressured us, too, to keep quiet and wait. In neighboring provinces some members were erased from the party. As I was one of those pressuring members, I was informed that "some of those who kept insisting with vigor, were been erased". I did not wait for them to erase me. After three years of struggle, I was convinced that they were fooling us. In the spring of 1984 I left the racist party of PA.SO.K. and I continued my fight out of it.

In 1991 we found the organization "Macedonian Movement of Balkan Prosperity" in which I became a member of the five member political secretariat. At the same time we started editing the Macedonian newspaper "Zora". Someone had to undertake the edition. As no one volunteered and because I did not feel like to persuade anybody else to take on this burden, I undertook the task

myself. So, although a bad essay writer in my school days, I became a newspaper editor. In 1994 we found "Rainbow" party, in which also I was a member of a five member political secretariat. They drove me away in the mid-January 1997, as they derailed "Rainbow" from its course, but this is another story.

In 1992 I was a member of the Macedonian delegation that participated in the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (O.S.C.E.) in Helsinki, Finland, where the Final Act of Helsinki for human rights was signed. It took place from 13 to 17 June 1992, so I had the opportunity to enjoy some white nights (aurora borealis). When I returned, I enjoyed many dark nights. Fortunately, these institutions were created to protect me, otherwise "I'd be eaten by black darkness" or I'd be another one of the exiled Macedonians. These did not happen, but a severe financial, social and psychological damage occurred to me. I became poorer, anti-social, more aggressive, but also more liberated. I would say completely free. Since my young days I'd say, I had, of course, quite of a not-gathered up mind and had grown tired of been advised almost always, to gather it up.

As another victim of racism that I am, I consider my duty to contribute in the struggle against racism, by revealing the role it played in our area, by hitting the ideologies, the institutions and the lies on which it is based. I will submit all that I lived and went through personally, but also all I was informed of, during this struggle.

History, it is said, is written by the victors. With their servants the professional historians, they write it as they please. But I think we, the amateurs and the defeated, too, have the right to write our history. Of course, we do not have the means to make it known. But we had some small victors already, and that's encouraging enough.

The 23 years struggle for the right of repatriation for Macedonian political refugees didn't bring about any results. We addressed the government invoking equality to which we have the right by the laws and the Constitution, to the parties and the citizens pursuing their sensitivities. The results were disappointing. All of this period we avoided touching on their "sensitivities". Now that those politics didn't bring about any results, we have no reason to continue it. Thus, liberated of this feasibility, I become one of those few yet that will dare to tell them a lot of displeasing truths. It's also a way to make others understand how displeasing is for someone to be contested.

Thus, I began writing in September of 2005. It happens that the appearance of "Macedonian Movement of Balkan Prosperity" completed 14 years of existence. It happens also that our area was just visited by the Patriarch of Constantinople and New Rome, Bartholomew, and the archbishop of Athens, Christodoulos. Since July 2003 to June 2004, they were fighting about who is the boss of *the bishoprics of the New Lands*. The moment that Greece pressured the republic of Macedonia not to use the term "Macedonia", they were naming the part of Macedonia belonging to Greece "New Lands". This gave the chills to the government and therefore it pressured them strongly to find some sort of compromise. So, they reached to an agreement, Christodoulos and Bartholomew, and as co-owners of the bishoprics of the New Lands they are touring them, with an entourage of tens of bishops and priests. In Pissoderi - Florina, they "prayed" for the victims of the "Macedonian struggle against the Bulgarian komitatzides". "Komitatzides" were the revolting locals against Ottoman rule. "Makedonomachoi" were the parastate and mercenaries of patriarchate bishops who, in collaboration with the Ottomans, fought against the liberation movement of the region. They would murder villagers and burn Macedonian villages because they dared to leave the Patriarchate nest. That's how they succeeded on bringing back to the Patriarchate's rule the schismatic Macedonian villages. As those criminals succeeded in bringing back and increasing the flock of the Patriarchate, than rightly they committed those crimes. Bartholomew and Christodoulos "prayed" only for the murdering culprits and not for the victims. For the latter, they agitated the old hate and slander. Otherwise, they talk of love and forgiveness.

My village today is forcibly faithful to the Patriarchate, like all the other villages of locals are and it is not in danger of being burned again like in 1908. Would anyone dare to leave the Patriarchate nest ever again? The wolves are all around. TV is showing them, too. They are a whole herd.

In the recent opening of the International Exhibition of Thessaloniki (9/9/2005), bishop of

Thessaloniki Anthimos during his speech declared, in regards to the Macedonian matter: "There are some droplets which are inside the borders of the Greek homeland and, although they may be few of them, they are bothersome and dangerous and must be eliminated. To all of them we say what the ancient Hellenes said, and let them go to learn what this means: "ekas Veviloï" (away, you impious). Where the name Macedonia exists, there is also Greece (Hellas) and where Greece exists, there is also Macedonia".

"Ekas" means far away, at a distance, let them go, stay away. His predecessor Panteleimon had declared: "Skopians are a nation of perverts and hashish smokers..." The persecutions against Macedonians were initiated by Germanos Karavangelis, bishop of Kastoria in 1903, with paid murderers as he himself reveals in his memoirs. Anthimos of Thessaloniki wants to finish them off. So, even the last small drop of resistance to disappear. The New Lands are now part of their feudal rule. Except of Peloponnese, which is the homeland of Anthimos, his homeland is also our homeland, Macedonia. One of the "droplets" that ought to be vanishing because they are "bothersome and dangerous" according to Anthimos, it is myself, too. And yet, these archpriests of chauvinism and intolerance they always talk of love thy neighbor and forgiveness: Greek orthodox hypocrisy. Besides to the "ekas veviloï" of the ancients, I researched also about the history of Greeks, of Greece and of Orthodoxy, to find out where Anthimos draws from this right. I submit it all, synoptically, as an answer to him and his alike. Unless, he doesn't want accept any counterpoint. Normally, if he is rudimentary a democrat he ought to allow us the opportunity, in front of the same audiences he directs his speeches, to hear our reply. If he is confident and sure of being right, he has nothing to fear.

It so happens that these days the president of Russia, Vladimir Putin (9/9/2005), is visiting Mount Athos. Certainly he didn't come as a tourist or to pray. He reminded that Russia has rights in the autonomous area of "Agion Oros"(Mount Athos).

The indigenous Macedonians, what rights do they have? In Macedonia?

THE CREATION OF MA.KI.B.E. AND THE FIRST REACTIONS

The political organization "Macedonian Movement of Balkan Prosperity" (MA.KI.B.E.) first appeared in the area of Pella, in September of 1991, with Aridea as its seat. It was the first autonomous Macedonian organization ever, since Greece occupied the southern part of Macedonia in 1912. There were others before it, but they weren't autonomous. They were within the frame of communist party of Greece (K.K.E.) and E.A.M. (National Liberation Front) and its army E.L.A.S. (National People's Liberation Army). It was found by few of us Macedonian activists who were struggling in a fight for the reinstatement of rights and dignity for the local Macedonian people. Those people that everybody calls local people of Macedonia, but are troubled to call it Macedonian and restrain its rights.

For almost a decade we were fighting mainly from within centre-left political parties, against the racist policies of Greece toward us. Our basic aim and goal was the racist discrimination against our homogeneous political refugees.

In our area, that happens to be the centre of Macedonia, the local farmers had lesser land than the refugee settlers and even this was in the most infertile areas. The office that distributed plots and land was named Office of Colonization. Its general directorate was under the Secretariat of Colonization in Macedonia. I mention this in order not to be considered arbitrary because I use the term "settler". As "settlers" they are characterized by all laws and decrees by which mainly Macedonia was colonized. But for the few pieces of land that the locals had, they didn't have ownership titles. This was happening so the state could confiscate the property from them, whenever it uprooted them and deprived them of their nationality. Inside the cities plots, loans, grants, were given first to the refugees. Local manufacturers, craftsmen and merchants of Edessa-Aridea region were forced to degradation and closures (even the Grekomans- Greek loyalists) while, at the same time, the settlers were aided. During Ottoman rule Edessa was among the top commercial-industrial centers of the Balkans with textiles, weaving, cannabis products and others. Aridea region developed commercial centers, craftsmanship of pepper products, cocoons (silk, etc.). Those were in the hands of the indigenous. In public services, organizations and banks, Macedonians seldom were hired and with great difficulty. The thermal spa of Pozar was bestowed to a Pontian (refugee settler from Pontos - Turkey) who wouldn't allow the locals to rent rooms to the bathers, not even sell their agricultural

products in the thermal baths area. So, slowly, the economy of our region came into the hands and ownership of settlers. Macedonians would talk about all these, but only among themselves and were unable to react to it, in any way. They were not allowed of any kind of collective action. If they dared to talk, they were immediately silenced by the phrase "Shut up, you Bulgarian!"

The previous generation of ours was very badly terrorized. Then, our generation came. Less terrorized and more educated. We looked into the matter and talked about it more openly. The policies of the state had also changed. The uprooted Macedonians couldn't return and those who remained had to adapt and be assimilated. In few words, some of them had to be fed, so they'd stop asking for the repatriation of their expatriates who were uprooted. For them the black propaganda was rampant so that racism could be justified and bridges of communication between them and those who were not expatriated could be cut. To talk with or to have some kind of relationship with someone from the Republic of Macedonia, was reason enough to be badly characterized. To have contacts with economic and political immigrants in U.S.A., Canada, Australia was even worse. It was "suspicious and with anti-Greek behavior".

Greece changed its policies concerning Macedonians of its dominion due to its ties with the European Union and therefore couldn't continue the same policies as before. Thus, the discrimination in hiring, loans, grants, etc was lessened. The thermal spa of Pozar were taken by the Pozarites, after many years of struggle, and immediately a prosperous development begun. A development, though, that was due solely to the very inhabitants. The state didn't help in the modernizing of the thermal baths, although it did it in other villages in Macedonia with less potential. It happens that the two neighboring villages that benefited immediately from this to be of indigenous people.

And suddenly, in 1983 the matter of repatriation of political refugees arises. All "Greeks by genus (race)" were repatriated without any sort of terms, except the Macedonians. The state doesn't recognize or regard them as Greeks and won't permit their repatriation. Namely, it was clearly a matter of race. This is done in violation of laws and the Constitution which implement equal rights for all citizens, regardless of origin: and in violation of all international treaties.

The struggle from within political parties hadn't achieved any results. Those who were against it, they had fallen out of favor. Many of them were erased from membership because they kept insisting on the matter. They were punished, so they could learn that Macedonians have no right to mingle with whatever regards the Macedonian matter. This right belongs to others. Especially, to those who did not even know where Macedonia is located. Therefore we sought other ways of claiming our rights. We resorted to international organizations. We had already been informed about the participation of two Macedonians, from Florina region, to the Macedonian committee that was presented in the Convention for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE-OSCE), in Copenhagen. We were also informed of the group of Macedonians from Florina region who had applied in Court for the recognition of a Macedonian cultural association under the title "Home of Macedonian Culture". This information we got from hostile publications that characterized those brave activists as "a small number of anti-Greeks, paid agents of foreign powers".

In 1991 we went to meet with them in Florina. They rejoiced. Obviously, we were delighted to meet them, too. We felt comradeship in its real dimension. They informed us of their actions and the problems they encountered. They have had been confronted with a ruthless "war of mud" but also professional persecutions. The application for the recognition of their cultural association was rejected by both the first and second instance Courts. They had appealed to the Supreme Court but they were aware that they would not be vindicated, so they will need to resort to European courts. There was need of great expenses and waiting, for a long period of time.

We were troubled a lot. We had to seek and find successful ways to bring our matters forth. Our comrades from Florina had already given us an idea, concerning their actions and results of their tactics. We had no right of staying inactive. Injustice was drowning us. The least we could do in our area was to do something similar, so they could not be referring and speaking about "those few from Florina". Thus, we began with an effort to create a cultural Macedonian association in Pella prefecture. We printed and distributed a brochure with the aims of the association and started passing it around. In the beginning it seemed to have quite an appeal and the interest by many Macedonians in joining it. But, within few days, a huge cloud of propaganda swelled and covered ancient Almopia: Very few agents and puppets are trying to do in Pella what they did those "few in Florina". The turkophone mayor of Aridaia, besides his venomous declarations, began immediately the publication of a special magazine (*Aridaios*) so to inform the public. In its first publication (August 1991) in the relevant article, they wrote in capital letters. "BEWARE!!! Strange associations in the making [...]" The

pretext is a study of Macedonian traditions [...] all of us, suspicious minded, were set in a state of alarm when we saw that this initiative is a tragic repetition of the same story as in Florina [...] But if it's a tactic ordered and paid for by the known "slav-macedonians", then the danger lies not outside, but inside the gates. We might add that we get information and we cross all the records that fall to our attention". In plain language, the mayor's office kept an eye on us and was keeping our files.

All those who, for years, were speaking with nice words about the democratic principle of respect for different views, of different culture, had become carriers of black propaganda. The "friends", the "comrades", the "democrats"! Thick black darkness fell all over....! Racism existed but it did not appear as long as the victims had bowed their heads. The Macedonians that showed their intent to gladly participate, they took a backward step and withdrew. We couldn't collect even twenty signatures, the least we needed to apply to the Court for our association. At least, our comrades in Florina wouldn't feel all alone. The local Macedonian culture wasn't even able to reach the Court's door, so it could have a "Home" in Pella. In Aridaia a club exist called "Efxeinos Club of Almopia". To it, a plot of land was granted by the municipality and the building of the club was financed by the state and now it is in operation. There is also another Pontian foundation, the "Xenitidio spiritual center". No Macedonian reacted on the creation of the Pontian association and the two clubs.

In "Efxeinos Club" in the spring of 1991, they brought the history professor of Thessaloniki University, K. Vakalopoulos, to speak to us on the Macedonian matter. They hired the heavy artillery to confront us. The editor of the "*Aridaios*" magazine, in the opposite page of an anti-macedonian article, characterized Vakalopoulos as "the greatest 'macedonologist' of the country" and me as "the known autonomist". A year later, they again brought him in confrontation with me, on a local TV channel in Thessaloniki. And they brought him without informing me about his presence, so it happened that I wasn't prepared for such historic discussion. Moreover, I didn't go there for such a confrontation but to inform on our demands, aims and political stand of our organization. If I knew it, the least I could have done would've been to carry his book with me, on the Macedonian matter, where the city and the area of Skopie are described as Macedonia. On the front page of his book, he has the map of the whole of Macedonia. Coincidentally, Vakalopoulos is from Volos. He is actually a co-patriot of Kostas Garefis who persecuted Macedonians in our area, a hundred years ago, and whose statue was erected in my village. He spoke also about the Macedonian political refugees: lies and filthy propaganda against them, too. The E.A.M.-Bulgarians, the autonomists, the anti-Greeks.... In short, the "Pontian club" was used for anti-Macedonian propaganda.

The local Macedonians shrunk, once again. What do we do now? Will we accept our defeat? Are we going to give up, now? Will we justify disrespecting racism? We failed even on an application to have our cultural association recognized. The recognition of such association would've meant direct recognition of indigenous Macedonian culture. For decades the state and parastate racist mechanisms tried to erase this culture. Now a bunch of disobedient Macedonians were about to revive it.

Concerns were intense. Even if we were successful to reach to the Courts, we'd be still running behind them without results for years to come, just like our comrades from Florina. If the political situation wouldn't have changed radically, we couldn't have had any affirmative results. And it's rather obvious that changes come about only by organized political struggle. There was a need for the creation of a national political force. But such recognized entity didn't exist and there was no probability of being recognized by state institutions. They didn't recognize even a cultural one.

Then we thought, as simple minded Macedonians from the rural area: "Since they do not recognize us, why shouldn't we recognize ourselves? Instead of us running after them, let them run after us. We are indigenous Macedonians in our land and our rights are our very own affair. We owe it only to our forefathers, our homeland and nobody else. They owe us, we don't owe them anything. We have showed them that we intend to move within legal bounds. They did not comply with laws regarding equality of citizens, and, therefore, they couldn't invoke them".

Thus, in September of 1991 we decided the creation of a political entity and simultaneously its self-recognition. We named it "Macedonian Movement of Balkan Prosperity". It was a movement of Macedonians that saw their prosperity in coincidence with the prosperity of other ethnic/national groups that live in Macedonia, in which ethnicities of all the Southern Balkan countries live. We had the same principles as the organizations of Rigas Velestinlis and Filiki Etairia (Company of Friends) had, although we knew very little about them. These were the same views and principles as Gotse Deltsef and his comrades (V.M.R.O) had, although we had just heard a little bit about them. How these views coincided? Simply, they are international principles of democratic and realistically thinking men.

We drew up a declaration and as legal Macedonian political entity, in September 16 1991, we sent it to the country's Prime Minister, K. Mitsotakis. We notified it to all political parties, to the embassies of the major powers and all the newspapers. At the same time, we printed it and started distributing it among the people.

Basic claim was the right of repatriation and recognition of all Macedonian political refugees, the abolition of all discriminations and reinstatement of all injustices against the indigenous people and the respect of Macedonian cultural identity. It included also a demand which looked like a big joke. A meeting among the prime ministers of Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia was scheduled for the 21st of September, during which they would discuss the future of the newly formed Republic of Macedonia. Even its sharing was discussed those days, something that bred great danger. We, as Macedonians and pacifists, in our proclamation had included, as our last demand, the following: "Either the prime minister of the Republic of Macedonia will be invited to the meeting or the meeting ought to be cancelled". And there was the miracle: with the immediate intervention of European Union and mainly that of the president of the U.S.A., the meeting was cancelled. Some of the extreme right newspapers (i.e. Stohos) wrote: "they cancelled the meeting!!!" and they published our declaration. We, as it's obvious, were satisfied and laughed whole heartily. However our laughs became quite sour. The prime minister didn't answer us but he accepted our declaration and cancelled the meeting with the other prime ministers.

Such daring! Our boldness created a kind of numbness during the first days. Later, however, a new storm broke on our heads. Thunders, lightning and mud rain! Le-le majko! They made people to pity us! The "foreign agents", the "anti-Greeks", the "hired by Skopie", the "paid off", the "ignorant of history" were some of the epithets they stuck on us. It happened, also, to be a very tense period in regard to the Macedonian matter. We, of course, had made simultaneous move by sending representatives to O.S.C.E. conference that, then, was taking place in Moscow.

We hadn't foreseen such intensity. The attacks were carried out by the media and local church members and officials. The first to attack us was the Turkophone mayor of Aridaia with venomous words. One of the first who reacted was the Pontian bishop of Edessa and Pella, Chrisostomos, who sent a circular letter to the local newspapers and to all the churches of the region. The local newspapers published Chrisostomos circular letter, (Chrisostomos=gold mouth, of what a gold mouth he was!), but also our answer to it. He got real angry, but as we were informed, he was advised not to respond. The priest of the village Piperia, whose residents a few years ago spoke mainly Turkish, besides the circular letter proposed to the flock a petition to collect signatures demanding the expulsion of a villager, Yiannis Kirkos, to "Skopie", because he had signed the declaration. Among the flock in the church, at the moment, there was also his 10 years old daughter who was unable to withstand, she fainted and fell down. Another comrade, Dimitris Papadimitriou, was deposed from the presidency of the local co-operative, and those of us who were self-employed lost our jobs and our clientele... Christos Pritskas was forced to close his bakery in Exaplatanos and myself the dry cleaner's shop I kept in Aridaia. These were the first results of the Greek Christian black propaganda. We comprehended very well what the elders meant when were saying: "God save you from bulgarian bullet and greek pen".

During the first days, everyone expected our arrest. This was the main subject of conversation in the region. As days went by, they began "digesting" that something like that won't happen. And as they couldn't stop us openly and by legal means, they unleashed a treacherous economic, moral, and social war against us, beyond all bounds. As they couldn't stop us, they concentrated with zeal on keeping far and away from us all other Macedonians. Even work co-operation with us had been characterized suspicious. Those that kept collaborating with us were advised to avoid it, so they won't be themselves characterized as having the same ideas with us and, therefore, as "Gligorov agents": and they did this "because of friendship and love toward them".

The self-made descendants of the ancient Hellenes and children of Christ showed indescribable deceit and mind degradation. And look what we achieved, without seeking it: we proved how hollow words were the declaration of democratic principles, social justice, and Christian love. And this was coming from people that couldn't pretend-like the Greeks of southern Greece- that they weren't aware of the existence and persecution of local Macedonian culture, discrimination against indigenous co-villagers, the existence of Macedonian political refugees. Most tragic of all, though, was the participation in this absurdity of a part of prominent Macedonians. They had to show their bosses that they are loyal subjects. We were very surprised and disappointed. Where was their democratic sensitivity? Christian solidarity? The free Hellenic spirit?

LIES AND HYPOCRISY

On one hand, we had the refusal of the state authority to stop racist policies against us. On the other hand, we had the attitude of its subjects. It started with indifference and insensitivity, ending on massive participation for the preservation of these policies. This troubled us intensely. We didn't have to deal with thinking people but fanatical mob. Even those that recognized our rights, they kept silent. "When wolves are howling, men keep silent". And the wolves are quite aware of this. That's why they howl whenever they need to force some people to keep silent. In this particular case, the underprivileged Macedonians must keep quiet. But why so many people had become "wolves"?

People, as everything shows, were and still are preying species like all animals. The development of logic made them differ from other animals and helped them understand some things: to distinguish the right from the wrong and lies from truth. For most of them, though, this helped to improve their methods of grabbing. In short, they made logic a tool for grabbing. And because to grab one must use violence and deceit, they developed mechanisms of violence and deceit. But grabbers always have fear of victims that they may become strong one day and get back what's been stolen from them. Injustice always creates resistances and strengthens its victims. In addition, the aggrieved often have the aid of foreign factors. That's why grippers make sure to legalize their grabbing. To achieve this, they have just to show their own wrong doings as being just, and the rights of the people they victimize as being unjust. Namely, they make of truth a lie and of lie a truth. To cover up the primitive motive of grabbing, they developed various methods of beatification and legalization. This is their true religion. Other religions are but masks.

Each Macedonian who looked for his rights or the rights of his co-patriots would be confronted with the justification of injustice. Since 1983 that the government of P.A.S.O.K. had exempted Macedonian political refugees from the right of repatriation, we came across a bunch of phony excuses.

"Repatriation exists only for the "Greek of genus", they told us. All those who declared or are of Macedonian genus are enemies of Greece, pseudo-Macedonians, baptized as such by Tito so he could annex Macedonia to Yugoslavia. Macedonian nation is a Tito creation and the real Macedonians are the Greeks. The same goes for the Macedonian language. This local "dialect" of Macedonia was an imported slavic idiom. The Slavs came to Macedonia in the 6th century A.D. and slavized some of the ancient Macedonians". And they told us many other similar things.

More or less they made us feel we are in debt to them. That we ought to be content with the little they allow us, even for them allowing us to live in this land, all of us who had not been already expatriated. Us who until then felt, but also those who still characterized us, as the local Macedonians (indigenous)!

Some might have known more. But, most of us, however, knew only whatever they taught us in school, on TV, and in church school of catechism. Namely, exactly what the majority of the people knew. Some half words we would hear from the elders, but whenever we'd ask for more information the answer would be "leave it, don't look for it". Now, though, that we saw a great injustice based on manufactured theories, we felt we need to research, and so we did.

The K.K.E. (communist party of Greece), long before Tito, not only recognized the Macedonian nation with its name but it also stood by its struggle. Since its 3rd Convention in 1924, it spoke about Macedonians and Macedonian language. Periodically, in fact, it was an ally for the creation of a united and independent Macedonia. And all this information exists in the party's archives. There can be found reports on the titanic struggles of Macedonians, long before the partition of Macedonia in 1913. "Macedonia for the Macedonians" was their slogan.

With the resurgence of the "Macedonian issue" during the 1990s, many more documents surfaced. Democrat journalists and intellectuals researched and revealed many truths that arose from Greek sources. The real truth, therefore, exists but is hidden. It is unveiled in reports and books published in regards to the Macedonian affair. It's hidden and distorted by the public education system, the state-paid historians and intellectuals that rely on the state, state and parastate mechanisms, including the Greek Orthodox Church which in Greece has all the characteristics of a parastate organization. The citizens of Greece live in a distorting ghetto but are unable to realize it. Most of them find that the situation suits them, and they even like it. That's why they were surprised and disappointed with the foreigners that in unison blame and denounce

Greece for its racist policies against Macedonians.

ABOUT MACEDONIAN POLITICAL REFUGEES

It is the main lie of the last 23 years. They say that their repatriation is forbidden because they have declared themselves Macedonians and not Greeks and are writing in their identification papers the old name of their place of birth.

The truth is that they didn't wait for them to submit their documents to the consulates and embassies of Greece, in then Yugoslavia. So, as there were not submitted any such documents, there were no applications that could have been rejected under these excuses. When the then minister of Internal Affairs, G. Genimatas, lodged in parliament the relevant decree there didn't exist the term "of Greek genus". After an intervention by the leader of the New Democracy party, E. Averoff, Genimatas cleared out that the non Greek of genus (race) were excluded, so he added the term. In fact the only condition was race, no other condition was added. When in 1983 Genimatas visited Veria, a three member secretariat of the provincial N.E. of PA.SO.K. met him and put the matter forth. Genimatas cut them off immediately. The first secretary of the N.E. fell in disfavor and a few months later he left the party.

However, as the excuses presented were of national descent and place of birth written with its old real name, many Macedonians changed their ID's with new ones where the nationality was written as Greek and the place of birth by the name imposed and recognized by Greece. The result was exactly the same. Moreover, the ministerial decision #106841 of 29-12-1982 didn't include any sort of terms for repatriation like anti-Greek propaganda, the writing of place of birth with the old name, acquisition of citizenship of another nation, etc. These types of "offences" were common to all political refugees. The decision, however, set the issue of race, namely it was itself racist. It allowed the right of repatriation only to the "Greeks by genus". The state doesn't account Macedonians as "Greeks by genus", it exempts them. But how can this be, for the state to consider us the Macedonians on its dominion and to impose upon us to declare "Greeks by genus" and does not do the same for our relatives abroad? Whatever we are, so are they. If it doesn't consider them as being Greeks, then we also are not "Greeks by genus". This is an absurdity that can only happen in Greece. Thus, it's the only country in Europe that doesn't permit the repatriation of political refugees. Thus, this is the only country in Europe where the walls of cold war have not fallen, yet. "Greece has become a lunatic house" said K. Karamanlis, uncle of today's Prime Minister. But, in the Macedonian Affair he himself was a member and, in part, a creator of this mad house.

The truth is that Greece doesn't allow repatriation because this doesn't serve its policies of gradual ethnic cleansing and altering of the composition of its population in the part of Macedonia that it annexed in 1912. It won't allow the repatriation even of the children that were taken away (paidomazoma=gathering of children) by K.K.E. in 1948. They are the 18-20 thousand children, aged up to 13 years old, who were taken from their villages so they'd be saved from the violence of war. Those, no one can blame of any crime. They also aren't allowed to repatriate.

I, too, had put the matter forth, as a member of the N.E. of PA.SO.K., Pella, to the member, at the time, of the Executive Bureau of the party, Kostas Laliotis. During that period, the Greek consulate of Skopie wouldn't grant visas to political refugees, not even for a mere visit. During the 1984 European election's campaign, we brought him to Edessa to be the main speaker. During the meeting with the Prefectural Committee, after seeing that no one spoke on the matter, I did. Even those members of Macedonian descent had kept quiet. I had the support of the Mayor of Gianitsa, at the time, Th. Georgiadis. This was of great importance because he is a descendant of refugees. "Comrade Laliotis" he said, "I am not of this race, but I have many co-citizens that have this problem concerning their relatives. I consider it unacceptable". Laliotis didn't exclude the solving of the problem but suggested patience because "the matter has difficulties". Laliotis is not of "Greek by genus" himself. He comes from the village Lala, Elias, which is an arvanitochori (Albanian village). During the first years of the Greek revolution this village was supporting the Ottoman conquerors and was attacked by the revolutionaries.

Quite revealing of the matter was the ex Prime Minister K. Mitsotakis who was overthrown by

the then minister of Foreign Affairs, A. Samaras, due to his stand on the Macedonian issue. In the prologue of a book published by his special counselor, Theodoros Skylakakis, "In the name of Macedonia" (Elliniki Evroekdotiki 1995, p. 3-4) he writes: "this minority, after 1950, it is actually certain that doesn't exist in our country because the citizens of slavic conscience that fought by the side of the communists, had left after the civil war end. They left and all Greek parties (including the orthodox communist party), for many years now, have agreed that they won't ever come back again".

"To be precise, during the years of dictatorship when I was in close cooperation with K. Karamanlis, we had discussed the problem within the frame of a wider understanding of all political forces of the Greek left and had come to agree that after the dictatorship, K.K.E. will be recognized and all political refugees will return, with the exemption of the Slav-Macedonians".

It was thus agreed by all parties to exclude refugees of Macedonian descent. Everything else is but excuses for the ignorant and insensitive subjects of Greece. On this, he says, K.K.E. had agreed, although by its side the Macedonian political refugees had fought. That's how can be explained the fact that K.K.E. didn't struggle, as it owed, for their repatriation. Until today, it hasn't put forth even a question in parliament, just for the people to see. It was its duty to constantly bring it forward, in every occasion and even organize protests for it. It was its own policy to gather the children and expatriate them, in 1948. With its stand K.K.E. confirmed Mitsotakis that it had agreed for their exclusion. Besides, it was in danger of being accused of "treason". About the Macedonians co-fighters who felt betrayed, it didn't care. What some members of K.K.E. do, when they are saying that the state should allow repatriation for humanitarian reasons, is unacceptable. The problem is political and, thus, it must be encountered. Macedonians don't ask for mercy but for justice. K.K.E., if it doesn't feel obliged and capable to accept its responsibilities concerning them whom it exploited, it's best for it to keep quiet. Hypocrisy is worse than insensitivity; even worse than treason.

THE K.K.E. POSITIONS ON THE MACEDONIAN MATTER

When, during last May the matter of the name of the republic of Macedonia rekindled, the Secretary of K.K.E., Aleka Papariga, declared "a synthetic name must be found that would include the name "Macedonia" but it must be bound so it won't give ethnic characterization to the name". The very same she said ten years ago (8-9-1995), after a meeting with the president K. Stephanopoulos: "We consider, in the case of the name, if it includes the term "Macedonia", I don't know how will that be, it must be defined that is intended with a geographical denotation of the term, therefore preventing any developing disposal, today or in the future, about a dismembered, scattered Macedonian nation (*Rizospastis*, K.K.E. Newspaper, 9-9-1995 p.3). Similar declarations were made by other members of K.K.E.

A. Papariga, like every other communist or not, can't be unaware of the history of her party.

In the 3rd extraordinary Convention (26 Nov. – 4 Dec. 1924) K.K.E. was saying: "the sharing among Greece, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria of Macedonia enhances even more the desire of Macedonians to re-unite the three parts of their decimated homeland, so to achieve one united and independent Macedonia... The Greek bourgeoisie succeeded with its adventurous imperialistic policies in Asia Minor and exchange of populations, to uproot from their homeland more than a million people and now seeks violently and spasmodically to settle most of these misfortunate populations in Macedonia and Thrace and to use them for the violent hellenization of the country, to stabilize its rule and have them, tomorrow, as meat for the cannons in the war that is preparing....". K.K.E. adopted "the right of the people of Macedonia and Thrace for their self-determination, even their secession from Greece and the creation, together with the other enslaved parts by the Balkan bourgeoisies, of a united and independent country, K.K.E. supports all national demands of all oppressed people (national school, national local government, freedom of religion, respect of ethnic and national popular customs" (*Rizospastis*, 6-7 February 1925).

In the 3rd regular Convention (March 1927), it repeated its position "a unique and independent Macedonia". "The current period, K.K.E. owes to put on first line not on the immediate

struggle for the above slogan but on the particular struggle against all measures and forms of national repression (taxes, agricultural issues, language, colonization, etc.).” (*Rizospastis*, 2 Apr. 1927).

In the 4th Convention (February, 1932) K.K.E. accuses Greece of being “an imperialistic country that conquered by force whole areas inhabited by other ethnicities (Macedonia, Thrace) which it oppresses and puts them under colonialist exploitation, persecutes and destroys national minorities and declares that it supports actively the revolutionary struggle of their population in these peripheries for their national freedom....” (*Rizospastis*, 5-3-1932).

In the 5th Convention (March 1934), it repeated the previous thesis. In the 2nd Plenary of K.E. (November 1934) in the “Program of agricultural claims” it said: “Consolidation of the lands to Macedonians, Turks, etc who are working it [...] Reinstatement of landless Macedonians to their villages and not in far away areas. Returning to Macedonian farmers of their seizure lands by the committees of abnormal transactions by the state and their exception of any taxation and forced labor. Freedom of their professional and spiritual movements. Freedom of their ethnic morals and customs (language, schools, celebrations, etc). Cessation of all national oppressions”. (*Komounistiki Epitheorisi* #5, March 1935).

In the fourth Plenary (September 1935) it indicates “the immediate danger of fascist Italian invasion” and says: “K.K.E. leads the people’s struggle for independence and freedom of Greece against the imposed by every imperialistic and fascist danger, for the free co-existence on it of all the people (Greeks, Macedonians, Turks, Jews, etc) that reside in it” (*Komounistiki Epitheorisi*, #15, October 1935).

In the 6th Convention (December 1935), “our party replaced the slogan “United and independent Macedonia and Thrace” with the slogan “Full equality to minorities”. The reason is the “change of ethnological composition in Greek part of Macedonia”. However, it accuses the bourgeoisie for “the most inhumane and terrorizing strangling of the rights of ethnic minorities living in Greece and first of them, mainly, the Macedonians. And the full support of K.K.E. for the full rights of Macedonians they present it as ethnic treason”. It also decides “the organizing of mass organizations of every minority (Macedonians, Turkish, Albanian, Jewish etc) and coiling of all anti-fascist forces in them” (*Komounistiki Epitheorisi* #2 January- #3 February 1936).

During the wars that followed it kept this position but it changed the term “Macedonians” to “Slav-macedonians” that was already been introduced a little earlier by the Ministry of Foreign affairs. To the accusation by “brotherly parties” of impudence towards the Macedonians, it answered that “they want us, because of 120.000 Macedonians, to lose all of Greek people whose sensitivity on the national issue has developed, of course, to the utmost, lately” (report by An. Tzimas to the Soviets, document #32, *Ethnos* newspaper, 14-6-1993).

In the beginning of 1949, K.K.E. is pressured very badly on the battlefield and sees that the “Greek people” won’t be enough. Without the participation of Macedonians, the continuation of armed struggle is not possible. Thus, in its 5th Plenary (29-1-1949) in order to tempt the Macedonians, it re-declares the old revolutionary positions on equality and autonomy. “In northern Greece the Macedonian (slav-macedonian) people gave it all for the struggle and fights with total heroism and self-sacrifice that are admirable. There must be no doubt that as a result for the victory of DAG (Democratic Army of Greece) and the popular revolution, the Macedonian people will find whole national reinstatement as it wants it, by giving today its blood to achieve it. [...] At the same time, Macedonian communists must be careful of separatist and dissolving actions that foreign motivated chauvinistic and reactionary elements are unfolding, so to break the unity between the Macedonian (Slav-macedonian) and the Greek people...” (*Democratic Army*, #2, 1949).

This progressive stand of K.K.E. succeeded, thus thousands of oppressed Macedonians joined it. Most of them were completely unaware of what capitalism or communism was. They simply showed their trust to K.K.E. Today, the very K.K.E. forgot Macedonian political refugees and its stand and support for the Macedonians that weren’t uprooted from their homes. The Macedonians, by their alliance with K.K.E., lost the basic appreciation and protection they had from all major western powers and international organizations they controlled. Instead of protection, they urged Greece to hit them hard, without mercy. To this is due the fact that, after the end of the Civil war, the hardest terrorism was unleashed, the prosecutions and grabbing of Macedonian properties. Despite the violation of international treaties, the major powers did not react.

K.K.E. right after the end of the Civil war changed its positions once again. It had no need of the "Macedonian people" anymore and only cared for the "Greek people". In the 6th Plenary K.E. (October 1949) the position on autonomy was changed and in its place was set the one on national equality. With these retractions, as it's obvious, it lost the trust of all Macedonians. Then, in a body the leadership of N.O.F. (National Liberation Front) abandoned K.K.E. K.K.E. accused them of being "agents of the fascist Titoist gang". As it's clear, it had developed a perfect technique of black propaganda. Whoever isn't with them is an agent of others.

The trust of K.K.E. had broken up even earlier. K.K.E. in its pro-macedonian tactics had created the Macedonian brigades. As these were strengthening and it was now clear that they would have been the guarantee for all that K.K.E. had promised in words, they were ordered by the party to move southwards. The Macedonian fighters, obviously, were puzzled. They knew their areas, passages, natural traps and could be much more efficient in their region. No logical reason could be applied for their moving south. Some of the Macedonian units that were sent to the unknown to them south, had been decimated. So, they didn't obey and the K.K.E. gave an order of disarming them. For the Macedonians there were no doubts anymore that K.K.E. didn't mean what it said. Besides, its stand during the occupation period enhanced the mistrust among the Macedonians. All of the Balkan communist parties were in agreement on the creation of a common Balkan Command that would've coordinated the resistance in the Balkans. K.K.E. was the only one that followed the British and moved its general command to Middle East. It paid it very dearly, of course. During the civil war, however, it remembered them and relied on its Balkan comrades. As soon Tito stopped his aid in 1948, they accused him of being an agent of the Western side. When K.K.E. left, together with the Westerners, to the Middle East, it wasn't a Western agent.

In the end of 1991, we met, together with Christos Pritskas who was a member of K.K.E., the member of the political bureau of K.K.E., Orestis Kolozof, in Edessa. We wanted to inform him of our stands and actions. He didn't even allow us to explain our policies. With a public prosecutors style he criticized us for resorting to international organizations "Who send you there? [...] How did you come to know about OSCE [...] don't you know the role such organizations play? [...] You should have fought from within the party. [...] Assimilate!" We tried to explain that our struggle from within the parties didn't accomplish any results. Our conversation was to no avail, so it ended quickly. In the past we were characterized as Tito's agents, now we became agents of the West.

The Macedonian fighters say also something else: that out of "politeness" and some hope for solidarity from K.K.E. they don't write in their memoirs. During the resistance and Civil war very seldom they would appoint a commander of Macedonian descent in the directorate or brigades. It was common, in a group of 30 fighters, one of them to be from south Greece or Asia Minor and he would be the commanding officer. If there was a need for another one, he would be the caterer. Moreover, they'd be sent to the most dangerous missions. Now, disappointed and bitter on the stand of K.K.E. they begun to talk, at least those that are still alive as most of them already died, with bitterness. K.K.E. by its stands may have ceased to be characterized treasonous by the "Greek reactionaries" but it is characterized as such by the Macedonian resistance. Besides, it's treasonous even of its own history. The revolutionary stand of every communist is consistent stand. K.K.E., if it wants to be called internationalist and communist, owes to keep a consistent stand on the Macedonian matter and must also publicly ask for forgiveness from the Macedonians.

In July of 1998, a meeting took place in Edessa of the 1948 Paidomazoma (child-gathering) of Macedonian children, on the occasion of the anniversary of 50 years since their compulsory exit to which K.K.E. led them. Invitations were sent to K.K.E. and its Resistance organization P.E.A.E.A. No representative showed up, not even a single member to welcome and offer them a bouquet of flowers. It's obvious that a "line" was passed by K.K.E. This extreme form of insensitivity, inconsistency and betrayal embittered enormously the children, victims of K.K.E. policy during the Civil war.

Let anyone consider for himself how the Macedonian political refugees feel, whenever they hear K.K.E. members speak. This is its thank you for the struggles, sacrifices, blood spilled by the thousands of Macedonians that trusted it. Simply, K.K.E. knows that has lost their trust and cannot exploit them anymore like in the past. Thus, in the Macedonian matter it identifies today with the "Greek reactionaries" and confirms K. Mitsotakis. The fact that the term "Macedonia" will be included

in the name of this state it has been accepted already by all bourgeois parties and there was no need to show progressiveness from its part.

The fact that Greece pressured the republic of Macedonia on the matter of Macedonians in its dominion during negotiations in New York, we were aware. Via diplomats and journalists our refugee relatives were been informed of it. It retreated on the name issue, on the NATO membership issue and on the issue of economic assistance from the European Union. With the Interim accord between Athens-Skopie in September 1995, Greece recognized this republic under the name "republic of Macedonia". The "former Yugoslav" was for the eyes of public opinion in Greece. After this, not only Greece didn't veto for its inclusion to N.A.T.O. but also, in the matter of economic assistance by E.U., it contributed and helped. In the matter of "Macedonian" minority in Greece the government of Skopie retreated. This was the "unwritten" compromise that most of the people weren't informed of. Diplomacy is compromise. Each side backs up a bit in something. It is not a coincidence that the very next year the organization "Rainbow" was defamed politically and organizationally and was derailed from its course.

RACISM BASED ON LAWS

To all Macedonians who left their land in whatever way, the state took away their citizenship and confiscated their properties. The most significant acts, on which these are based, were the following:

The 6th Constituent Act of 20-1-1945 that was codified by the Emergency law 533 of 1-9-1945, determined 13 categories of offence and among them were: undertaking of government position during the occupation, collaboration or co-operation of public officers, the military, judiciary, etc. in helping the Occupying forces, crimes and acts of violence, leaders of friendly to the Occupying forces movements, etc. For punishment it foresaw death sentences, life or temporary imprisonment, expulsion, part or total confiscation of property, deprivation of political rights. It was, of course, drafted to punish all those who had committed some of the actions it foresaw and there were thousands of them. Tagmatasfalites (security brigades), germanotsoliades (dressed traditionally with 1800s dress, collaborators of German occupants), P.A.O. (Pan-Hellenic Liberation Movement), army officers, judges, policemen, clergy, high level public employees, e.o. Very few of them were persecuted, though. If the law had been applied properly, thousands of Greeks would have been executed and imprisoned and their properties confiscated. The very Prime Minister during occupation, General Tsolakoglou, was sentenced to death on this law but a few months later he was granted a pardon and his punishment was changed.

The extraordinary Special Courts of the 6th Constituent Act became another tool so to unleash a wild chase against indigenous Macedonians. They were brought massively to Courts with accusations not because of the severe crimes that by thousands were truly committed by non-Macedonians, but usually with the accusation that they "showed friendly feelings to the Occupying forces or they consciously became tools of the enemy (Germans-Bulgarians) for the sake of propagation and praising of its actions". In the minutes of these set up Courts, the use of "Slav-macedonian language in churches and schools" is found as a crime. But most terrifying was the fact that many of the Macedonians who were brought to these Courts had participated or helped the Greek Resistance. Besides, the accusers were ex-security brigades' members and PAOTzides of the area. Often, a plot or a piece of land that was envied by some adventurist was a reason enough for a Macedonian to be slandered.

The truth is that many Macedonians had expressed friendly feelings for the Occupying forces. Just before the Occupation, the dictatorship of Metaxas preceded. The persecutions against Macedonians were intensified. The mere use of the Macedonian language was reason enough for fines, beatings, imprisonments and castor-oil drinking. Castor oil has the capacity to paralyze your digestive system. After swearing at and beating them, they would force them to eat salty herring so they'll become thirsty and drink more castor-oil and, at the end, they'd be thrown in the street, full of shit on them resulting from the punishment. They would do this to humiliate and rip them apart psychologically and also to show them as example to others. This is how they Hellenized us and now, without shame, praise themselves for it.

The Occupying powers exploited these Greek policies and they put an end to all persecutions: they gave all kind of freedoms that non greek speaking Macedonians were deprived of. Why shouldn't Macedonians appreciate these gifts? Why, between the two fascisms, Greek and German-Bulgarian, they had to be friendly to hostile Greek one and hostile to the friendly to them, of the others?

In our area (Pella-Central Macedonia) and among the fascist Occupying forces German-Bulgarian, they had a very serious reason to be selectively friendly toward the Bulgarian and German occupying powers. In the region of Krya Vrisi – Gianitsa they were been formed strong groups of PAOtzides (Poulios teams) that collaborated with the German forces of occupation. They were formed solely of refugees, mainly Turkophone, and their main job was murdering indigenous people and terrorizing indigenous Macedonian villages. Indigenous Macedonians, as a consequence, had to protest to the authorities. In Edessa the authority was German, therefore it didn't want to bother its colleagues PAOtzides. Thus, the Macedonians were obliged to address the matter to the Bulgarian Commander in Edessa, lieutenant Kalchev. Their persecutors considered this hostile act and found one more reason to commit more crimes against them. Macedonians had to be murdered and terrorized and accept it without protests. Some other Macedonians, in order to be protected from PAOtzides and security brigades, joined the Greek Resistance and together with Greek democrats they hit the collaborators. Often, the phenomenon was observed that the same Macedonians who were seeking protection from the occupation forces, they would do the same asking for protection from the Greek Resistance forces. Maybe this phenomenon contributed so they'd be called E.A.M.-Bulgarians (National Liberation Front-Bulgarians). In many Macedonian villages teams for local protection were formed that were in co- operation with the Greek Resistance and K.K.E. This phenomenon was rightly interpreted by the Greek Resistance and KKE, thus they promised Macedonians freedom and rights they had been deprived for decades. So, the paradox phenomenon of Macedonians enjoying and live most of their national freedoms, it was seen during the Occupation and Resistance partisans rule.

In the trials that were set up after the war, very few of the Occupation collaborators were sentenced. And those who were sentenced, they were pardoned after a short while. Many of them became police officers, commissioned army officers and got high positions in the public sector. But for Macedonians a different policy was put into use. They were taken to trials massively with accusations of been friendly to the forces of occupation or for the use of the Macedonian language in churches and schools. The denunciations they made to the Occupying authorities or to the Greek national Resistance against the terrorist actions of P.A.O. and security brigades were the reason for their condemnation. In fact, most of the witnesses against them were ex-collaborators of the forces of occupation. Defense witnesses were very hard to find. If some of them dared to appear as defense witnesses, most probably they would be characterized of having the same ideology as the accused and were in danger of getting the same punishment. In one of the first trials two Macedonians from Krontselovo (Kerasia) and partisans of the Resistance, dared to appear in support of one of their comrade in arms from Edessa. They were arrested and put in a room next to the Court, so they'd be tried under the same accusations. They escaped through the window and the very next day joined the Democratic Army of Greece.

The persecutors found the opportunity, with phony accusations, to dispose of still some Macedonians and grab more properties. Circumstances were favorable. To the eyes of the Great Powers they presented them as prosecutions of pro-nazis and communists. Thus, they had their permission, even their sympathies.

Even today, many “historians” and politicians use a huge lie to justify that racist policy. They say that many Macedonians of our areas were condemned because they collaborated with the Bulgarian forces of occupation. It's a huge lie, simply because there were no Bulgarian forces in Central Macedonia. There were only Germans with whom the paramilitary gangs, descendants of the refugees, collaborated.

Greece did not only reward the Nazi collaborators, here. The Nazi collaborators in Caucasus and Pontus were scattered all over Russia, even Siberia, as punishment by Stalin. These Russian-Pontians were brought to us, here, as “repatriating Greeks”. Also these, as they did with the old Nazi collaborators, they are helping to resettle in Macedonia... The privileges given to them do not apply south of Thessaly: interest free and subsidized loans for houses, jobs in the public sector, street market permits, etc. They enter, by a privileged order, in the Body of Border Guards. The reportage of *Ethnos* newspaper (7-12-1993) is quite revealing: “Five thousand of contemporary akrites (Frontiersmen) [...] will guard, in a few months, the borders of the country. The force of akrites will be embodied mostly of Pontians from ex-Soviet Union and with other citizens as well [...] To the contemporary akrites will be granted fertile land on the border lines in a -byzantine style action- and will be aided economically so they integrate themselves in the area [...]. Strong economic motives are provided for, like high salaries, fertile lands to be exploited, house, etc.” In other words Macedonians aren't suitable for “akrites”. The unemployed Macedonians aren't of their concern. They had to expatriate so they could find work. Even today, they use policies to empty villages of Macedonians and replace them with colonists from Russia and Caucasus. If some Macedonian protests against this blunt racism, he is in danger of been accused of racism. Always the donkey

calls the rooster as big headed. The Greek pen. For this racism, even the progressive people won't mention anything, in fear of disappointing the "poor Pontians". And the change of population composition goes on. The changing of the ethnological synthesis of a population is prohibited by European justice. They bombarded Milosevic because he put foreign people in Kosovo. Greece is permitted to do it because it's an ally-protectorate of the Westerners.

But, where did they find land to distribute to the repatriated "brothers refugees" colonists? The very same Macedonians are owners of small pieces of land or landless. Plots are not available even to the new Macedonian families.

By the 3rd Resolution of 18-6-1946 (F.E.K. - the government bulletin-203/1946) special military courts are created to "persecute insurgents": in other words, the Democratic Army fighters. This was applied with particular ruthlessness to Macedonian fighters. Against them they added the accusation of "seeking the dismemberment of part of the country or performing unlawful actions". It foresaw death sentences, imprisonment or exile.

A characteristic example is the execution of the first group of fighters that were sentenced by the military Court at Gianitsa, on 26-7-1946. Of the seven, only one was of refugee descent (Yiorgos Moustakidis, K.K.E. instructor), the other six were Macedonians. Among them was the Macedonian teacher from Rousilovo, Vodena, Mirka Ginova. Two more women were sentenced to imprisonment. Mirka Ginova was the first woman to be executed for political offence during the Civil war, but this fact is not projected by K.K.E. institutions.

By the AZ Resolution of 7-10-1949 (F.E.K. 267/47) "about deprivation of Greek citizenship of those that act abroad in anti-national manner", the citizenship was revoked from all subjects residing temporally or permanently abroad. It was considered that they acted "anti-nationally or were supporting in any way the gangs' fight against the country..." To Macedonians abroad the citizenship was revoked even if they had no participation at all.

By the M' Resolution of 20-1-1948, (F.E.K. 17/48) "about confiscation of property of participants in the gangsters' fight" the properties were confiscated even from "everyone that had been deprived of Greek citizenship according to the AZ' resolution".

All of the decisions taken under the previous resolutions were annulled by the #106841 ministerial decision of 20-12-1982 (F.E.K. 1/1983). The right of repatriation was granted and the citizenship was reassigned to all "Greeks by genus". Without any other condition and completely irrelevant of the reasons for which they had been condemned. The only reason was race. Excluded were the refugees of Macedonian origin who the State doesn't consider "Greeks of race". With the law 1540 of 4-4-1985 (F.E.K. 67/85) the properties of the repatriated were returned to them, but the properties of Macedonian political refugees were kept in confiscation.

Macedonian properties were taken also by the legislative decree 2536 of 23-8-1953. This was a bill "broom". It took the properties of everyone who, for whatever reason, were absent from their home for a period of more than three years. Even if they had emigrated within Greek borders and even if their properties were held by relatives of theirs. It was the bill "about colonization of borderline regions and enhancing its population". If you intend to colonize, you must find land for the colonists.

By article #11, all confiscated property, together with those confiscated on the basis "of M' and N' resolutions as well as any other accessible areas of land to be disposed for colonization purpose, are available as by the provisions of the Agricultural legislation text for settlement of new colonists". The same Agricultural legislation validated the 1218/29-10-1952 Ministerial Council Act which defined that: "it allows, as per derogation of the Agricultural Code, to reinstate on the above areas of abandoned allotments and properties also discharged army soldiers, Police and Army officers and noncommissioned officers, as well as war victims and war invalids from this or other region, that have agricultural family background independently of lack of property, of their today's agricultural status and amount of pension received".

The new colonists, by the article #12, have also "the right of housing in old lodges, reconstructed or new ones to be built, under the custody and financing by the relevant office, full agricultural equipment and all food expenses for themselves and their families up to the first harvest. The relocation from other areas of colonists is financed by state funds under the direction of the Bank of Agriculture..."

The only obligation for colonists was defined by article #13 that was their permanent settlement in the area. And that is because the government of Athens wanted to avoid what happened with the first settlement with new colonists in the '20s, when many of them sold to the indigenous Macedonians the agricultural allotments and plots the state had ceded them. After all, this was the real purpose: the place of the uprooted Macedonians had to be taken by new colonists. Colonization was carried out by the Department of Colonization of the Directorate of Agriculture.

Very revealing was the newspaper "*Nea Alithia*" (New Truth) on 12-5-1952 that wrote: "There

is an elaborated plan that we welcome with all our heart. The Slav-macedonians must understand (those that weren't uprooted) that if they want to live in Greece they must be relocated south, and in their areas Greeks from the south must be transferred [...] Simply, we have no trust in them".

Since they had no trust in us what did they want, and came for, in our land? Macedonians showed trust to the Grecian brothers: the Grekomans (Greek-loyalist) Macedonians to the "makedonomachoi" (Macedonian fighters), to the patriarchate bishops and to nationalist Greeks, while Macedonians of the Resistance with socialist tendencies to the Grecian left. Both sides of Macedonians were betrayed!

Even the Grekomans and right wing "nationalists" Macedonians had the same bad treatment as the Macedonians of the Resistance. A characteristic example is the villages Bachovo (Promachoi) and Tressino (Orma). They were in majority Grekomans and "nationalists". That's why they named Bachovo to Promachi (on the front=they were on the front line of orthodoxy) and Tressino to Orma (name of ancient Macedonian settlement). I say and accentuate the "majority" because in both villages there were many autonomists and members of the Resistance. To the Bachovites they didn't give land near their village, although there was available land. They were given land near Kria Vrisi-Gianitsa (40 km away) or Notia Almopia (30 km away), in a period when the only means of transportation were carts pulled by animals. At the end, they gave them some land in Tsakoi, Almopia, but later it was taken away from them to be given to the "new colonists". But also a big part of the infertile valley of Bachovo, although it was not a Turkish tsiflik (property), it was classified as exchangeable property and the Bachovites didn't get titles of ownership. That is because communism and "macedonism" were not a danger anymore so they had no need of them any longer. Thus, Bachovites have an average of 15 acres or less per family of infertile plain, without ownership titles and are among the poorest villages in the area.

In Tressino they settled about 30 refugee families. In order to ensure them, they made land distributions and gave them titles of ownership. In the division that was done in 1958, they gave to refugees 26 acres free of charge. To the native Macedonians they gave 22 acres, which they had to pay for with 15 yearly installments. Actually, the natives paid for the land of their forefathers. To Pozar, which was mainly a Resistance and a macedonist village, they gave nothing. The Turkish estates that were near it they distributed to turkophones from Asia Minor, to those that terrorized the Pozarites if they tried to open a small piece of land in the infertile area that there is between the two villages. Thus, the Pozarites had little and infertile pieces of land and were among the poorest in the area. Even the pastures area of the village, in Dobropole that never was Turkish estate, had to be paid to the state in 1968 in ten yearly installments. The plots where the thermal baths of Pozar are built on that never were part of Turkish estate and although we know to which families they belonged, were also characterized as "exchangeable properties". They had to pay for them to the state, with a 20 years loan. The mountainous land plots were characterized as forest area and its cleansing and tree planting was forbidden. They begun to allow this, when MA.KI.B.E. appeared, out of fear that the indignant Macedonian peasants could follow it massively. Thus, the mountains were filled with cherry and chestnut trees.

That's the way the natives became the poorest of the area and the refugees the wealthier. On top of this, they call us backwards and "Bulgarians" with a mocking meaning of the term. Instead of gratitude for our hospitality in our land, they showed shamelessness and disrespect.

Hiring of Macedonians in the public sector, in public utilities organizations, in banks, etc very seldom was happening. Even Grekomans were hired with difficulty. Quite revealing is the journalist Kostas Faltaitis, from the island of Skyros, in the lecture he gave in the gathering organized by the "Western Macedonians Association" of Athens in Parnassos, on 22 May 1927. Faltaitis took part in the Balkan wars and toured the area as correspondent of "*Empros*". Among other things, he said: "Because since 1912 the Greek state is busy in doing anti-macedonian politics. In the army, in education, in diplomacy, in church, in the government, everywhere there is anti-macedonism. Anti-macedonism: affirmative, real, systematic, rational. The honorable audience, to which I have the privilege of addressing, won't be able to imagine the extent of this anti-macedonism. Only the Macedonians present or those who lived in Macedonia are aware of the situation up there, by the state perspective.

And the situation is not good at all. It never was good since 1912, and continues not to be so. What on this side was detected and written since 1923 repeatedly that the Asia Minor disaster saved Macedonia, is not absolutely correct. The horrendous disaster that became the cause so Macedonia could change ethnic colors via colonization of 750.000 Greek refugees and the exchange of over 300.000 Turks who left, didn't change much of the official mind concerning Macedonia. Athens saw Macedonia as colony until the Asia Minor disaster, as colony it sees it today [...] According to today information from Thessaloniki, the people of various Macedonian villages have raised flags of foreign countries, so to avoid the installation of refugees and the distribution to them of Muslims' land

property. [...]. At the same time, the Greek communists through their organizations and the "*Rizospastis*" newspaper, paid with Russian money, promote with vigor the doctrine of autonomy of Macedonia, of "self-determination" as they tell to Macedonians [...]. In Macedonia there are teachers, professors that communicate with their students in serbo-bulgarian language – macedonian according to them- and also others in Rumanian. [...] Since 1912 up to day, we have sent whatever leftovers we had in administration, education, lawyers, medicine, army, scientists, and church and by these persons we asked to assimilate Macedonia. [...] Macedonia, in terms of people, is not self-governed. It is governed by the other Greece, and in fact is tyrannized [...] worse than a colony is Macedonia, because even the Zulu or Kafreria have at last some type of self-administration.

How can, our governors, diplomats, mayors, teachers, public officials, judges, telegraphers, bankers, army and police, and scientists practice macedonian politics since they are not Macedonians and they feel and know Macedonia as much as they feel near and know Madagascar or Cameroon? [...] How many Macedonians are serving in the army? How many allophones, in particular? Bulgaria has 500 from greek Macedonia, we don't have even 50 active in a total of six thousand officers [...]

How many police officers and how many policemen? Here, we have nobody. How many priests –mainly priests - that come from sacerdotal schools? Not even one. [...] The admired school of Agriculture of Thessaloniki that Turkey passed on to us was abandoned to oblivion by Athens and in 1926, when it had become a rut, it was downgraded to a station [...].

The way we have tied the whole of Macedonia in the public servants' old Greece and old Greece's science, it resembles a convict on whom we have put handcuffs. What will the convict do? Is it necessary to have external boost or to believe in other religion and speak a different language from the one of his policeman, in order to break his handcuffs?" (Our mind on Macedonia, Athens Publications D. Deli, 1927).

I am returning to the contemporary times.

As it's obvious, many Macedonians protested against the racist exemption of their native homogenous refugees from their right to repatriation. PA.SO.K. government at the beginning implied that the problem would be solved in a future time. This was proven a lie. To limit the reaction of Macedonians that had relatives abroad it applied a treacherous policy. It began to give the refugees' properties to their closest relatives for a minute price. In Pozar, as for example, a 1.000 m2 plot was ceded for 950 dracmas (3 euros). Even this symbolic payment was donated in April of 1986. Many benefited from it and kept quite. Others understood the treachery and refused to participate in it. But department officials came and several other well wishers and convinced them to do it. If they would not do it, were told, they'll lose the opportunity and the state would give the property, in the future, to other landless people. Thus, many more Macedonians started not wanting the repatriation of their relatives. In addition, the state gave the opportunity to those who for a period longer than 20 years held plots belonging to the refugees and weren't related to them, to claim them as their own by a law "About use caption". In this way, one more part of Macedonian population was added to those that do not desire the repatriation of their co-patriots. If one takes into account the terrorism that's performed on Macedonians, he will understand why there are so few Macedonians fighting for the rights of their uprooted co-patriots.

It also did something else to reduce the disappointment of Macedonians. It began hiring many more Macedonians in public services. In the prefecture of Pella, where the natives were slightly the majority, for the first time those hired in the police, fire department, trainee officers and others were by majority natives. It made more infrastructures in the local villages that until then were neglected. I like other of Macedonian descent members of PA.SO.K. were happy and enjoyed the praising by our own people of the region for the "success". Of course, it didn't take us long to understand why the government satisfied some of our long sought demands. It was to lessen the bitterness of another injustice. If they hire your son in the public service, then you would care less for the repatriation of your cousin. "A well fed pig doesn't growl" people say.

PA.SO.K. government performed one more treachery, more contemporary. With their Florina elected representative, Yiorgos Lianis, as an intermediary and the then vice-minister of Foreign affairs, Andreas Loverdos, tricked the Macedonians of western Macedonia. He promised the solving of the problem of political refugees. The vice-minister himself met a delegation of "Rainbow"-E.F.A. party. Even the elected governor of Florina prefecture (a PA.SO.K. member) in 2002 took a public

stand in favor of repatriation. Thus, he secured Macedonians' votes of the region and was elected. Of course, the Member of Parliament G.Lianis also other times before elections promised to solve the problem, but after election he was forgetting about it. Often, though, he soothed the ears of poor Macedonians in the region speaking about the "deserted Prespes". By who and why they systematically became deserted, he would not say.

PA.SO.K. betrayed the Macedonians once more. Up to the end of its governing period on March 2004, not only didn't accomplish its promises, but toughened its stand against political refugees. Many can't even obtain visas from Skopie consulate for a mere visit to their homeland. Those who are not rejected have to wait for 2-3 months before getting a visa for just a few days visit. They also have to pay 35 euros (ten days work) while we, Athenians, don't have to pay anything to go there. If the application is rejected, they don't get their money back. Of course, they can't come even as economic immigrants.

At the same time PA.SO.K. did also something else. In June of 2003 passed the law 3147/03 (F.E.K. 135/5-6-03) and on this basis it started the proceedings of concession of estates belonging to political refugees. Plots and farms were granted to those that held them, paying 1/3 of their value price. The law was in effect for one year. They spread that whoever would not follow the proceedings, they would lose the property because it would be granted to others. Thus, in this way, most of those who held such properties made the applications. In my village there are 130 such plots and hundreds of farming fields. Most of them are possessed by relatives of political refugees. Thus, the Macedonians, here, will have to pay the state for the properties of their relatives: namely, their grandfathers' and grandmothers'. Obviously, the colonists that held such land are rubbing their hands in joy.

Based on law, the profit from this auction will be deposited with interest into the special account "Public funds for public investments, for grants, loans and buildings of the Ministry of Agriculture, as well the implementation of programs of land consolidation – colonization". In other words, for the reinstatement of "repatriated Russian-Pontian". With our money they'll build for them houses in our plots. And since they don't recognize us as Macedonians, they'll be the Macedonians and we, the pseudo-Macedonians. "Democratic" PA.SO.K. applied a colonization of the worse kind.

If PA.SO.K. really intended to solve the matter of political refugees it wouldn't have disposed of their properties. For the simple reason that afterward it would've had to give them other plots and land of equal value or reimburse them in its entirety. Obviously, it doesn't make sense selling properties on 1/3 of their value when you know that you'll have to repay them on 3/3 of their value. This you do when you know that you deceive the victims, that you will take the one third and you won't need to pay for the three thirds. By this deception PA.SO.K..firstly gathered many Macedonian votes, secondly it created a smoke screen and diverted Macedonians' attention from the selling out of their homogenous political refugees and their properties, thirdly it managed to make one more part of native population and settlers to be negative on the repatriation of our co- patriots. Obviously, PA.SO.K. was certain of losing the elections of 2004. Thus, what it didn't do for 20 years that was in power, it promised to do after those elections as it was sure it will lose them. But it found among the Macedonians some who played its game.

Macedonians that weren't uprooted from their land experienced all kinds of hardships. Not only they were forced to stay in their infertile and mountainous areas, but often had to pay the state for that little they had.

Before, during, and mainly after the Balkan wars many Turks, due to uncertainties, sold their estate at very low prices. The Macedonians despite their poverty exploited the situation and bought some small property. The regime of Athens didn't recognize those deeds and considered them as state property. As many Macedonians had built homes and warehouses and stables, the state did not claim them but it charged them. It helped them, of course, to pay for them in 15-20 yearly installments. This is the case of our plot where our house was built, in Aridea. The father of Alexandros Gesios, from whom we bought the plot, paid for it once to the Turk bey and again to the state of Athens. The Ottomans when they took these plots from our ancestors did not pay anything. In other words, they just grabbed them from the owners. This means that the old man Gesios paid his plot once to the old thief, the bey, and once more to the new thief, the state of Athens. I mention the

case for those who would be interested to cross-examine what I am saying. There are countless cases like this one. As I've already mentioned, we Pozarites paid for the thermal spa plots and the pastures of Dobropole that were never been Turkish tsiflik (estates).

The refugee colonists of the region, besides getting the larger part and most fertile farm land, they got also the larger part and the best plots in the cities. Roads and irrigation systems were done in refugees' villages. They also did some works in natives' villages, so "to dampen the waters". Villages that were characterized as "settlements before 1923" were abandoned to their fate. In most of the natives' villages even today the irrigation systems and agricultural roads are as they were during Turkish occupation time. New, more profitable cultivation that were promoted by Directorate of Agriculture were given first to the refugees villages. That's the case with tobacco, apples, and peaches in our region. Ownership titles were given only to refugees. They were given also to some natives that resided in mixed villages. This created more problems to the natives. Public services, banks, etc. that were overwhelmingly embodied in majority by refugee colonists, took care of their own first. God help the native that was forced to resort there. Up until 1970, very seldom a native would be hired in public service. For this reason Macedonians would not pursue education beyond elementary level. Even bishops followed this kind of policy. Even today there is no bishop of Macedonian descent. In our province, Macedonian priests are almost one tenth of the whole total of priests, although in the total of population Macedonians are a majority.

The results of these policies were the riches of the area to be passed to the refugee colonists. Industries, shops, residential blocks, transport, commerce, etc. are in their hands. The few exemptions are as many as needed to "dampen the waters" and legitimize the situation. The tsiflikades (Turkish estate owners) have been replaced by the economic neo-tsiflikades. Now, even if the racist policies stop altogether, it's absolutely impossible to reinstate justice. It's well known that riches produce riches.

My persecuted Pozarites co-villagers cannot, without help, exploit the touristic possibilities of their region. They don't possess enough financial means. Many of them sale their plots to make ends meet. Almost all of them are bought by people from outside our area because the other Pozarites lack simply the means to buy them, themselves. The thermal baths have not been updated and synchronized as it was done in other thermal springs of other areas (Langada, New Apolonia, Agia Paraskevi). The great opportunities of mountain tourism cannot be exploited since the roads not only are not paved but they neither are maintained. The road that connects Kaimaktsalan ski center, via Orma-Black Forest, isn't paved with asphalt although this project was accepted and approved through an European program, just for not to affect negatively the interests of refugee-colonists village of Panagitsa and of Agios Athanasios village, of which most of the tourist business units don't belong to village residents. My fellow citizen minister of P.A.S.O.K., G. Paschalidis, instead of supporting the rights of Pozarites he supported the injustice of his homogeneous people in Panagitsa. They are the ones that reacted against even on the building of the road through Kerasia.

I mention this as a local example, so anyone who wants will understand that even today a covered up racist policy is applied. Something similar to it took place in other areas, too. In Edessa and Aridea during Turkish occupation the commerce and craftsmanship (textiles, cannabis products, mills, pepper products, silk, commercial shops, etc) were in the hands of natives. Now they are not. I had the opportunity to get to know one of the methods of economic destruction myself. I hadn't done anything illegal for them to close my shop. Simply, I had raised my head up and asked for my rights. Black propaganda influenced my clientele: "that shop is suspicious, it's been watched by the police, anyone who goes there is considered an anti-Greek and of the same ideology". They terrorized the people. Elderly people of Edessa and Aridea told us of similar tactics of economic destruction. "Anyone who goes to the shop of X is suspicious and police will make and keep files on them". "You don't go to the Pontian shop? You don't want Pontians in Greece? Do you want to be classified as Bulgarian?" Back then, instead of Skopians, they called them Bulgarians: and other similar names. In such situation, try not wanting to go to buy from the Pontian's shop!

The Macedonian language was persecuted just as hard as the Macedonians. And let's say that the Macedonians somehow faulted. Their language, though, as any other language doesn't have the possibilities to harm you. There are no bad and good languages.

Language is the mean by which man expresses his or her psychism, the creations of his intellectual potentials, his personality. If this mean isn't his mother tongue, he will have a weakness and a gasp of expression. This, in turn, creates blockages of mind creativity. It restrains very seriously the rational expression and literary quality. The prohibition of mother tongue is the most unbearable lack of freedom.

The most extreme prohibition of freedom of expression I think was done by the prohibition of our mother tongue in church. There, men communicate with their imaginary Holy. They forced my ancestors to come to contact with God in a language they were totally ignorant of. On their behalf it was the priest who communicated with God. It was an extreme form of intermediation with God. Why, though? Maybe God doesn't understand Macedonian? The Catholics not only allow all languages in liturgy, but the Pope says "blessings" in eighty languages. This, the Ecumenical Patriarchate not only didn't tolerate but persecuted other languages and especially Macedonian. They persecuted Cyrillic writing that is a creation of Macedonia. They made the most extreme use of Greek for chauvinistic reasons: fascism on earth in the name of heavenly God!

I that am writing these things, started to learn Greek when I was six and went to kindergarten. What I heard all the time, until I finished high school, was that my mother tongue was foreign-brought, gypsy, bad, and unwritten. A slavic or bulgarian idiom that Bulgarians imposed on us. Despite the fact that Vasileios Voulgaroktonos (the Bulgarians killer) defeated the Bulgarians, the language stayed. Our poor ancestors for so many centuries couldn't understand that they spoke an outlandish language, a barbaric idiom.

Greek was the language of Plato and Aristotle but also of the Gospels. This is how my eyes opened and saw their truth. There was nothing more excellent than to be Greek and speak the language of the Gospels. But that wasn't enough. I tried to open my grandmother's eyes, too. "Grandma" I would tell her "we won't say voda anymore. We'll say nero (water). No dunka, but kidoni (quince)". She would listen to me patiently and never scolded me. "Mi arnou, tsedo" (well, my boy). "No arnou tsedo, grandma, kala paidi mou, you'll be saying!". Unfortunately I didn't succeed on teaching her Greek. Besides, I had to suffer beatings and punishment in school to learn Greek, myself. Although I got brain-washing for many years, my brain wasn't washed well enough.

The state, besides the prohibition of language, changed the names of most of the villages, cities, rivers, mountains, without asking the inhabitants. There were no Greek names in our area: neither Greek-speaking villages. In the whole of the province of Pella there wasn't even one Greek-speaking village, in the city of Voden they all spoke Macedonian but the high clergy, big merchants, and big craftsmen spoke also Greek. You cannot do commerce without the knowledge of a wider spread language that in the Balkans was the Greek. There was also a Greek school where the bourgeoisie and priests sent their children. About the surrounding areas, I have an opinion of my own and have no need of being told or read books or statistics that usually don't say the whole truth. In the neighboring province of Kukush (Kilkis) also there was not one single Greek-speaking village or small city. The same goes for Florina province, too. In the province Emathia there were some Greek-speakers. The villages of Naousa province that was called Negousta, Negous, or Niaousta, they spoke Macedonian and Vlach. In the main city they spoke Greek as it was an industrial-commercial center. Most of its residents spoke, together with Greek, also Macedonian and Vlach. In Veria they spoke Greek, Hebrew, Macedonian and Vlach. The villages of Veria spoke vlach, Greek and Macedonian. Vergina was called "Kutlesh" by the natives. The Macedonian name of the monastery Dobra (good) in Vermio became Thovra municipality in Greek, with its seat in Yiantsista (Ag. Georgios-Saint George), but very few of its residents know the meaning of the name and where it derives from. Most of the natives' villages of Thessaloniki spoke Macedonian. Greek idiom followed and in very few places Vlach was spoken. In the village of the fanatically Greek Papatthemelis they spoke Macedonian and it was called Visoka (tall). They renamed it Ossa that in Macedonian means wasp. In the city of Thessaloniki many spoke Macedonian, particularly in the area of Vardar square and behind the railroad station area. From Macedonians of that area, at the time, the "Internal

Macedonian Revolutionary Organization" (V.M.R.O.-I.M.R.O.) was created and had as a goal the liberation of Macedonia.

Almost all the rivers, mountains, villages of Macedonia changed names after 1912. The river Vardar became Vartharis and then Axios. The wind that blows in the area, though, was saved and it's still called Vartharis. They use to say it also in songs. Imagine they'd change it and they'll sing "Axio-oooo is blowing!" The river Lud-ias (crazy river) became Louthias, Galik became Gallikos, Bistritsa became Aliakmon. The mountain Paiak (spider) became Paiko, Nitse became Kaimaktsalan (Turkish name) and then Voras. Bor in macedonian means pine tree. There is a mountain side called Borovo. Maybe they got the idea from there. Cities were renamed or became Hellenized. Voden that in hellenized form we call Vodena was renamed in Edessa. The name of Edessa is Frygian but, they say, whatever is ancient it belongs to the neo-Greeks. So, it'll be called Greek. Frygian are also the names of Skydra and Veria but since there are not anymore Frygians, who were an affiliated tribe to Macedonians, to claim them they are neo-Greek. The toponym Serres is Thracian while Kavala is Latin or slavic (kaval=flute). Postol (stol=seat, throne, po-stol=by the throne) became Pella. It preserved the name of the ancient capital. The name Pella is of unknown origin. There was an old Illyrian city called Pellion, so it's possible to be Illyrian. Illyrian, probably, is also Eordaia. The toponyms Pieria, Emathia, Almopia, Paionia, etc are Thracian and not Greek. From the ancient Thracians we kept a name in our language that we give to any woman called Maria. Even today we call them Musa. Muses were the daughters of the Thracian God Orpheus, namely the Virgins. It is the corresponding to the Virgin we give to the Holy Mary.

Jenitze was renamed Yianitsa, Gida to Alexandria, Sabotsko to Aridaia, Sorovic to Amynteon, Kailar to Ptolemaida, Lerin to Florina. Of course, neither Florina nor Grevena are Greek names. Kozani in Macedonian means goat-land as does also Koziakas. But the name Kozani is "Greek". Kastoria is Latin and derives from the word castle. Kastroria was its first name.

The irony is that the three highest mountain peaks of Greece have slavic names. That of mount Olympus, Mytika (mutika=spade), of Pindos, Smolikas (smola=resin) and of Kaimaktsalan Nitse (Nitse probably means common-nobody's). Not even the name Gramos is Greek. Gramosta as the natives call it, is related to thunder (grames=thunder).

They changed also the surnames of the people, without asking them. This kind of rights had on us, those villainous ones. Petsov was changed to Petsos, Sougarev to Sougaris, Vosnakov to Vosnakis, Gatsov to Gatsos, Petkanov to Petkanis, Stoyanev to Stoyanidis, etc. The names also were changed, while many of them were prohibited, as for example Tane, Tousi, Tonta, Zlata, Kamena, Stoina, Stoitse, etc. Traiko or Traian, which is my name, they made it Traianos. When I was 10-12 years old, a circular letter came that said all those who wished, they could have their name changed by a simple application. They did not impose it on us but they told us that the names like my name, Traianos, could bring about problems to our careers. Some changed it to Andreas. I didn't. It seemed to me as totally crazy. I couldn't digest that my god-mother would give me a name that's bad. For about a decade priests didn't permit baptisms under this name. Later, the teacher of Catechism called me Trianos. It derives from Trinity she said and suggested to me to celebrate my name day on Holy Trinity day. She also explained to me that there was a Roman emperor by the name Traianos, an idolater. But also I became an idolater. They made me to worship the idols of Christian saints that existed on the icons of the churches. My teacher would tell us that idols are only the sculptures and sculptured replicas of gods or saints. The ancient Hellenes adored sculptures that were replicas of phony gods and semi-gods (saints). And I, who had believed that I was a descendant of the smartest people of antiquity, got confused. It can't be for the smartest people to believe in phony things. I consulted dictionaries that wrote idol is a replica, a picture, an icon. It could be sculptured or painted. And the icons I worshiped were painted idols of Christ and the saints. With the brain that God gave me, I couldn't understand my teacher. But, was it the only thing I couldn't understand? It seems I had great difficulties on being Hellenized.

In my village, like in other natives' villages, they had created institutions called "House of Children". They created them so parents could bring their children, 3 to 5 years old, so they would learn Greek from so young age. If we learned and used Greek words they would reward us by giving us candies, toys, and many "bravos". These institutions were part of the regional Directorate of Cultural Affairs. This type of directorate existed only in seven Macedonian regions. There were none

of these in other regions, for the simple reason that there weren't any subjects in other regions for acculturation alias Hellenization. Hidden behind the nice title, there was a department of information and spying something similar to the bureau on "Indian Affairs department" the Americans developed for "acculturation", namely to erode the Indians of America. Of the "New World" they called it, of the "New Lands" Greeks called it. Missionaries were used there and priests were used here. Colonial powers use common methods.

In my village this institution was housed in the home of a political refugee by the name of Tsatsko. Thus, we called it "Tsatskova kukia". Kukia means house and has the same root as the ancient Greek "oikia".

This kind of roots exists in many Macedonian and Greek words. This motivated the first principal of the Greek High School in Bitola (Monaster), Konstantino Tsioukas, to publish a relevant book. Tsioukas was from the village Gorentsi (Korissos) Kastoria. He studied at the School of Philosophy in Athens, in which he later became PhD of Literature. The book was titled "Contribution to the bilingualism of Macedonians - a comparison of the Slavic-like Macedonian language to the Greek". The book was published in 1907 in Athens. It was published again in 1991 with an introduction by Nikolas Martis, ex Minister of Northern Greece. He calls all the time the language Macedonian and the Macedonians by this names, as well as his village Gorentsi. It's one more document where they call our language Macedonian and us Macedonians. Tsioukas places more than 4.000 Macedonian words and compares them with corresponding Greek words. He claims that in Macedonian "exist 1.260 Homeric in origin words, while in common Greek only 650 words have been saved». He claims that today's slavophone Macedonians must "consider themselves the only pure descendants of Philip and Alexander the Great and their heirs." Before any unwelcome impressions could be created, I would like to make it clear that I consider myself a descendant of my grandfathers and grandmothers, namely just to where human memory can reach. Besides, if I was a contemporary to Alexander the Great, I wouldn't have had good luck at all.

Our language was called Macedonian by Pavlos Melas, Karavitis, Mazarakis and many more "makedonomachoi" (Macedonian fighters). In the official census of 1920 our language is also recorded as Macedonian. After our region was embodied to Greece, an interpreter was needed for notary acts. It was mentioned in them that "for the ignorant of Greek and speaker of Macedonian" the X interpreter was used. On these official documents everywhere the language is mentioned as Macedonian. The term "Slav-macedonian" was invented after 1935.

In 1977 we applied for the registration of an athletic club under the name Pozar. They returned our application and asked us to change the name. We changed it to Aris and it was registered. Two years later we applied for a cultural association under the name "Pozar". As we had foreseen the rejection of the name, we submitted our application the time that a new, female judge had been temporarily appointed, who either was more democratic or was not tutored, and she accepted it. The association though, despite being active only in cultural events, not only didn't receive any help from local authorities but was confronted by various obstacles. As soon as it established the yearly celebration "Pozaritika", at the end of August, the Municipality of Aridaia established cultural events during the exact same days (4), which richly financed. The first years they brought singers of wide popularity (Glykeria, Arvanitaki, etc.) to draw people away from "Pozaritika". They failed to do so, of course, because people are not that racist as authorities would've wanted them to be. Since 2005 the cultural events were replaced by the "Pontiako Panegiri" (Pontians Festival). Their problem was that after the "Pozaritika" official program a Macedonian festival followed with Macedonian music and songs. The racist war fronted by "Pozaritika" forced organizers to alter the program. It wasn't allowed to have a clear Macedonian character. They made of it a mockery mixture. Purely Pontian festival is permitted, purely Macedonian no. At the end, local people started to abstain from "Pozaritika". People that go to festivals or popular event, when they go to Pontian they want it Pontian, when they go to Vlach, they want it Vlach, when they go to Macedonian they want it to be Macedonian. The same goes for

Sarakatsaniko (Greek-speakers Vlachs) or Arvanitiko (Albanian christians). Otherwise, Macedonians celebrate the "liberation" of the region from the Ottomans, together with the persecutors of their freedoms. During Turkish occupation the Macedonian songs were never persecuted. The native Macedonian culture wasn't bothered, not in the least.

In Bahovo (Promahoi) they applied for a cultural association under the name "The Macedonians". Although the village is more of "nationalists" loyal to Greece than Pozar, they returned their application back and asked them to change the name. They named it "Almopes". In Edessa, nature lovers applied in 1989 for an association by the name "Friends of the mountain". The application was returned to them and they changed the name to "Friends of Kaimaktsalan". It seems that the phrase "of the mountain" created suspicion that guerillas could be formed. These are real phobias!

In 1992, some Macedonian cultural associations organized the 1st festival of Macedonian dances in Vodena. The war of black propaganda was unleashed against it to such an extent that did not allow the reoccurrence of the event. On 29 of October 2005, in Alexandrio Melathlon of Thessaloniki, the 1st festival of Pontian dances was held. Not only the air conditioned stadium was ceded but also government officials participated and the event was repeatedly broadcasted by national TV. Pontian culture not only is free in Macedonia but also supported. Macedonian culture not only isn't supported, but isn't free to develop even self-contained.

In 1993, the "Pan-Macedonian Union of Pella" announced in the local media the organizing of an open meeting at a school in Aridaia, with aim the creation of a "Pan-Macedonian" annex in Almopia. The main purpose, according to the announcement, was the cultivation of local Macedonian culture and the tying of relations with the Macedonians of the Diaspora. It was of direct interest to us. Here we are, I said, and I went to it. After the main introduction, the presidium gave the opportunity for questions and dialogue. My presence created a chill. Since no one of the audience spoke I asked for the floor. I asked for a definition of what they call "cultivation of local Macedonian culture", do they also mean the cultivation and spreading of the local Macedonian language, songs, customs, etc. To clear it out if they intended to tie closer relations with Macedonians political refugees and our immigrants in Australia, Canada, USA, Europe, etc.

The presiding panel, the majority being descendants of refugees, found itself in a great dilemma. It was unable to answer, affirmative or negative. It behaved though diplomatically. It didn't reject the local language or the Macedonian Diaspora. If they would've rejected it, then it wouldn't be Pan-Macedonian. It explained the "difficulties" and concluded on the long term implementation of this aim. The "difficult" discussion, though, took most of the time, and the meeting begun to degenerate. The people were leaving it. The main aim of the creation of "Pan-Macedonian Almopia" was in danger. The irritation of some people became visible. The panel continued on the diplomatic stand. Then, two of the initiators jumped up, one after the other, Christos Binos and Gr. Tasiou, from Karartzova, both of Macedonian descend. "Why are we wasting our time talking about what he is putting forward he who is very well known for his pro-skopian feelings? Instead of organizing the "Pan-Macedonian", we are losing our time with him". They made other inflammatory remarks and loyalist declarations of such kind that the Pontian of the meeting would have never made. They were made, on their behalf, by some Macedonians. The time was lost and the "Pan-Macedonian" meeting was not fruitful.

Actually, the issues I raised should have been put by these two Macedonians, in the first place. Some years later it was revealed why those two outbid on "patriotic" declarations. I put it in quotes because if they were real patriots they would have put forth the issue of local culture and the relations with the Macedonians of Diaspora. They gave their exams. Tasiou put a candidacy for prefectural counselor and, later, for mayor of Aridaia. Binos put candidacy for parliament deputy and later for mayor in Aridaia. In 2002 he was elected mayor in Aridaia. He is the one that established and financed (15.000 euros) the yearly Pontian festival in Aridaia. It's held on the exact same days as "Pozaritika" to which he promised 5.000 euros that haven't been received yet, a year later since were promised. This year he erected a monument of the Pontians. This type of monument not even the Pontian ex-mayors did erect. For his forefathers that gave their life for the liberation of Macedonia, he speaks very negatively. He doesn't want to hear of Gotse Deltsev. He praises Garefis. Besides, his village (Tsarnesovo) was renamed to Garefi. Garefis, as mentioned in the introduction, terrorized and

murdered Macedonian resistance fighters in our area, in 1905-06. This is the kind of freedom Macedonians enjoy. Some of them exploit it.

A bit later, a "didactic" precedent had been created. During the municipality elections of 1998, another one from Garefi was also a candidate for mayor of Aridaia, Vangelis Apostolou, who had passed to the second round of the elections as an independent candidate. He ran against the official candidate of PA.SO.K. The outgoing turkophone mayor, I. Agianoglou, who was supported by New Democracy, failed to pass the second round. But, instead of supporting the independent candidate from Garefi as the official position of his party of New Democracy imposed, he supported the candidate of PA.SO.K. The independent candidate of Macedonian descent had not made the necessary "declarations". He spoke to the locals in Macedonian and had visited our relatives, political refugees, in the Republic of Macedonia.

Some other Macedonians without applying for a cultural club and just wanting to participate in a secular custom, were restrained by the army and police.

In the peak of Nitse (Kaimaktsalan) there is a small church that was built by the Serbs, using artillery shells among other materials, right after the 1st World War. There took place a hideous massacre between Serbs and Bulgarians, with thousands of dead, for whom they built an ossuary. During the war the old small church dedicated to Prophet Elias was destroyed from its foundations. Here, before the partition of the mountain and the placing of border lines, every year on Prophet's Elias name day, on 20th of July, a celebration took place. They called it stredba =meeting. A meeting took place of all the people of the areas around it, Meglen, Voden, Ostrovo, Lerin, Bitola, Mariovo. The fact the mountain is common for all of the area and doesn't belong to anyone exclusively; it must be the reason to its name. Ni-tsei in Russian and Ni-koi in Macedonian means no one. As the mountain doesn't belong to no one (nitsei) of the area (countries) it was considered common to all. Probably that is how was established a joyous meeting (stredba) on the common (Nitsei) mountain. After Nitse was divided, the celebration ceased to exist.

The decade of the 80's, some of the elders and romantic people started going again to the small church in reminiscence of stredba, on Prophet Elias name day. In 1986, when I went myself, the visitors were almost 50 of them. But each year the numbers were increasing. In 1990 there were 150. Until then, nobody bothered them. They ate, sung, wonder around the mountain. Stredba started being resurrected. At the same period, though, the Macedonian matter was inflamed again and stredba took place the same day as the day of Ilinden, (Prophet Elias), namely the very day the Macedonian uprising of 1903 took place. The people that went there didn't give a political contest. It was clearly a secular custom.

On the 20th of July 1992, Prophet Elias name day a company of few friends and I begun to go to the small church. Half way we met others, returning. They informed us that we won't be able to go to the church. It was prohibited by the army and the police.

We couldn't believe it. We kept on and as soon as we reached the bare area, the huts of Yianakoulas, we met the first patrol. They told us that it was prohibited to continue. Most of the pilgrims were returned back, there. We explained to the patrol that since they did not show us any commanding order or any law that we were violating, we had the right to go forward. They took our records and we proceeded. After we walked 500 meters we met another patrol. We did the same as before. In the peak of the mountain there was a guardhouse, right on the passage. The distance from there to the Prophet Elias church is about five kilometers. There, the lieutenant was waiting for us. He explained to us that hiking to the peak was prohibited because it's a supervised zone. We responded that if this is a supervised zone some relevant signs should be there, but such we did not see anywhere. And that they have the right of supervising, but we have the right of visiting it, since it's not prohibited.

The lieutenant understood that he was dealing with people that were aware of their rights. The truth is that he showed understanding and he was also willing to call his command in Edessa. The answer he got was negative. The lieutenant couldn't take responsibility. We told him that we won't discipline ourselves and if we are in violation, so let them take us to Justice. We walked another kilometer to the point where our road meets the one from Florina and Arnissa. There were about ten more visitors. In front of us, though, there was a barricade. A mixed team of about 20 armed soldiers

and policemen had put vertically an army vehicle to block the road. Here, they gave no explanation. They told us that it's "an order" and that's it. We couldn't claim our rights. Guns and uniforms are law. A while later, an army patrol came down accompanying one of ours in the group, who had gone further up by a motorbike following a path where a car couldn't go through. Further up there was another blockade. He was fined because he was not wearing a helmet. In everything else he was lawful. The same as I was, with my car. We sat there in front of the barricade, eating and drinking and talking with those that restrained us.

The next year, the very same scene was repeated. But this time this happened twice. On the 20th of July, Prophet Elias name day according to the new calendar and on the 2nd of August according to the old calendar. Authorities did a new fraudulence. Most of the policemen were of Macedonian descent and our acquaintances. There was a Pozarite whose house was right next to my house. They did this so to put us in conflict with our own people. Of course, for us it wasn't the policemen that mattered but the ones that put them there.

At about that time, the ski resort center was constructed, about a kilometer north of where they restrained us. Thus a problem occurred. They couldn't prohibit visitors to the ski center. Then, they did something else. A few meters over the chalet of the ski center they built another guard room and abolished the old one. The old one was on a pick of the mountain from where they could easily control the entire area. The place where they built the new one was in a hollow and from there it is impossible to control anything but the road that leads to Prophet Elias small church. It's not a place of passage for illegal migrants and from a military point of view it is in a very disadvantageous position. The enemy could conquer it even with stones as weaponry. The inauguration was made by our "comrade" Akis Tsohatzopoulos himself, then minister of Defense. Those who go to the ski center can verify the disadvantageous position of the guardhouse. An answer, though, of what the guardhouse is guarding, they won't get.

One year, though, we tricked them. It must've been in 1995, Prophet Elias day. A few days before, a free lance reporter of the French channel TV 5 had visited us together with a journalist of "*The Guardian*", the British newspaper. We grabbed the opportunity and took them up there. The reporter was taking pictures and filming the area when an army Major came down and told us that it's prohibited to hike, photograph and film the area. The journalists wondered why and replied to the Major that they see no signs or army installments that could explain the prohibition. The Major at first tried to explain but quickly realized that he wasn't convincing enough so, at the end, he said: "What can I tell you that we guard? We guard those who brought you here, so they won't go to the small church up there in the peak». He showed he had self-respect, something that both journalists appreciated. They reported the case, though. For this type of reportage the Greek nationalists were protesting. Most of the media abroad dedicated so much time for the demonstrations and the declarations of the prime minister on the Macedonian matter, as much as, and even more, for what we had to say to them.

The position of Greek officials on the Macedonian issue and the demonstrations helped enormously so our case would become internationally known. It'll not be right from our part not to recognize the help they offered us. Because of them, journalists from all major newspapers and TV channel worldwide visited us. Several diplomats also visited us.

The most remarkable visit was the one by the consul of USA of Thessaloniki, James Blandford, at the end of August 1992. It was of particular relevance because of its political character. Two weeks before Russia had recognized the republic of Macedonia. USA, because of NATO, was bound not to recognize it but couldn't allow the first step to the Russians. Thus, they proceeded to an indirect act. Indicative was the front page title of "*Avriani of northern Greece*" newspaper (27/8/92): "USA recognizes bodies of Skopie". "*The Greek North*" newspaper of N. Mertzos had on its front page the title: "The G. Consul in quarantine by the Macedonians". Mertzos is from Neveska that was renamed Nympheo and its Vlach residents Greeks. This is how the Grekoman Mertzos emerged. We were on the front page on most of the newspapers. We were very puzzled, though, by the information given to us by a friend journalist that the picture of the USA G. Consul reception was given to the

media by the Greek Information Service (E.Y.P.).

The US Consul was scheduled to meet with the mayor of Aridaia, I Agianoglou, Our meeting, though, was prolonged by three quarters of an hour. When Agianoglou was informed of the reason for the delay, he was outraged and suggested to the Municipal Council not to meet him. They met him, though, as loyal soldiers. It wasn't easy for them to do otherwise.

During the three year period 1991-1994 we were visited by about 30 foreign journalists who informed public opinion, internationally. We were also visited by Greek journalists, but they didn't bother to report to Greek public opinion. Some decent ones told us that they will be reporting everything but could not guarantee that the reports would be published. Some of them were dishonest. From a 40 minutes video, they presented just about 2-3 minutes and only the parts that would damage us. Thus, the international public opinion is certainly much better informed on the struggle of Macedonian Movement of Balkan Prosperity than the Greeks. Neo- Greeks aren't free to know.

THE GREEKS, THE LATINS AND THE SLAVS

Who are these "Greeks of genus" to the "race" of whom we don't belong? Where did they get the right to treat us so inhumanely and become the political, economic, social and intellectual patrons of ours? They legitimize this arbitrariness by saying that it is the historical right of the "Greeks by genus" in Macedonia. For this reason they teach us "their history" in ways that legitimize their policies. Because I think we have every right as Macedonians to doubt this racist policy, I am forced to doubt history as they are serving it to us. This is the reason why I'm doing a synoptic account of the history of our land.

The ancient people of Greece was formed the first half of the last millennium b.C. In Peloponnese and the region we call today Sterea Hellas and where the Achaeans dominated, a more uncivilized barbaric hordes, the Dorians, invaded the place around 1.100 b.C. They destroyed the structures of the previous civilization but also they kept some of its elements. Almost three centuries were needed so it all could become normalized and the development of a new civilization to arise, which after the 8th century b.C. would be called Hellenic. With the gradual homogenizing of these two primary people with the pre-existing indigenous native people, the ancient Hellenes were created.

The neighboring of Hellenes with the obviously much more civilized peoples of the eastern Mediterranean (Egyptians, Babylonians, Phoenicians, Cretans, Lydians, etc.) helped the contact and the taking of their elements of civilization. Their land was at the crossroads of the sea routes of the epoch. This helped the development of commerce and the forming of naval fleet. These two factors brought knowledge and riches. These, in turn, led to the development of the so much admired classical Hellenic civilization.

The Hellenes of course, didn't imitate their neighboring civilizations in everything. What they borrowed it was adapted to their own frame of mind. They added their own spirit and created their own civilization. In the technical sector they made their own improvements and added their taste. After them, something similar was done by the heirs of Alexander the Great, the Romans, and the list goes on and on.

What made the ancient Hellenes special and admirable is their intellectual civilization. Eastern intellectual civilization of that time, the most advanced at that period, had as its basic rule mysticism and dogmatism. It defined many things in a theocratic manner and way. The Hellenes introduced as their basic rule rationality, doubt, research, free thought.

During the 6th - 7th centuries the Hellenes became a colonial power and displaced the other naval powers of the region, mainly the Phoenicians and Egyptians. This brought them more riches and wealth, factors that helped to engage with and develop their civilization. All great civilizations of antiquity were developed wherever the accumulation of wealth favored it. The very same Hellenes were more uncivilized than their neighbors before they accumulated wealth and riches from the east. They ate acorns when others were building pyramids, palaces with hanging gardens. Later, when the Latin Romans became wealthy, they in turn developed their own great civilization. They embodied the Hellenic one in it, the same way that the Hellenes embodied the Phoenician, Cretan, Egyptian, etc.

So, today's American civilization due to its wealth embodies, buys off- elements of other civilizations and has become the dominating civilization of the planet. By this, I want to say that civilization isn't a matter of charismatic descend. It is a matter of mind that under favorable circumstances that wealth creates, it develops. The spirit, namely the frame of mind is the element that gives the particular color of every civilization. The free mind of ancient Hellenes is what created the brilliant classical Hellenic civilization.

From the 4th century b.C. the political power started slipping from the hands of the Hellenes. At first the kings of Macedonia and their heirs the Ptolemaic and Seleucid and later the Romans became the dominating powers of the areas where the Hellenes dominated. There was also accumulated all the wealth of the region. Hellenes entered a phase of decadence and were embodied to the Macedonian and afterward to the Roman empires.

The Macedonians made Hellenic the official language of their empire. The state mechanism, education, bibliography, religion etc used as their language the Koine Hellenic. All the significant books of all the other peoples were translated into Hellenic. Then the Bible (The Old Testament) of the Hebrews was also translated into Koine Hellenic. Thus, all educated Hebrews became hellenophone. There in is due the fact that the Gospels, the Epistles and rituals of the new Christian religion were written in Hellenic. Christianity was spread via the Hellenic Koine language. This is exactly how they called it, "Hellenic Koine". It was what the English language is today. The multiethnic civilization that was created it was based on Hellenic Koine and later it was named Hellenistic and that period was named Hellenistic period. From there derives the word "Hellenism" that's used today widely but totally abusively. Hellenism is a "multiethnic" civilization concept and not nationalist. Of course, in no way it means descent from ancient Hellenes.

In Hellenic Koine was written almost all literary work during all the following period. In Hellenic wrote the Hebrew Apostles and Evangelists. The Jew philosopher Joseph became Josephus and wrote in Hellenic. The Molossian Tharypas studied in Athens and spread Hellenic to Molossians. In Hellenic wrote also some of Syrian descent like Lucine, Oppian, John of Damascus, Roman the Melodist and even the Cappadocian Gregory the Theologian, Athanasius the Great, the doctor Arethas that became Aretaios and others. Another Aretas, the hegemon of Nabataean Arabs since he was a Hellenist, he was named "Philhellene".

Hellenic became also the official language of the royal court of Parthia (Arsacid), a kingdom found on the north-east of today's Iraq (250b.C. - 226 A.D), as well as that of Persia (Achaemenids). It's not all coincidental that the last seven teachers of the school of Philosophy of Athens fled to Persia, when the emperor Justinian closed the school in 529 A.D. The Hellenic-Christian Byzantium persecuted Hellenic philosophy and they went to teach it in the Hellenistic East.

Hellenic was also the language of the royal court of the Kingdom of Pontus. The kingdom was found by the Persian Ariobarzanes (Ariyavarzana in persian) in 326 b.C. Until that time the term "Pontus" meant Black Sea (Euxinos Pontus). Country or state Pontus did not exist, neither existed Pontian people, of course. Pontus was part of Cappadocia, which in persian means land of horses. Hellenic colonies in Pontus had ceased to exist as Hellenic since the Persians conquered the area, in 546 b.C. The Hellenes of the area had the same fate as the Hellenes of Sicily, southern France, North Africa, etc. The Hellenes of the colonies in Macedonia and Thrace were mostly slaughtered by Phillip of Macedonia, some he sold as slaves, others he chased away and some he kept to work for him. The same happened to the Hellenes of Pontus by the Persians.

The heirs of Ariobarzanes the Mithridates, were worshipers of Hellenic education and to them are owed the influence of the Hellenic language in the Pontian dialect. The residents of their state were Cappadocians, Chaldeans, Laz, Georgians, etc. These PontianMithridates resisted the armies of Alexander the Great and, consequently, they never became part of the Macedonian empire. They resisted more than anyone else against the Roman Empire's expansionism. They also succeed to chase the Romans away from all Asia Minor and conquered Thrace and Macedonia (and kept it for more than 2 years, from 87 to 85 b.C.) and a great part of Hellas, but the Romans succeeded in beating them and subdued them. The last and most glorious king of Pontus, Mithridate the 6th Eupator, in order not to fall into the hands of the Romans, gave order to his servant to kill him. Although he is their most glorious king and they are his descendants, today's Pontians do not honor him. The reason is simple enough. He was of Persian descent and believed in God Mithras of where

his name derives from, who was the Persian's God (Parthian, Arians, etc). They don't honor the glorious kings of Pontus who never were conquered by the Macedonians and Romans, but honor with passion Alexander the Great against whom they resisted and were the only ones from Asia Minor that never became part of his empire. Except the Pontians, the greatest resistance against Alexander the Great invasion in Asia Minor was by the Hellenic colonies of Miletus and Alikarnassos. The leader of the Persian forces, in fact, was Memnon of Rhodes.

The Hellenes were spread and embodied in this huge multiethnic world and ceased to exist as a separate nation.

The term 'Hellenes' from the age of Alexander ceased to mean Hellenes of descent. Alexander himself determined the meaning on his supposed vow as follows: "I don't divide men as the narrow minded do, in Hellenes and barbarians. I don't care of their descent as citizens or of their race, where they were born. I divide them under only one criterion, Virtue. For me every good foreigner is Hellene and every bad Hellene is worse than a barbarian..." Similar is the meaning the Hellene philosopher Isocrates gives: "Hellenes are those who participate in Hellenic education". In fact, they give the term "Hellene" a cultural and not racial content.

After the spreading of Christianity the term meant idolater. After Christianity was imposed as the official religion of the Roman Empire, the term for some centuries (6-7th) had a very bad meaning and was avoided by the subjects. It was something similar to anti-Christ, communist, Jehovah.

Something just as similar happened with ancient Latins. Latins were called the people of Latio who had Rome as their capital. It covered almost one fifth of today's Italy. The Latins conquered almost all of Italy first and afterward the whole of the Mediterranean. With them they brought and imposed the Latin language. Latin people were spread all over, mixed with numerous other peoples, and ceased to exist as a separate people. Latin was called anyone that spoke Latin language or some of its dialects. Today, for instance, Latins are the Romanians, Italians, Spanish, Mexicans, Cubans and in general south Americans (Latin Americans). Their descent though is different. If instead of the Latin, their neighbors the Etruscans were to dominate them, all of these people would have spoken Etruscan. Later, if during the Carthaginians wars the Carthaginians, of Phoenician descent, were to prevail, all Romans, among them the Hellenes, would have spoken and be very proud to do so, Phoenician and even be Phoenicians. Besides, Hellenes and Latins took their writing from the Phoenicians. But, since they ceased to exist and as there's none to claim the origins of this writing we call it Hellenic. Whatever bright from antiquity, they tell us it is theirs.

The Hellenes, though, exist as much as people like the Latins, Phoenicians, Lydians, Frygians, Etruscans, Scythians, Illyrians, Thracians or Medes, Carthaginians, Parthian, Babylonians, etc. exist. In fact, as people do not exist since many centuries ago. The word Hellene, just as the word Latin, has only civilization, cultural content and is used wrongly as noun. They are epithets.

Something similar happened with the term "slav". Country or place Slavia never existed and neither people that called themselves "slavic". There are slavic languages that are being spoken in the Balkans up to Russia and the Baltic. Macedonian that's characterized slavic has very little in common with Croatian or Czech languages. It's related, though, with Serbian and Bulgarian languages that neighbor with it. Croatian and Czech are related with their neighboring German languages. Prussian, that was slavic, disappeared and the Prussians became German-speakers. The today capital city of Germany, Berlin, is slavic. The neighboring Bulgarians, that are Tatars-Mongolians in descent and not slavic, speak slavic.

To Macedonians, who arbitrarily are characterized Slavs, the word "slav" was unknown. Besides, there is a part of slavophones in Macedonia that is obvious they aren't of slavic descent, but they speak Macedonian even today. They are of dark complexion Macedonians who live in areas of Veria, Naoussa, Aridaia, Krya Vrisi, Goumenisa and other. They aren't obviously of slavic descent. Therefore, whoever is slavophone doesn't mean he is a Slav. In our area they use the term "slavam" which means honor. Many Vlach (latinophone) villages have slavic names, like Metsovo. "Metse" in Macedonian is the bear (Metsovo=bear area). It could also possibly derive from "mets" which means sword. There were, in fact, metallurgists that made swords in this area. The village of Riga Velestinlis, who was a Vlach, is called Velestino and it has slavic origin. He, himself, signed as Velestinlis (not Feraios).

Slavs were spread and resided all over the Balkans, from the ancient times. They had as

neighbors the Illyrians and Thracians. With them they didn't only mixed and influenced each other but, from what is obvious, had similar state of mind. They were meek people and respected their neighbor. They wanted to live by their labor and not the exploitation of others. They didn't feel the need to prevail over others, and that's why they had no need of having a strong army and state. But if you don't conquer and grab the riches and wealth of others, you don't create spectacular civilizations neither you get to be glorified. If we examine the glorious spectacular civilizations we'll conclude that they were all based on the brutal exploitation of people-slaves, in conquering and grabbing. The Slavs that settled in Greece, and generally the south Balkans, were settled in open country as farmers and animal breeders.

The Hellenes, during their peak period, acquired wealth through exploitation of slaves, ilotes-serves and exploitation of colonies. Historical sources revealed that in Attica at the time of Pericles, there were more than 400.000 slaves. They were mainly prisoners of war, or bought on slave markets. They were almost quadruple in numbers than the Athenians. There was an additional class of foreign subjects, the so called metics, who were merchants, craftsmen, seamen, etc. All of them learned the Hellenic language and became Hellenes since they "participated in Hellenic education". When the Hellenic states were abolished, the dividing lines between them ceased to exist. With the embodiment of Hellas to the Macedonian and later to the Roman empires, other foreign populations were settled there. All of them, due to their gradual settling, learned the language of the majority and became Hellenes. Besides, it was the language of commerce and aristocracy. Many of the ancient Hellenes immigrated to the East where there was a need for educated people and experienced on wars. Macedonians and Romans conquerors, in order to keep their new acquisitions, had to staff their state mechanisms mainly with foreigners and also to establish guards of foreigners, there. And they paid well for it, for the very same reason they pay well today all those who serve in Afghanistan, in Bosnia, in Iraq. New colonies always have been a paradise for all adventurers. The empty spaces they left were taken over by other populations less adventurous, content with whatever the land and their labor could provide them.

In Greece, especially during Roman rule (Byzantium), many settlements of foreign population took place. The most massive were those of Latins, Slavs and Albanians. The settlement of Albanians was the most recent and their presence is more obvious and undoubted. They are called, of course, Arvanites and their language arvanitiki. They composed almost half of the revolutionaries in 1821. M. Botsaris, O. Androutsos, the Tzavelaioi, Karaiskakis, Miaoulis, Bouboulina and others were all Arvanites. The last two were from the islands of Hydra and Spetses that were inhabited by Arvanites and carried the main burden of the naval struggle. The rest of the Greek islands had minimal participation, in comparison to these two.

The settlement of Slavs is older and, as it seems, more massive. Probably, to this is due the fact that prevailed the naming of Peloponnese to be "Moreas". In slavic *more* means sea (moreva=of the sea). With time the v was gone and was left as morea, which in hellenized form is pronounced Moreas or Morias. Byzantine sources mention the existence of slavic hegemony that lasted for 218 years (585-802 A.D.). Emperor Nikiforos sent general Stavrakakios who subdued them. They often revolted, until Michael the 3rd subdued and Christianized them (perhaps around 850 A.D.). That's when and how their hellenization began. Gradually and slowly their language was gone, but hundreds of slavic toponyms that were left confirm these sources.

In the area of Taygetos Mountain where the Melingi are mentioned and the Ezerites Slavs in Laconia, names as Mani and Tsakonia were left. There is a village Tsakoni in Almopia and another one in Kastoria.

The first city that the revolutionaries liberated in 1821 was Tripolitsa-Tripoli (tro=small, little-pole=valley, tripolitsa=small valley). Somewhere near it is the homeland of ultra-Greek Antonis Samaras, who tumbled the government of Prime Minister Mitsotakis because he was giving in on the matter of Macedonia. His village has the slavic name of Stemnitsa that means darkened or something like that. Samaras is of slavic descent. Another one of the ultra-Greeks is the leader of the nationalist Right wing party L.A.O.S., G. Karatzaferis, who is an Arvanite. The leader of one of the Albanian parties in the republic of Macedonia is named Arben Tzaferi. Arben Tzaferi is a fanatic Albanian; Karatzaferis is a fanatic Greek.

The first Senate of notables in Moreas was held in Kaltetzon monastery, the first convention in

Vervena, the second in Zarakova, that are slavic names. Petrobeys Mayromichalis, the first president of the National Assembly of the Greek revolutionaries, had origin from Tsimova, Lakonia. After the liberation of Greece it was renamed Areopolis. In slavic Tsimova and in the rest of Mani region the Greek revolution started on March 17th or 18th 1821, by the Mavromichalaioi. Tsimova and the surrounding villages were part of the slavic hegemony (584-802 A.D.) that was abolished by the Byzantines that Christianized and Hellenized them. The toponyms of the area were left unchanged, as also the slavic name of mountain Sagia. Thus, the first president of the National Assembly is a descendant of those Slavs. From Tsimova started another revolt, also against the Ottomans in 1770 that was instigated by Orlof.

The birthplace of Papaflessas is Poliani, Messinia, (pole=valley, poliani=plain). He lived a monastic life in Moni (monastery) Rekitsa (reka=river, rekitsa=small river). It has the same root as the Hellenic verb reo (flow). Therefore, according to Tsioukas, "Macedonian is the same as Hellenic". Aigio was called Vostitsa. Opposite to it, in Roumeli, there is Amfissa that was called Salona. The same happened with the slavic name of Lamia, that it was called Zitouni (land of grain), while Spercheios river was called Alamana. Varvitsa in Gortynia, where the name Varvitsiotis derives from, has Slavic origin, thus Varvitsiotis is of slavic descent. During the revolutionary period of 1821 most of the names in the area of continental Greece were slavic and arvanite. To most of them they have changed the name and that's how they Hellenized Greece.

The Legal Provision of Eastern continental Greece of the National Assembly that was held in Salona (Amfissa) the 20-11-1821, indicated: "All residents of Greece, believing in Christ, are Greeks". The same was indicated by the first temporary Constitution of Greece (Epidaurus, 20-12-1821), as well as the one of Astros (29-3-1822) but also in the official one of Troizina (May 1827): "Greeks are all indigenous of the dominion that believe in Christ". In other words, Christians irrelevant of descent, Greeks, Albanians (Arvanites), Italians, Vlachs, Slavs, Thracians, Macedonians, Bulgarians, etc. Albanians Muslims were exempted and they were called Turk-Albanians, in contrast to Christian Albanians (Arvanites) that were called Greeks. Most of the Turk-Albanians were Christianized, so they won't be uprooted from their lands and that is how they became Greeks.

Despite the changes of names that took place during the following years, many Slavic toponyms still exist today, such as Tirnavo (there is one in Bulgaria, too), Smokovo, Arachova, Viviani, Slatina, Vonitsa, Ko(i)nitsa (a land of horses), Metsovo, Zagora, etc. The name Zagora, that's in Pelio and Pindos, derives from the word *zad* that means behind, and *gora*, which means mountain and has common roots with the Hellenic word *oros* (mountain). To Zagoritsani, in Kastoria, they changed the name to Vasileiada. From the same word comes the name (G)Korestia, that is the area above Kastoria. In Hellenic we would call it Oreina. In Pindos, where the slavic language has been lost, there are left some slavic names of places such as the mountain peak Tzoumerka, Sliva, Kourouna, Tsouka, Loupata, Karaoula, Koziakas, Smolikas, etc. The famous Vikos ravine also has slavic origin (*vikam*=yell, *vikot*=voice, echo). Obviously, it was called like that because of the echo of the voice that can be heard in the ravine.

THE FORMATION OF THE MACEDONIAN LANGUAGE AND THE KINGDOME OF SAMUEL

There are some historical factors that explain why in Macedonia there is a higher prevalence of slavic elements in the language.

In Macedonia was created, around 866 AD, the Cyrillic alphabet, after an order of Emperor Michael the 3rd, by Cyril and Methodius of Thessaloniki. The first translation of ecclesiastic books was made in the dialect of the region Soho Langada that most probably was their birthplace.

The reason for creation of Cyrillic alphabet by the emperor of Constantinople was his pursuance to include the Balkan population under the guidance of the Patriarchate, since most of the areas fell under the Pope of Rome and liturgies in the churches were in Latin.

At the same time, also by emperor's order, the school of literature of Ohrid was created and was organized by Cyril's pupils, Saints Clement and Naum. The official language was the Macedonian dialect of that time and contained slavic, hellenic, latin and local elements. It's estimated

that 3.500 students studied in it, a very large number for that period.

In 976 Samuel made of the Byzantine theme of Macedonia an autonomous state, with its seat in Prespa and afterward in Ohrid. It had as official language the local Macedonian dialect and scripture the Cyrillic. He created the Patriarchate of Ohrid which also had as its official language the literary language of the Ohrid School of literature.

In 1018, the emperor Vasilieos the 2nd abolished the Patriarchate of Ohrid, but recognized it as independent archdioceses. It continues to have as official scripture Cyrillic and language the literary Macedonian of that time. We have to notice that the church of that period was the main carrier of education. Thus, a new Macedonian culture developed that co-existed in harmony with Hellenic and Latin, from which it had taken a lot of elements. In the medieval churches of Ohrid, even today, epigraphs in Cyrillic exist, mixed with Hellenic. This archdiocese was maintained until 1767, when it was abolished by the Ottomans conquerors after an insinuation by the Fanariote officer of the Sublime Porte, Ioannis Ypsilantis. Its Bishoprics went under direct rule of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. In the same way also the Bulgarian Patriarchate of Tirnovo was abolished. It fell under the Ecumenical and adopted, gradually, Greek language in the Bulgarian churches.

The emperors created in Macedonia a second byzantine culture of civilization to facilitate the preservation and expansion of their power. They did it, to stop the invasion of the Holy Roman Empire of Charlemagne (800 AD). The later, although a Frank, appeared as the inheritor of the Roman Empire and had set eyes on the Balkans that were an old province of Rome. A little later, the German emperors acclaimed themselves as the inheritors of the "holy Roman empire". The phenomenon that's noticed in today's Greece, that claims the inheritance of the Roman Empire (which they call Byzantium or Romiosini), it doesn't constitute a neo-Greek novelty.

The "Roman" emperors of the West promoted the creation of a common Frank language, which was a mixture of Latin, Celtic and Germanic. For the same reason, something similar was attempted in the East by their "Romans", with Cyril's endeavor. They attempted to create a common byzantine language, mainly for the Balkans, that was a mixture of Slavic, Hellenic, Latin. Later, both empires entered a phase of disintegration. But the already formed Macedonian culture with its epicenter in Ohrid had obtained its own autonomous dynamics.

Holy Roman Empire, as ideological Trojan horse used papal Catholicism of Rome and entered areas that the other "Roman" empire, the Eastern, also claimed. The later, as ideological Trojan horse used the Orthodoxy of the East. It started with the Slavs of Greece, who were subdued by the generals Vryenios and Stavrakios. To make them more obeying, they Christianized them. At the time, especially the generals were massively Christianizing populations and it's rather obvious in which way they did it. According to byzantine confessions, the Christianization of the Slavs in Greece took place between 800 and 850 AD, and their gradual Hellenization followed. Up to that time, Christians existed only in urban centers. This undertaking revealed a great difficulty in the effort of spreading Christianity to non Greek-speaking populations. All of the ecclesiastic books of the Eastern Church were in Greek. The majority of the contested zone (Balkans) residents were slavophones or latinophones. As the teaching of Greek was very difficult, since the schooling system was quite imperfect and there was no TV, the decision was taken to translate the religious texts. Latin, though, rendered the populations vulnerable to the Pope of Rome and western emperors. That's the reason why neither the emperors nor the orthodox clergy wanted it and ought to be replaced by a new scripture and language. That's how Slavic, with addition of Greek and some Latin, was chosen. The latinophone (Vlach) of Byzantium fell into disfavor and gradually lost their privileges. Many were Hellenized and others, in order to survive, moved to agricultural and mountainous areas where slavophone dialects prevailed. Many of them, of course, were slavicized. Here lies the fact that latinophones (Vlachs) had a longtime co-operation with the slavophones. They were underprivileged populations of Byzantium and often revolted together.

Cyril and Methodius were sent to Bohemia (today Czech republic) and this wasn't coincidental at all. These were contested areas between the western and eastern empires. They were sent, in other words, to the "front". Of course, the Pope and the Frank emperor didn't remain apathetic. In the beginning they persecuted them and took them as captives. They had to convince the Pope they had no political aims and, as it seems, they succeeded. Cyril stayed in Rome, where he died in 869, and Methodius was appointed bishop by the Pope. That's where the roots of Uniates position of the

archdiocese of Ohrid lies. Their students and later graduates of the Ohrid Philosophical School spread Christianity and Cyrillic writing to the Bulgarians, Serbs, Russians, etc.

Macedonian culture was used also by the Serbs and Bulgarians hegemonies in order to preserve and expand their power. Macedonia for very long periods was under Serbian and Bulgarian rule. That's how they became its protectors, too. All of these, though, contributed in the spreading of the byzantine Macedonian language to local Macedonian population. They are right, in a way, those that say that Macedonians of today are slavized ancient Macedonians, but not by the reasons and the ways they are saying it. The ancient Macedonians were a mixture of populations, too. Their ruling class might have spoken Greek and might've been of Greek descent, but it is beyond doubt that the largest part of the Macedonian kingdom people consisted of Thracian and Illyrian origin. It's not a coincidence Greeks called them barbarians, namely allophones (speakers of other language).

The contemporary Bulgarian state presents this Byzantine Macedonia's writing and language as its very own. And it presents itself as its sole inheritor. It does exactly as the Greek kingdom did, by proclaiming itself the sole exclusive inheritor of Greek language. They declared it themselves and took exclusive right, the copyright. For Macedonia and Macedonians there was nothing left. And it suits them quite well, both of them, the disappearance of Macedonian culture because it serves them on the political dividing of Macedonia.

The kingdoms of Serbs and Bulgarians weren't monoethnic, as official historiography has presented them. They were multiethnic, like Byzantium was. Their hegemonies were tax-subjects to the Byzantines but for some periods they would be completely autonomous. They often appear as allies but also inheritors of Byzantium. Their kings would marry Byzantine princesses and thus they considered that they had rights on the empire.

Bulgarians settled in areas between Aimos (mountain) and Danube (river) and became allies-locum tenens of the Byzantines. They were rulers of Thracians, Vlachs, Slavs, and other populations and were tax-subjects to the emperors. Slavic consciousness, though, they didn't have. This can be seen by the hostile position they kept against slavic Serbs. Also, characteristic is their stand during the revolt that appeared in Asia Minor provinces under the leadership of Thomas the Slav.

Thomas descended from Slav mercenaries from the slav population that the Byzantines had settled in Asia Minor. They did this often, to break up the unity of local populations, thus to avoid revolts. Thomas the Slav exploited the disappointment of the locals against the inhumane exploitation of the Byzantines and led an extensive popular rebellion. In a period of few months his movement prevailed in all of the Asiatic provinces. He distributed land and money from the byzantine coffers to the farmers, lessened the heavy taxes and gave the governing of the provinces to democratic citizens. For more than two years (820-823 AD) he abolished imperial power on almost all of Asia Minor. Official historians don't give the proper importance of that rebellion because they were always servants and flatterers of oligarchic powers. It is mentioned in the unofficial history of rural rebellions.

Thomas the Slav leading a multiethnic army reached the borders of Constantinople so to conquer it, in 823. Then, the emperor asked the help of the Bulgarian king Omourtag and, thanks to him, he was able to defeat the rebel army of Thomas. The Slav, allegedly, Omourtag did not support the Slav rebel but the emperor Michael 2nd of Phrygian descent. He himself feared a rebellion by the populations he exploited and oppressed. Between kings and feudal lords there was always support for each other.

Bulgarian hegemonies finally succeeded on making an autonomous state in 852. Their subjects, besides Bulgarians, were Thracians, Vlachs, Cumans, Slavs, e.o. The Thracians lived from the Aegean up to the Danube. They were Latinized and Hellenized by the Romans and later Slavized. That kingdom lasted up to 971.

In 1184 a new state was found in the area, that the Byzantines characterized Bulgarian. As founders of the new state, they characterized themselves kings of Vlach and Bulgarians. Most of the historians support the claim that the dynasty of Asan that found it, was of Vlach descent. Vlach hegemony of Peter and John Asan led a revolt and succeeded to rouse the Vlachs, Bulgarians, Thracians, Cumans, and Slavs. The Vlachs were in disfavor because of being latinophone and they often revolted. This must have been, probably, the reason Asan, and in particular John Asan, collaborated with the Latin crusaders. Vlachs called him "Kaloyan" (good John) and the Byzantines "Skyloyan". He had taken the food from their mouths.

Byzantines propagandists had created a bad image for the concept of "bulgarian" that has been kept up to day. Thus, to any mutiny they would stick the characterization "bulgarian". Even the Vlachs were called Bulgarians by them, let alone the slavophones. As it is well known, Bulgarians are not of slavish descent, but of Tatar-Mongolian one. Eventually, this kingdom was abolished by another Tatar horde and the Asan royal family fled to Constantinople. It is known as the Greek family of Asanians who became related to the dynasty of Palaeologans. A descendant of this marriage match was Andronicus Palaeologus-Asan who had the hegemony of Mystras (1316-1321 AD).

Another significant example where Byzantines used to characterize all renegades as Bulgarians was the kingdom of Samuel, with its seat at Prespes and later in Ohrid of Macedonia.

Samuel was son of count Nicholas who was the commander of the thema of Macedonia that at the time reached up to shores of Euxinus Pontus (Black sea), and who was appointed by emperor John Tzimiskes. The byzantine title of Komi (Count) that Nicholas had, it resulted in his sons to be called Komitopouloi (meaning sons of the Komi) by the chronicle writers of the time. In 976 Tzimiskes died and a struggle for succession begun between Vasileios the 2nd (Voulgaroktonos=bulgarians killer) with the rebelling generals Vardas Fokas and Vardas Skleros, that lasted 13 years. Fokas, in fact, was proclaimed emperor of the East, as he was a Cappadocian.

Something similar did Samuel in Macedonia where his father was hegemon. He founded an autonomous state with Prespa as its capital. To this state other hegemonies of the surrounding areas adhered, resulting to include a big part of today's Bulgaria, Serbia and Albania, Epirus and Thessaly. The people of these areas gladly accepted the disengagement from the empire's predatory rule and helped the new state. The armies of the empire were weakened at the time, due to Fokas revolt in the Anatolia and were easily defeated by Samuel. When Vasileios succeeded on beating Fokas (998 AD), Samuel's state was already strong enough and was fighting Vasileios' army as equal. The reserves though and allies of the emperor were stronger. He succeeded to re-conquer the eastern prefectures quite fast. In 1002 he took Vidin and Tirnovo that was the capital of the first Bulgarian state that Tzimiskes subdued in 971 and the seat of the Bulgarian Exarchos (archbishop). Afterwards, he turned west. There he encountered great resistance. After 12 years he succeeded in beating Samuel, north of Serres, at the known battle of Belesitsa (Beles) and in the straits of Kleidi (1014). A short while later Samuel died.

The resistance against the empire continued for another four more years, until 1018. This shows that this state had strong popular bases. Something that enhances this view is the fact that the emperor, in order to bend the people's resistance, satisfied some of the demands of the rebels. He gave amnesty, some form of autonomy and didn't abolish the Ohrid Patriarchate. He recognized it with Crysobull (golden bull) in 1018 as formal autocephalous archdiocese and the Macedonian as its formal language. This, of course, disappointed the Patriarchate of Constantinople but it couldn't do otherwise. There lie the roots of anti-Macedonian wrath of the empire's clergy.

Today's self-proclaimed inheritors of Byzantium claim that this country cannot be characterized "Macedonian" and certainly it wasn't by this concept. The Thema -that's how they were called, formally, the administrative regions of Byzantium- to which Samuel's father Nikolas was governor, was called "Thema of Macedonia". It reached from the Adriatic to Adrianople. From the region of Adrianople is where Vasileios the 1st founder of the dynasty came from and that's why it was called Macedonian dynasty. Few historical documents that exist show the ethnic origin of Vasileios as Armenian. At the same time a separate Thema of Greece existed, with its seat in Thebes.

Those that created and defended the country that Samuel founded were mainly Macedonians of that period, the continuation of which are today's Macedonians. On how much relation they had to the Macedonians of Alexander's time should be a matter that ought to be considered by historians and ethnologists and not by politicians, clergy, and other unrelated to the issue people. Of course, the ancient Macedonians did not disappear. The Romans destroyed their ruling classes, so to impose their own rule. Subsequently, Latins and Slavs and others were settled in Macedonia. From what documents show, there was close co-operation between Latinophones and Slavophones, since the hellenophones were more vulnerable to Roman-orthodox power. But also the persecuted hellenophones preferred co-operation with the Latinophones and Slavophones. Besides, during that

time, most of the people were bilingual. The farmers-animal breeders were mostly Slav-Latinophone and in urban centers there were hellenophone-bilingual. Only when the Balkan region was divided in many countries, bilingualism was abolished. The Roman-orthodox power was in fact hellenophone, but of descent was multiethnic. I must remind that when we say Greeks, Latins, Slavs, we must note that we say it in cultural means and not racial. The new culture that was created in Macedonia, mainly around the school of literature and the Archdiocese of Ohrid, was created in Macedonia. Why then it cannot be called Macedonian?

About Samuel's descent there aren't clear written documents. His name is Hebrew, due to Christianity. His mother's name, Ripsimi, shows she was Armenian. It was common, as it is today for princes and counts to marry princes and counts from other ethnic groups. His daughter was called Miroslava, which has slavic origin. He was probably Slav-Armenian. The epigraphs that were saved are in Cyrillic but also there are some in Greek writing. These reveal a peaceful co-existence of both languages. Besides, Greek was an international language, the stone of his parents grave is written in Cyrillic, in the Macedonian language of the time. In 999, Samuel was crowned czar of Romans and Bulgarians. This shows that he considered himself to be the continuation of both those states. To consolidate his conviction of being the continuation of the Romanic empire, he moved the remains of Saint Achilles from Larissa to Prespes and put them in the basilica church he built on the island of St. Achilles.

Saint Achilles was Bishop of Larissa at the time of Constantine the Great and participated in the 1st Ecumenical Synod of Nice, in 325. Constantine became emperor in 324, found Constantinople and made it his capital of the Roman Empire. He is considered its founder. He made Christianity the official state religion and assembled the 1st Ecumenical Synod in 325, where the Symbol of Faith was introduced. This is considered as the cornerstone of Christian religion. Constantine the Great hails from Nis, (in south Serbia) which then belonged to the Thema of Macedonia and Saint Achilles was one of the leaders in the 1st Ecumenical Synod. Samuel did all these because he wanted to appear as the continuation of the Romanic state. Official historians avoid telling us that he appeared also as the official czar of the Romans. They tell us he was only the czar of the Bulgarians. He would appear as such indeed, but they don't tell the people that the kingdom of Bulgaria wasn't monoethnic, as wasn't Byzantium, either. If he wanted to appear as continuator of the state of Bulgarians, he would've had his seat in Bulgaria and his capital would've been Vidin or Tirnovo in Bulgaria, which had come under his rule. But even if we suppose he was unable to keep them in his rule, he would've made Patriarch of his state the Bulgarian Exarch that continued to hold his seat in Vidin. Samuel, in accordance to the confessions of monk Nikolaos, made Patriarch the byzantine bishop of Voden, Germanos: "Germanos, and Gabriel, at Vodenis and at Prespes". To him must've been dedicated the church by the same name and also the village of Agios Germanos, in Prespes. The garrison commandant of Voden (Edessa) joined Samuel, too. His name was Draxan (Draxanos).

Byzantine chronicler of the time mention of the fortune of Bulgarian Prince Boris the 2nd, who after the abolishment of the Bulgarian state in 971, settled permanently in Constantinople. Soon, as Samuel created the State of Roman-Bulgaria, Boris left Constantinople to Bulgaria, with the aim of contesting his heritage. Historians say that Samuel's men killed him by mistake. He wore, they say, the outfit of a Byzantine prince and thus they mistook him for Byzantine and killed him. It is amazing what they are they capable of say to the people whenever they want to trick them. Consequently, since there wasn't an heir of Boris the 2nd, legitimate continuer of the Bulgarian multiethnic state became Samuel until 1003, when they fell once again under the emperor's rule. The same fortune, of course, had Macedonia too, 15 years later.

Vasileios the 2nd never called himself "Voulgaroktonos" (Bulgarians killer). They called him like that later on, some propagandists and chronicle writers. When, two years ago, the then president K. Stefanopoulos declared in public that it was false to call "Voulgaroktonos" the emperor Vasileios 2nd, nationalists and para-ecclesiastics of Greece rose up in protest. They gave and they preserved the name in an oppositional awe. They praised him for the fact that after his victory in Kleidi (1014) he blinded 10.000 solders, leaving one of them with one eye in every one hundred, so he could lead the others back home. This brutal crime surpasses by far all massive crimes of contemporary Nazis. Samuel died because of the shock, after seeing his soldiers were blinded.

Vasileios the 2nd after his victory in Kleidi (north of Serres) came towards our area, in the spring of 1015. He entered Voden and then besieged the castle of Moglena and conquered it. He exiled the residents of Moglena to Asia Minor and the settlement disappeared completely.

With the exchange of populations in 1924, some of the refugees that were settled in the area of Goumenisa spoke a dialect that was a mixture of macedonian, turkish and greek words. I had the opportunity to talk to some of them that had come to the thermal spa in Pozar for bathing. They understood our language quite well but were unable to explain how this language was found in Asia Minor. They told me that it was spoken in quite a large area. Obviously, they descended from the exiled Macedonians by Vasileios the 2nd. We cannot be sure that actually they were from Moglena, due to the fact that Vasileios had exiled Macedonians also from other areas. The villages of Goumenisa, where some of these refugees that spoke this macedonian-turkish dialect were settled, are, among others: Bl'gatsi (Kampohori), Kousinovo (Polypetro), Nt'bovo (Valtochori), Limbaovo (Pilyria), Gerakatsi (Yearakon), etc. In 1015 Vasileios exiled them as revolutionaries "Bulgarians", in 1924 Greece brought them back as pure Greeks. They settled them in Macedonian villages from where they chased away other "Bulgarians" Macedonians.

Samuel's army was multiethnic. His most stable ally was the hegemony of the Vlachs of western Macedonia, Nikoulitsa, whose seat was in Servia, Kozani, where he was the commandant of the garrison. Nikoulitsa's son continued the resistance against the army of the empire after Samuel's death. He was forced to surrender to the Byzantine emperor in the outskirts of Skopie on August of 1018, and was imprisoned in Thessaloniki.

The chronographer John Skylitzis writes that: "and also of various were soldiers, indeed, of Romans, Armenians and from Pelagonia and Prespa and Ohrid ranked under Samuel...". In fact, ex-Romans and Armenian soldiers had joined his army.

Part of Samuel's army was Bogomiles. Bogomilism, of which I will speak, further on, started to develop in Macedonia at the end of the 10th century. They disputed the by God mercy rule of kings and bishops on earth and men. They proclaimed equality and rights of societies to self rule. Samuel tolerated the Bogomiles and in this way he secured their alliance. Chronicle writers, indeed, mention that the Bogomiles were the most fanatic fighters. That's mainly to what is due the fact that resistance continued in Macedonia, even after Samuel's death. The following decades Bogomilism will take large dimensions and the conflict will continue.

A big revolt took place under the leadership of Samuel's grandson Petar Delian in 1040, with the area of Ostrovo as its epicenter (today's Arnissa), up to Prilep. In 1072 another revolt took place under the leadership of Georgi Voyteh with its epicenter in the area of Skopie. The mercenary army of Alani and Franks, that the Byzantines used, subdued the rebellion and is the one that destroyed the church of saint Achilles in Prespes, as well as other churches and castles of the area.

Roman-orthodox propagandists characterize the state Bulgarian, the very same is said by the Bulgarians, too. It is something that suites them well, both of them. They do the same with the Macedonian language, which they dislike because it had become the language of the democratic and revolutionary movements.

The Serbian king Stephan Dushan married the sister of the czar of Bulgaria, Helen, and was later crowned czar (emperor) of Romans, Serbs, Bulgarian, in Skopie. The subjects of that state, among them the Macedonians, are characterized by the Byzantines as Serbs. The Latinophone Vlachs joined him gladly and they did very well to do so. They went with the one that treated them better. They also created an autonomous hegemony in Thessaly that they named Great Vlachia or Megalovlachia, as allies of the Serbs. Later, under Italian occupation, they created a Vlach hegemony in Pindos.

HOW IDOLATRY WAS IMPOSED AS ORTHODOXY

Christianity is a religion based on Jesus Christ teaching and of his disciples. It is based on Hebrew religious tradition that's imprinted in the books of the Old Testament, the so called Bible. The Hebrew clergy at the time characterized it as heretic and persecuted it. The highlight of this persecution was the crucifixion of Jesus.

The teaching of Jesus and his disciples were mainly intended for Judeans. They had very

small affect to other populations due to their ignorance of the Bible. Since they did not know Hebrew history, they did not know about their fathers and prophets, consequently they weren't waiting for a savior. The original sin and other similar things did not exist in other people's traditions. Thus, they weren't waiting for a savior that could sacrifice himself in order to rid them of their sins. Neither could they accept that the sins of their forefathers would burden also distant descendants. And what the Christians would also say, that Christ brought along peace to the world, wasn't believable either. The wars went on with the same rhythm. Thirty five years later, in fact, after Christ was crucified, Jerusalem was destroyed completely by the Romans. Logically they couldn't accept and understand why God would have a privileged behavior toward the Hebrews and facing them as his chosen people. Namely, why he sent them his Prophets, he enlightened their Patriarchs, protected the people and sent them his Son. This obviously seemed unjust and they couldn't accept that God could be so unjust with other people.

Disciples of Jesus in their journeys visited mainly Hebrew synagogues. Apostle Paul visited Hebrew synagogues of Philippi, Thessaloniki, Veria, Corinth, Athens, etc. In Athens they allowed him to speak from the floor of Pnyka for the simple reason that the Athenians were open to any new philosophical and religious current.

There were, though, favorable circumstances for the new religion. During the 2nd century AD the Bible had been translated into Greek by the "Seventy" sages of Alexandria under the order of the Ptolemaic that at that time ruled Egypt and the wider region. This translation together with the fact that Hellenic Koine was the official language of all the states created by Alexander's heirs and it was also the wider spread language of the time in all of the countries of eastern Mediterranean, helped so the Hebrew religious traditions would spread to other populations. To this is due the fact that the letters of the Apostles and the Christian Gospels were written by Hebrews but in the Hellenic language. This presents also a characteristic example that verifies that hellenophone doesn't mean Hellene of descent. It was favored also by the fact that old religions had already degenerated and the clergy wasn't trusted and believed by the populations with higher education levels. Another factor that had favorable affect was that Palestine at the time was prefecture of a huge state, the Roman Empire, thus the internal moving of populations, ideas, commercial products, etc. was quite easy. Many Jews were spread all over the dominion of the Roman Empire.

Despite all the favorable conditions, up to the time that Constantine the Great became emperor (324 AD) and made Christianity the official religion, Christians made up almost one tenth of the total population of the Roman Empire. Jesus himself didn't write his teachings in some book nor did a historian write about him, thus his teachings and actions were described by others and mainly by his disciples. Except the four official Gospels, more than fifteen others circulated, the so called "Apocrypha" (hidden). Some more letters circulated yet and four or five "Apocalypses", apart from the "Apocalypse" of John. These contained many differences and contradictions. This, of course, puzzled the people. It could not be that God enlightened so differently every Evangelist and every Apostle! If God had enlightened them, he would have done this evenly.

The so called "Fathers" of the church had also their differences among them. Some claimed that Jesus Christ was the son of God and had only one nature, the divine one. They were called monophysites. Some others claimed that Jesus was the most perfect creation of God, but was not God. They were called arianists, from the name of the main supporter of this concept, Arius. The same was claimed by the nestorians who called Virgin Mary, Christotokos (Mother of Christ) and not Theotokos (Mother of God). The problem had its roots on the fact that Jesus did not name himself God, but son of God. All Christians call themselves sons of God. He called God, Father. But all Christians also call him Father. "Our Father...". Besides, the name Christ they gave him added to Jesus, means Anointed One. It derives from the verb chrizo which means proclaim, nominate, appoint officially. We say he was anointed to be successor or despot or king or representative or heir. If you are your father's son, he does not anoint you as his son. Anointed son would be the adopted son who is not a real son, but a nominated one.

The monophysites claimed that Jesus was also God, like his Father. The others would say that if he is a God then we don't have only one God and Christianity is converted to a polytheistic religion. Simply, Zeus as God had more children. Moreover, if he was a God then he shouldn't have suffered tortures and crucifixion. There are, after all, common mortals that due to their strong convictions and faith in something, they self-submit to such a point that they don't feel pain and endure it unruffled. Moreover, it seemed senseless why God would want to crucify his Son, so to forgive his people's sins. Egoism and sadism are elements that characterized men and not God. God can forgive people's sins without the need of someone being sacrificed for this. Sacrifices to Gods

were a tradition of Hebrew religion and of other ancient religions. But there were also some others that didn't bother with these sorts of problems and followed the teachings of Jesus in practice.

The reason that Romans did not persecute the first Christians was because they did not forbid other religions. They allowed, for instance, Judaism and actually protected it from heresies such as Christianity despite it was not a Hellenic-Roman religion. But Christians had some principles that weren't liked by the rulers and emperors, at all. They refused to worship them. Only God deserves worshipping they said and not mortals. The same goes for entreaty. Everything belongs to the creator and not to kings. But kings appeared as the owners of their kingdom. The country was theirs and it was up to them whether you would have farmland or you'd be free to graze animals on pastures. Initially, Christianity namely contained also political controversy and disobedience. Many Christians died due to their refusal to worship the emperor or local hegemonies. However, their dedication until death to what they believed in provoked admiration. Admiration and sympathy were also provoked by their way of life. They were content with little, good hearted, in solidarity with the suffering people and peaceful subjects. This created an image of superiority against the old worn out religions and helped its slow but steady spreading.

The empire's authority noticed the fact that Christians were peaceful subjects and that it was something they wanted from their subjects. The other characteristic of theirs, that they fought and sacrificed their life for their beliefs if they could adapt it to the Romans needs, it would have been the very best for their own sake. This was understood better than all the others, by the later emperor Constantine the Great. During the struggle to prevail over the contestants of the throne, in order to attract the Christians he spread among them that he himself was also a Christian. But not just that; he spread rumors that before the battle of Milvian (312) against the other contestant, Maxentius, he envisioned a luminous cross with the epigraphy "in touto nika" (with this, you shall win). This was spread among the Christians. Thus, they fought with their full passion simultaneously for Christ and Constantine, who was the chosen one by Christ.

The trick succeeded. Later on, Constantine sent his mother Helen, who found the "holy cross" on which, of course, Christ was crucified. In order for her to find it, it means it was lost. For three hundred years the Christians of Palestine were indifferent and ignorant of its existence. The following centuries, countless quantities of "holy cross" wood will be distributed to the faithful. Mother Helen also found the place of the "burning bush" in Sinai where God had appeared to Moses, appointed him leader and gave him the Ten Commandments. On that site, with the tax-money of the enslaved Egyptians, she built a grandiose church.

In this way the problem of worship was surpassed. The Christians from now on worshiped the emperor not as a mere mortal, but as the chosen one by God. Worshiping was extended to the royal family and anyone that would be given the title of prince. Later, in order for bishops not to feel inferior to princes, it was established also for them and even to lower levels. Solved also was the problem of contesting the right of the king to appear as the owner of the country, since he was the representative of God on earth.

Constantine the Great established Christianity as the official religion of the empire. The bishops in order to return his services to them, a bit later proclaimed him "Great" and "Saint". The fact that, in order to seize power he killed thousands of men didn't count. To keep the power, he ordered the murder of his son Crispus who was conspiring, with supporters of the old religion, to take over the throne. For the "Fathers" this didn't count, either. Since he did our job, he's done well, the "Saint" man.

Constantine used Christianity with technique; one Almighty ruler in the skies, one Emperor on earth, one people, one religion. Unity among them. Christian religion, though, with the different views and heresies wasn't united and this presented problems for the empire. Thus Constantine assembled the first Ecumenical Synod. It was the one to decide which will be the right dogma and to imprint the first articles of the Symbol of Faith. It condemned Arianism, excommunicated Arius and punished him to exile as well as all his followers. Afterwards, Christianity and Roman Empire were allied and had a common course. Bishops became the protectors of secular power, they got enchanted by its riches and enjoyed them ever since. Ecumenical synods were convoked by each emperor. A sole concept was established and all others were condemned and characterized as heretical. Heretics were aphorized and exiled. Their churches were given to bishops of the empire. The followers of "heresies" had no place in the administration and their books were prohibited. The same goes for all of the old Hellenic-Roman religions. They are characterized as idolatry and are persecuted. Their books destroyed as well as are their temples. The Parthenon was saved from Christian maniacs because some provident Athenians forestall and converted it from a temple of Athena to a church of Virgin Mary. Thus, the Athenians that for so many centuries prayed there to

goddess Athena for her help, now they did the same with Virgin Mary.

Except the heresies, another bigger obstacle yet was the questioning created to the thinking man by some of the views of Christianity. Christianity adopted eastern mysticism and dogmatist philosophy. Besides, its creators were all easterners. The great Fathers, the Three Hierarchs, Basil the Great, John Chrysostom, Gregory the Theologian, John of Damascus and others, were by descent from Syria, Cilicia and Cappadocia. The same goes with the Apostle Paul who was the founder of Christian religion. Their eastern philosophies couldn't be established wherever Hellenic philosophy prevailed. Rationalism, research, doubts and freedom of mind that characterized it was a serious obstacle. That's why they identified it with Hellenic religious traditions, characterized it idolatry and anti-Christian and persecuted it. The writings of ancient Hellenes disappeared and their place was taken by Christian writings. Fortunately, they were translated by the Persians and Arabs and were included in their education. From the Arabs the western Europeans took them and translated them in their languages. In Greece they returned centuries later, via the western Europeans. They even abolished the Olympic Games. Justinian closed the School of Philosophy of Athens in 529. And as he abolished Hellenic wisdom, he built the Saint Sophia (Sophia=wisdom) church. Thus, in the eyes of his subjects the eastern dogmatic wisdom of the bishops appeared as Holy "Wisdom", God given! This constituted the most extreme phase of God-exploitation and autarchy. Churches for Holy Love, Holy Solidarity, Justice, Equality, Freedom, etc. wouldn't do for them because they weren't much given to by their God.

The researching and free Hellenic mind they replaced it with "believe and do not search". Critical thought was replaced by dogmatism. Sculpting and architecture were exhausted on the building of imposing palaces, churches and monasteries. Painting was confined on replicas of religious figures. Music and songs were confined to religious hymns. Theater and satire were abolished. It was replaced by the theater played by the bishops themselves. The hypocritical art of the ancients became a tool and privilege of the bishops. Applied science was underrated because they developed critical thought and intended to improve life on earth, while bishops were pushing their faithful for a heavenly life. In all sectors of life they imposed their dogmatic concepts. That's the main reason the Hellenic world entered a phase of decadence. It couldn't participate, centuries later, neither in the Renaissance nor the Enlightenment movements. Whatever little was taken it was via the Arabs and Europeans, despite the reaction of bishops. Eastern Christianity, thus, abolished real Hellenism. By "grace of God" autarchy of the bishops became the gravestone of the free Hellenic mind. It kept only the name, in order to patronize and exploit it. Hellenic-Christianity has no relevance whatsoever with Hellenic civilization, at all.

Shortly after Constantine the Great, his nephew Julian became emperor (361 AD). He had studied at the Philosophical School of Athens and he was a devotee of the Hellenic spirit. He brought back Hellenic as official religion but tolerated all the others, too. He punished all those who destroyed the temples of the old gods. Among those who were punished with death was someone by the name of Makedonio that together with Tatiano and Theodoulo, destroyed the statues of the temple of the "ethnics" in Miropolis of Phrygia. Later were proclaimed saints for their actions. Julian was characterized Apostate and by this name is known throughout history.

In 380 AD Theodosius became emperor and brought Christianity back. That's the reason he, like Constantine, is characterized Great and Saint, in contrast of the one in between, Julian the Apostate. They are, in fact, those who characterize someone and name him. They are the same ones that some centuries later will baptize as "bulgarians" Samuel and the Vlach Kaloyiannis (Slyloyiannis), while Vasileios the 2nd as "bulgarians killer". They did the same with the Macedonian revolution of Ilinden in 1903, which they presented as Bulgarian. They developed the technique of delusion and slander as their weapon against every opponent. That's the reason those with greed of power avoid to oppose against bishops.

During the centuries that followed, Christianity will go through a complete metamorphosis. Although it started as religion of the poor and persecuted, it became the religion of the wealthy, the exploiters and the persecutors. It started as anti-idolatry and condemned the old religions for worshipping soulless replicas (idols) of Gods that at the time were in the form of sculptures. At the end it became idolatry itself. It brought back idolatry in a different form. The place of the sculptures was taken over by the icons.

The "Fathers", in spite of their efforts, discovered that simple and uneducated people kept honoring the Hellenic-Roman Gods. They had difficulty to understand the abstract concepts and felt respect and awe for the symbols and sculptures of ancient gods. They discovered that the same awe and respect was felt by the Christians for the painted pictures of "fathers" and "saints" of the church. Holy symbols and replicas always imposed some kind of influence, mainly to the uneducated

populations. That's what gave them the idea of using icons. They easily found pretenses so not to be characterized as idolatry. The idols of the ancient were sculptures, while theirs were painted. So, they started putting more icons in churches. An icon of a saint meant to the faithful all that he had in mind about the other life, God, the secret guardian any desperate always seeks. It represents the mediator. John of Damascus said that icons are the books of the illiterate. And they are, indeed, for the very same reason that children's illustrated fairytales are more easily understood by them. All those they said to the faithful about the kingdom of God, the angels praising and worship him, the saints and faithful next to him, as an icon were much easier accepted and imposed. The fearless of God painted even archangels that are keeping the order in the kingdom of God. Who was actually the one that went there and saw it? Later on, they painted God himself. People worshiped these icons and made their prayers to them. Gradually, the worshiping of sculpture- idols became the worshiping of icons-idols. This helped also the worshiping of persons, something bishops and emperors were seeking. On the icons, the saints, that are mediators with God, are presented in dresses similar to the bishops, thus the impression created to the faithful is that contemporary bishops are the "saint" mediators of God. During the years of primal Christianity, bishops wore the simplest secular clothes, as Christ did. Gradually they began to dress in clothes similar to the emperors. Uniforms always inspired respect and awe; The emperors' in particular. In addition, in order to impress the faithful and certainly not God, they squandered huge amounts of money for the impressive decoration of churches and monasteries at the same time that people were suffering.

As it's obvious, the thinking Christians were seeing that the clergy had veered away completely from the basic principles of Christianity. Reaction started to swell rapidly and divided Christianity into two fronts. Those that protested against iconolatry as idolatry, and were called iconomachoi (icon-fighters) and the others that adored icons and were called iconolatries. In 727 AD the iconomachoi prevailed in Constantinople and the emperor himself said icons were idols and must be taken off churches. The appearance of Mohammedanism must've also contributed to this, since it contained elements of Christianity and Judaism but considered iconolatry as idolatry. Even the replica of Mohammed was considered a great sin. Priests had now to speak to an audience that was not dazzled by unworldly icons in the churches. If you don't worship icons, you worship less also the persons. In addition, if there are no icons you don't light candles and chandeliers and don't leave money. Thus, the clergy sided with the iconolaters again. This dispute lasted for almost 120 years and often reached a state of violent confrontations. Finally, the emperor Michael and his wife Theodora saw that this hard dispute will ruin their "business" and in 843 AD decided to intervene. They imposed icons and wouldn't allow discourses on the matter anymore. That's it, end of it. The re-installing of icons is celebrated on the first Sunday of Lent that was named "Sunday of the Orthodoxy". Reinstatement of icon-idols, namely idolatry, they named it Orthodoxy. "Believe and do not research".

The emperor also decided the bishops of different areas to be designated and to fall within the Patriarchate of Constantinople, since he was the one that appointed the Patriarch. He granted bishops secular power, profits and privileges and built spectacular churches and monasteries. The dogma became clearly autocratic (imperial). That's where the roots of the fact lie on that even today the imperial flag of Byzantium, with its two headed eagle, flies in all the churches.

It is a mistake, though, to say that Christianity was spread. The truth is that it was imposed by force by the Roman rule and the fanatic Christians. And, indeed, this particular dogma was imposed, as it served well the Roman authority, and was abusively named Orthodoxy. Actually, it is a heresy of the Christian faith. The most accurate name for this dogma was first given by the Christians of Egypt. They named it "Imperial".

Bishops paid back the emperors for their support. In the churches they put icons of the emperors with halos (aureole) of saint and in holy rituals they praise the glory of the kings and pray on their behalf. The holy rituals were made in a way so to support the power of the emperors. The troparion (short hymn in honor) to which they changed only the word "king's rule", that's chanted even today is quite characteristic. The prayer is "save, our Lord, your people and bless your heritage. Victory granting to the king's rule, against the barbarians, the one that with your cross guards your regime". This last part is the most significant and hasn't changed even today. The regime was oligarchy (royal) and slavery. Slavery, of course, wasn't denounced by the bishops as they owed like good Christians, but they legitimized it. The slaves of God more easily accept being slaves of his representatives on earth. Their "by God" regime was the oligarchic one to which they are the main supporters even today. In order for this to be put in the heads of the faithful, these types of chants are repeated many times, again and again: the people, the king and the "guardian" via the cross of "God's regime". For democracy they never utter a word. Equality, abolishment of slavery,

exploitation of the weak, social justice and human rights, they never speak of. Popular revolts, they always condemned; even the ones against the Sultan, later on. The revolting people they call it mob. This is where it comes from the fact that, almost always, the disappointment and the hate against the emperor and oligarchy turned against bishops as well.

THE BOGOMILE MOVEMENT

This autarchic power of emperors, naturally, created resistances. The most significant religious-political movement in the Balkans was created during the end of the 10th century. We have to keep in mind that the thema of Macedonia at the time included a big part of Thrace, Serbia and Bulgaria. It was the movement of the Bogomiles. In byzantine chronicles is mentioned as the "heresis" of the Bogomiles. Boga in Macedonian means God, mili means beloved, Bogomiles therefore are God's beloved or God's friendly. The prefecture of Moglena (Almopia), in fact, is mentioned as one of the most significant centers of Bogomilism.

Bogomiles maintained that all men are equal before God and no authority of men over other men derives from God. The earth belongs to all and not to hegemonies and feudal lords. Thus, they disputed the God given power of kings and bishops. They condemned the bishops of the empire as idolaters and embezzlers of theophobia (fear of God), and that they used religion so they could exercise secular power and benefit from it themselves.

They, themselves, started to live and behave as Christians of early Christianity and established similar commune institutions. The worship of icons they characterized idolatry. They also rejected rituals, priesthood, baptism, holy Eucharist. They maintained that all these corresponded to human egotistical weakness and that is not allowed to ascribe God with human weaknesses. Besides, God shows beyond doubt that he doesn't take these into account, not in the least. They were saying that God has no mediators on earth and that the bishops act arbitrary by presenting themselves as his representatives. God, moreover, shows in many ways that he does not see them as his representatives and does not listen to them more than any other simple men. They accused the bishops of having slipped away completely from true Christianity.

Instead of all of these, they held meetings at night where they would have discussions and discourses on theological and philosophical matters. They read the Gospels but made their own didactic myths and parables. Most of their stories were in relevance of the conflict between good (Christ) and evil (Devil). They rejected Old Testament. They defended equality of women and the right of love, something very pioneering for the time and condemned by the Empire's Church. Very characteristic is the poem of the liturgy of the Kathari, who are the corresponding branch of the Bogomiles in Provence: "Men, let us love our women and our bodies, love our souls in such a way that women will become equal to men-and bodies become souls-so their gender won't mean difference". Today's customs of gynaeocracy (female dominance) in Macedonia and Thrace are residues of the Bogomiles.

They urged the people not to obey the lords and maintained that kings and land owners arbitrarily kept the land, which belongs to everyone. They said that wealth, cosmic and ecclesiastic powers are the work of the devil. They mocked the rich with their expensive dresses as well as the needless and fancy rituals of the church. They themselves had created commune societies according to the prototype of early Christianity. In these communes everyone offered accordingly to his potentials so that the needs of the weaker people would be covered. They built homes for their families in common, as they did stables, warehouses, roads, aqueducts, etc. They created, in other words, a society of solidarity.

A residue of that custom was the Zadruga that existed in Macedonia until the midst of the last century. Za in Macedonian means for, and druga means the others. In one word we would call it solidarity. It was the wide family of relatives whose leader was Dedo (grandfather). Up until the 60's, for the building of a new house in our village relatives and neighbors would be gathered and would build it. They often collected contributions from the village for the poorest families.

Bogomiles often organized events with shared meals for all where they sang, danced around the fires, they set up satiric performances or they would all dress in disguise (Tzamalaria or carnival),

they would exercise on walking on burning coal and other traditional manifestations of Dionysius and Bacchus character. The Imperial Patriarchate prohibited such festivals and considered them idolatry (Hellenic) and satanic. Bogomiles maintained that any secular expression that contribute in lifting and relaxing the psyche (soul), without harming the others, comes from God because he made men to be so.

Satire was a characteristic element of the Bogomiles. They satirized themselves, the neighbors but also political and religious authority. In the popular celebrations they organized, they used to disguise themselves with garish uniforms like kings and princess, officers and bishops and they would mimic their rituals in a mocking manner. Princess and bishop, of course, wouldn't leave them in peace and persecuted them fiercely. As satire, like all the Bogomile celebrations, contained elements of ancient Hellenic culture, they said that Bogomiles celebrate "the Hellenic way". The "Hellenic", of course, they said it in a degrading manner and meant an idolatry way. Satire and comedy were rejected by the bishops because they referred to the Hellenic spirit. Thus, the bishops, in order to degrade the Dedos of the Bogomiles, would call them koutogeroi (stupid old men). They, the "saints", were the ones that gave characterizations such as Heretic, Skylosopher (dog-philosopher), Skyloyiannis (dog-John), Bulgar, Transgressor, Antichrist, etc. They gave to themselves characterizations such as Great, Majesty, Eminence, Beatitude, Holiness, Saint, etc. Bogomiles, as anti-oligarchic, made fun of them during their celebrations. After the persecutions they suffered, slowly they reduced their taunting in the verses. Remains of these celebrations are the Tzamalaria (carnival), the (D)Ragutsaria, Kolida and Sourova, the Korbani, the lighting of fires during celebrations, the walking on burning coal etc.

Wood for fires, food, wine, tables and money for the common meals were collected from all houses of the communities. They urged the most wealthy to contribute more, telling them that it's a pious act, in contrast to the bishops for whom pious act was the donation to churches and monasteries that had ended up to be mere sub-stores of the clergy.

The common treasury from which these common meals were offered is the known korbani. Even today the common treasury is called "korbani" (korvanas in greek). It's what we call the state korvanas. Of course, in that korbani they contributed according to their means and took according to their needs and hunger. For today's state korvanas all are obliged to contribute to it, but the lion's portion is taken by the wealthy and their public servants. For the bishops' korvanas everybody contributes and they give back a small portion of it to justify their role, by the standards of the Pharisees. Remain of that institution is the custom of Korbani in many Macedonian villages. Distribution of meat or food is done on the name day of Saint Athanasius.

Common meals that included meat were called "Kolida". Kolam in Macedonian means I butcher. Kolidaski were the butchered animal meat (sausages, bacon, etc). Fasting meals were called "Sourova". Sourovaski were the frugal, dry, dieting foods (beans, chestnuts, walnuts, dried figs, etc). In some areas were called "dragoutski". Dragu in Macedonian means good. Dragoutski were, namely, the goodies, as the Thracians would call them. Those that went around the houses to collect these goods, were called Drvanari (drvo=wood). Sourovani, Kolidari, Dragotsari. In other areas, of course, their names varied in accordance to the local dialect. When the Romaic-orthodox power repressed the movement of the Bogomiles and as it was difficult to abolish these secular customs, the bishops adopted them to their needs. Collection for the help to the misfortunate went under their control, so they could appear as performers of pious acts. They don't contribute themselves, but they take. For "Kolida Babo" that were common meals with butchered meat, they would say that it means "they are butchering, grandma" and that this would be a reminder of the 14.000 children that Herod butchered. Naturally, the children weren't going on Christmas to Babo to tell her of butchering but of something joyful. And the butchering of thousands of children, of course, is a myth. It was spread by the "holy fathers" for the same reason that the Old Testament states that Egyptian Pharaoh slaughtered thousands of children, seeking in this way to butcher Moses, who according to prophecies would have taken his royal throne.

The leading of the Bogomiles would be called Teachers or Perfect or Deditsi (grandfathers). These weren't some kind of axioms or titles but simple characterizations, since they didn't recognize titles or axioms. They weren't appointed like the clergy but rose through the natural process of life.

Sequent, there were the faithful and, finally, the tutored and the followers. AS they represented a threat to the Romaic-orthodox establishment, they were persecuted very ferociously. Many lost their lands, herds or jobs and lived by contributions from the others. That's how they became wanderers and traveled in other areas where they spread Bogomilism. Because they carried on their shoulders a bag (tourvas), they were named "Tourbesides" or "Foundaites". In other areas they were called by the local names. They were called also "Patarinous", namely wayfarers. Road in Macedonian is called pat. From pat derives the word pateritsa (crosier) and not from pater (father) as the Fathers of the Church tell us. It was the cane that aided the walkers-Patarinous in their walking trips. The Patriarchate followers called them mockingly "Koutogerous" (stupid old men) to make them appear stupid, or "publikanous" or "Voulgarous". There it is again the bulgar of the Imperials. Bulgars they called the construction workers and other workers of inferior jobs. Like, for instance, we used to call "gypsies" the iron workers or "vlachs" the shepherds, irrelevant of descent. The degrading tint of the word vlach was introduced also by the Imperials so the Latin language would be avoided, since it made latin speakers more vulnerable to Catholic Church. Of course, latinophones as the slavophones that weren't hellenized, found themselves in disfavor and were mostly laborers, craftsmen, crofters and animal breeders and that's why they became followers of Bogomilism. In Byzantine sources the Bogomiles are mentioned also by the names Koutogeroi, Fondaïtes, Tourbesides, Dragouvites. They called themselves Christopolites (citizens of Christ).

Bogomilism spread in many areas of the Balkans, in northern Italy and France. In each area, obviously, they were influenced by local customs, morals and traditions and took local character and name. In the West were called Katharoi, Bougres, Publicani, Albigenians, Bulgari, and other names. In Asia Minor they had the name Pavlikani. It's probably the Greek pronunciation of Publicani. Publicus in latin means common, public.

The movement was mainly joined by farmers, serfs, laborers, craftsmen, unemployed and the lowest clergy. In a religious way they expressed their disappointment to the aristocracy, the big landowners and the high clergy. When the movement of the Bogomiles took bigger dimensions, the persecutions against them begun and violent conflicts took place with the Imperial forces. In Asia Minor they confronted the forces of Leon the Armenian, ferociously. Later, they collaborated with the Saracens, against him. In France they held an assembly in 1167 and had the Pope excommunicated. The Pope not only excommunicated them but chased them with his army. He butchered them, spread them all over and burned their books.

The Imperial Patriarchate of Constantinople condemned the Bogomiles as heretics, while the emperors unleashed vigorous chases against them. The most vigorous persecutions were unleashed by Alexios Komninos. Bogomilism had infiltrated Constantinople and presented a most serious threat for the oligarchic establishment. He arrested the leaders and slaughtered them. He burned alive their chief, teacher and doctor of medicine Vasileios, in the hippodrome in 1111 AD. Anna Komnini was so much impressed by his bravery for which she wrote: "Not even the fire melted his iron soul".

I feel obliged to say that most of the information on Bogomiles was taken from the essay of a friend and collaborator that left us early, Tasos Tilios. I thought of dedicating this book to him but I have so many comrades and victims to whom I owe to dedicate it. Early left us also Heracles Papanikolaou, one of the six first comrades of MA.KI.B.E., and Kostas Gotsis, our first collaborator from Florina. My debt to all of them led me to write this book. About Bogomiles of Moglena I gathered the data from various sources. I was helped, of course, by the knowledge of the Macedonian language and customs and traditions of our area.

The persecutions suffered by the patriarchate clergy were the main cause that led Bogomiles to join Mohammedanism, after the prevalence of the Ottomans. Besides, Mohammedanism was closer to Bogomilism. It was not idolatry and a personality cult like the imperial-orthodoxy was. It didn't have icons, rosaries, crosses, saints and was against aristocracy and axioms. It was forbidden the replica of Mohamed. Icons created idolatry and personal cult and, in turn, they become elements of exploitation.

The orthodox believers chant in church the "to one Lord, to one Saint [...] our God". But, if there is only one Saint how come they have hundreds of saints, while they call each other 'saint'? Christ himself was called Teacher. In the Gospel is mentioned literally the case where he corrects the

rich man that asked him what to do to gain the eternal kingdom. The rich man called him "Teacher agathe (supreme, good)..." Christ corrected him: "why are you calling me supreme? No one is supreme, but only God". This shows that Christ not only didn't consider himself as God but, out of humility, doesn't want to be called Supreme. Bishops speak of humbleness but their self-complacency is striking. Not only Supreme but also Saint and Reverend and Holiness call themselves. Christ dressed simply and plain, like the laborers and farmers but they dress in remarkable imperial uniforms, have luxury homes, expensive limousines with personal drivers, house helpers, cooks, vacation homes, etc. The priests, except the salary of public servants, they also have their tips. During these days (Theofania - Epiphany), the village priest wandered from one house to another and with every sprinkle with holy water he was given one, two or five euros. I found out that even the money the faithful leave on the Epitaph go to the pockets of the priest. For every ritual, he takes an extra 65 euros. Of these, he keeps 20 for himself and the rest goes to the church and the bishop. I was told of an example where he performed one common in memoriam mass for four deceased and when he was asked why he doesn't take only 65 euros but four times the amount, he answered "that's the rule". Of course, even the money that go to the church, they are the ones that spend it for them wherever they ought to pay from their own pocket. The priest of my village lives in an apartment owned by the church, without paying any rent. Even electricity bill is paid by the church coffers. Is it possible that God would better accept prayers and wishes by these professionals more than from disinterested and spontaneous simple men? They named arbitrary their dogma as orthodox, which automatically means that all other dogmas are unorthodox.

BOGOMILES AND MACEDONIAN MUSLIMS OF MOGLENA (ALMOPIA)

Moglena, according to byzantine sources, participated actively in the state of Samuel and the Bogomile movement. The first Patriarch of Samuel's state was the archbishop of Vodena Germanos, while the commandant of the castle of Vodena, Draxan (Draxanos in greek), also participated. The emperor seized Vodena in the spring of 1015 and the castle of Moglena in the summer. He destroyed the large village of Meglen and exiled its people to Asia Minor. The reason for him to do this means that the people resisted, despite Samuel's death one year earlier.

The fact that the people of the area had joined Bogomilism massively is verified, besides of written sources, by local customs and manners that their roots derive from it. There are also many graveyards of Bogomiles in the wider area and a village a bit south of Vodena that had the name Koutougeroi. Koutougeroi was the name by which the bishops called, scornfully, the Teachers or Deditsi-Grandfathers of the Bogomiles. That was the name it had up until 1926, when it was renamed to Kesariana. In the neighboring prefecture of Morihovo there was until recently a village with the name Bogomila.

Another factor that shows the massive joining is the identity of the people during the exchange of populations in 1924. The elders were telling us that "the Turks of our area spoke local Macedonian". The names of the villages were Macedonian and not Turkish. They were the villages of Sambotsko (Aridaia), Bizovo (Megaplatanos), Poliani (Polikarpi), Drougoumantsi (Apsalos), Roudino (Aloro), Tsakoni (Tsakoi), Kostourni (Xifiani), Voltsista (Hydraia), Slatino (Chrysi), Kapiniani (Exaplatanos), Karlandovo (Melia), Gostoliub (Kostantia), Rouziani (Rizochori), Straista (Ida), Novoseltsi (Neochori), Prodrom (Prodromos), Kozousani (Filotia), Traestenik (Theriopetra), Fustani, Leskovo (Tria Elata), Sbortsko (Pefkoto), Severni (Voreino), Ranislavtsi (Agathi), Prebanista (Sosandra), Stroupino (Likostomo), Gabrista (Dorothea), Nevor (neochori), Tousim and Orliak (Aetochori), Izvor (Anavra). Turks were the residents of Tsako mahala, Bitzo mahala, Tourmanli, Kara Dere (Mavrolako), some in Aridaia and possibly in Fustani. To these we must add vlachochori Naete or Noti (Notia) that had about 3.500 Vlachs Muslims, Lougountsi (Langadia) and Berislavtsi (Perikleia) which were inhabited by Christian Vlachs. For them, there are information that say they settled there perhaps in the 13th century AD, coming from Aimos (today Bulgaria) and connect them to czar Kaloyan. The chronology coincides with the seizure of the Vlach-Bulgarian state by the Tatars. The dynasty of Asan whose most significant czar was Kaloyan Asan, as we mentioned before, were Vlachs in descent. They were persecuted by the Byzantines from the east and by Tatars from the north, thus they came to our area. After 1913, they were chased away by those from the south. The

Muslim Vlachs of Notia were expelled to Turkey as Turks.

In 1913 the language and religion synthesis of the population of the prefecture of Moglena was like this: thirteen villages were entirely Christian slavophones (7.910), sixteen were mixed of slavophones, Muslims and Christians (17.821), seven were entirely slavophone Muslims (5.725), seven were inhabited by Turks Muslims (yourouts) (2.436), three by Vlach Christians (1.760) and in Notia (3.500) by Vlach Muslims.

So, what did happen?

Many of the Bogomiles after the predominance of the Ottomans in the Balkans, due to the hated tyranny of the emperor and the bishops and because of the advantages they were given, they chose to join Mohammedanism.

Mohammedanism was tolerant of all religions, customs, manners, and closest to Bogomilism than Imperial Orthodoxy. It allowed them to honor Christ not as God, but as a Prophet. The last prophet is Mohammed. Thus, Bogomiles began to honor, besides Christ, also Mohammed. Moreover, the true God shows in an undoubted way that he doesn't discriminate, not in the least, between Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, etc. Furthermore, the behavior of the Ottoman Muslims in regards to Bogomiles was better than the Romaic-orthodoxy. Therefore, many of the Bogomiles of Moglena joined Mohammedanism. But many of the customs and manners of the Macedonian Muslims continued to be common, as before. Differences in religious concepts do not divide people. They are divided by those that use religions in order to satisfy their aim for power. The Ottoman rule didn't rename the villages of the area, nor prohibited the Macedonian language. Thus, the Macedonians that were Muslims kept their language and names of their villages. What the Ottomans did not do in five hundred years, the "Christian brothers" did in less than one hundred years that they are in our land; Christian barbarity.

The most massive example of Bogomiles that joined Mohammedanism is the Bosnians. They are of Serbian descent Bogomiles who had succeed during 13-14 centuries to create an autonomous hegemony and who were under continuous attacks by the Serb feudal lords and the Serbian Patriarchate. These continuous persecutions forced the Bosnians of Serb descent to choose Mohammedanism instead of the Orthodoxy of their homogenous. That's where the roots of hate lie on of today Bosnians toward the Serbians. They preferred to collaborate with the Croats against the Serbs. The same happened with a big portion of Albanians and Greek-speaking Romei.

During the exchange of populations in 1923, from the prefecture of Moglena were expatriated about 18.000 slavophone Macedonians and 3.500 latinophone Vlachs Muslims as Turks and only 2.436 real Turks. Most of Vlachs of Notia, Perikleia, Langadia, during the First World War were forced to abandon their villages and move to Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. After the end of the war most of them returned, while some stayed in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia (Gevgeli). In 1924 the Muslims Vlachs of Notia were expelled as Turks. Eight families from Perikleia, 50 from Langadia, and 85 from Archangelos were expelled to Romania as Romanians.

In the same category, most probably, belong the Pomaks of Western Thrace. The fact that their language is relative to the Macedonian and that they live in mountainous areas shows that they belong to the underprivileged of the Byzantium who joined Bogomilism and afterwards Mohammedanism. They weren't uprooted because the Treaty about exchange of population did not include Thrace.

THE REAPPEARANCE OF ANTI-BOGOMILISM IN ALMOPIA

Anti-Bogomilism reappeared in our prefecture in the 90's without the reappearance of Bogomilism. In the beginning of the 12th century, when Bogomilism was in great flourishing in our area, someone by the name of Illarion was placed as bishop of Moglena by the archdiocese of Ohrid. He was placed with the aim to suppress the Bogomiles movement and bring "black sheep" back to the Patriarchate's corral. He had been forgotten completely and nobody, up to 1990, knew even his name in our area. With the Macedonian issue resurgence and the appearance of MA.KI.B.E. and "Rainbow" party, he was pulled out of history's closet by the bishop of this region. At first, they built a small church in his honor near the village of Bahovo and a monastery dedicated to him followed. They did, in fact, a special Attendance that was approved in 1996 by the Holy Synod of the Church of

Greece. The Attendance, together with his biography, circulated in 1998 in a book that was distributed free of charge in the region.

What really provokes a real surprise is that the Attendance, in its larger part, mentions the Bogomiles. It begins like this: "Illuminated by Christ's doctrines, Illarion in Moglena defending against the filthy named mob of the Bogomiles, as best Sheppard towards true commands [...] holy paddock admirable, brought back to the Lord the scattering heresy". Some of the phrases contained in it are: "Dreadful bad fame" [...] "the darkness lighting, on the plight of Bogomiles" [...] "the hate carrying beasts of Bogomiles he straightened" [...] source of the unlawful Bogomiles and dizzied apostates brought back in, of the Lord's paddock [...] drowning the Bogomile mob [...] hail the one that defeated the Bogomiles".

The divine service and biography was written by today's bishop of Pella and Moglena, Iloil. He writes "it's a demonic status the heresy, [...] and heretics are wild beasts"...

The prologue was written by the then bishop Chrisostomos where he writes: "The heretics have the meaning of Satan [...] heresy is worse even than a brothel. All sins don't divide man from God, but heresy keeps him away". This encloses all their philosophy. All sins, like theft, lies, slander, murder, brothels are forgiven by God. It is not forgiven to leave their dogmatic stable. Besides, this is what they mean as God's path: the path that leads to their corral. Otherwise you are black sheep. They attach to Bogomiles those characterizations that exactly match them. They have swallowed Satan's bait totally, which is the fascination of secular power and commit the heaviest sin: cultivate theophobia (fear of God) and exploit it to exercise spiritual and political power but also to secure economic benefits. This way they become rich against the poor to whom they reciprocate their hypocritical assistance. They promise them the kingdom of heaven, so they won't contest their own kingdom on earth. All those who dispute the correctness of their philosophy are characterized by them as heretics and unleash against them extreme forms of black propaganda. They made slandering a part of their rhetoric art. Besides, that's their job. They don't do any other kind of work that would allow them, as Christians, to help their needy fellowmen.

Bishop Iloil writes also about the origin of Saint Illarion:

"Because many foreigners called saint Illarion a "Slav", separating him needlessly from the concrete body of Romiosini (ie modern Greece) [...] let us point out the noble descendant and the higher class of the Saint's parents, an element that verifies that his parents belonged to the layer of the old Greeks [...] that his parents were distinguished as much of race as of wealth and respectability".

God of "Sheppard" Iloil allows him to separate men into nobles, distinguished, according to race and wealth who are automatically Greeks and to inferiors. And he does this so to show that Illarion was a Greek. In his sermons, though, he talks of humility.

The remains of episcope Illarion were taken by Bulgarians at the end of the 12th century and were brought to the seat of the Archdiocese of Tirnovo in Bulgaria, so to show that he belonged to them and not to Ohrid Archdiocese that had appointed him bishop of Moglena. Claiming him gives them rights on the area. It is a very good example that shows how religion is used in the services of political expediencies.

What led them to start an anti-Bogomile campaign is not easy to explain to the common mind. As it appears, they fear the revival of Bogomilism because deep down they know that it is closest to real Christianity and in the psychology of Macedonians and every Balkanian, in general: closer to the thinking Christian. Therefore they took preventive measures. The monastery of Saint Illarion, of course, looks like a vacation home in which everyone would like to live in. They have put many signs along the way leading to it. If they wanted a monastery, where someone goes to live monastically away from people, they wouldn't have put signs like commercial business do to attract more customers.

After MA.KI.B.E. appearance, they made another monastery in Archangelos. It seems it provoked some kind of uneasiness to them, without it having any intent to. The participation of "Rainbow" in the elections of 1994 alarmed Bishop Chrisostomos of Voden even more. In the calendar pocket book for the year 1995 that he distributed, there were twenty pages with anti-Macedonian content. Two of them were referring on the pioneers of MA.KI.B.E. It informed the faithful

that "some uninformed and slinky Skopian agents, having or seeking specific interests and hidden rewards, are practicing, by fraud and deceit, unfair anti-Greek and anti-national propaganda..." Possessing the art of slander, he was making black propaganda against us with love for the neighbor and the money that the faithful leave in alms chests of churches.

For Saint Illarion they write that he performed miracles. He cured the sick and during a year short of wheat, he filled in a miraculous way the warehouses with wheat. Now, how it happens and so many saintly episcopos (bishops) made so many miracles in the past and today bishops cannot do any it seems unexplainable to me. Bishop Chrisostomos himself died due to a long incurable disease, despite all the clergy of the prefecture prayed for many years for his health.

WHAT WAS BYZANTIUM

It is difficult for today neo-Greek to accept that his "Greek-orthodox Byzantium" was a bad dynast. He can't understand why populations he considers his own were closer to Bulgarian, Serb, Arab or Ottoman hegemony than to Byzantium.

Byzantium that never before the 16th century was called by that name is the Eastern Roman Empire. It is, namely, a creation of the Romans and not the Greeks or other people of the area. The state was multiethnic and its subjects were called Roman citizens. Citizens actually they never were because they didn't have democratic rights. The official language until the time of Justinian (527-565) was Latin. Greek was imposed at later time, but the people continued to be called Romans or Romaines. From this term derives "Romiosyni" (Greekness). The concept of "Hellenism" was established much later.

The Romans came into the area as conquerors and as conquerors they behaved up to the end. Resistance against the Roman invasion was mainly projected by the kings of Epirus, Macedonia and Pontus, by the notorious Mithridates. The Hellenic states not only didn't resist, but allied with the Roman invaders. The Athenian aristocrats, grand-merchants, grand-landowners, ship-owners and craftsmen preferred the tutelage by the Romans instead of the Macedonians. Macedonian states were cleaved and this didn't help the commerce of the Greeks. In the contrary, Romans were a united and upcoming empire and this better served their interests. Capitalists, since the beginning, were allied to world rulers. The ideology of hellenism and macedonism are contemporary concepts that not even in the least concerned the higher class that ruled the Greeks. Neither concerns them today. This is why they want good relations with republic of Macedonia, so they can expand their businesses. In order to achieve better terms of expansion, they pressure the country with the nationalistic movement about Macedonia, which they encourage themselves. Then, they appear to the republic of Macedonia as moderates and Macedonians open the doors of their economy to them. The fact that capitals and industries leave and thousands of jobs are lost in Greece is not of their concern, at all. Neither it will be in the future, as long as the people behave as a spineless flock.

The Romans had the army in order to expand and secure their conquered possessions. In official history they teach us only the glorious expansive campaigns of the Roman army and the defense of their possessions from "external enemies". We, as Romaines, approve and rejoice because they taught us that Byzantium was our own state. The consequences this had for the conquered lands and people didn't concern us, as long as the snatching was done by our own it was well done. Conquerors are bad only when they conquer us. Most of the operations of Byzantines, though, were against internal enemies. Many of them, of course, were confrontations between hegemonies and royal families for the conquest of power. To these, we stand by the side of Greek-orthodox because we are Greek-orthodox ourselves. There were a great number of campaigns against revolting people. About these, they tell us almost nothing because they were revolts against our own. And whatever they tell us, it is to justify them. The reason is that the history of the ruling class of Byzantium is written by the ruling class of Greece, of which is the continuation. They taught us that we are descendants of the Byzantine ruling class and not of the people that it oppressed.

The main mission of the army was to secure internal order on account of the interests of the ruling class. Land, forests, ports, quarries that invaders snatched, were contested often by local populations. The heavy taxation they imposed on the people wouldn't be paid by them, if the Roman army didn't exist. Obviously, taxation wasn't providing any sort of social benefits to the people, like

medical care or education.

Romans annexed many areas via diplomatic accords. Properties were left in the possession of local populations, but the heavy taxation often caused inability for them to respond to the obligation and thus to lose them. Of course, without the army the authorities wouldn't have been able to take them. Thus, they were converted to serfs.

The most significant rural rebellion was the one that took place in Asia Minor (820-823) with its leader being Thomas the Slav, whom I mentioned in a previous chapter. If the emperor had not been helped by the Bulgarian hegemon Omurtag, we would have had an early democracy in Byzantium.

Another serious secular revolt took place during Justinian's rule in 523. The heavy taxation imposed by his minister John the Cappadocian for the building of Saint Sofia, which for the time was a very big project, roused the people of Constantinople. This clearly secular revolt that almost came to a point of overthrowing Justinian, is known as the "revolt of Nika". Empress Theodora prevented Justinian from resigning and urged him to fight back. The army drowned the revolt in blood, butchering more than 30.000 of the insurgents. But the image that was passed on to us of Justinian and Theodora is a good one. And this is due to the fact that he not only imposed Christianity as the official dogma but abolished Greek philosophy and replaced it with the "by God's holy wisdom" of the bishops. And in order for this "wisdom" to be more easily accepted, he built the biggest and most impressive church in its honor. Thus, the bishops and holy monks, that usually wrote history, were satisfied and reciprocated it. The fact that so many thousands of people were slaughtered and so much tax money was wasted didn't count at all. Justinian like the other "saints" emperors, besides impressive churches, built also monasteries inside Constantinople and in other large cities. The monasteries, of course, had guesthouses, restaurants, libraries, schools, etc. In such monasteries even emperors and empresses stayed when they were overthrown. Thus, when we read it we say: "the poor fellows". The thousands of monks who lived in the capital city were no "poor fellows", at all and they had no relation whatsoever to real monks. They lived like parasites on the expenses of others and were doing quite well without working, while the people were suffering.

Tens of these kinds of rebellions were drowned in blood by the army. This was its main work. But, as it wasn't this easy to use soldiers to drown the rebellions of their own people, they preferred mercenary soldiers from other areas and other more barbarian races. To break peoples' unity, they often moved populations from one area to another. Many years were needed for the new colonists to assimilate with locals and, thus, to become a threat for rebellion. I consider useful to mention some of these displacements that took place in the areas of the Balkans and therefore they concern us.

Emperor Provis (276-282) settled in Thrace 100.000 Vastarnes (of German descent), Theodosius the Great (378-395) settled Goths in the western Balkans with Alaricus as their hegemon. He Christianized them and consecrated Ulphila as their first Patriarch. He, having knowledge of both Greek and Latin, translated the Gospels into gothic and is considered the creator of gothic alphabet. Theodosius made their leader, Buterichus, commander of the Thema of Illyria which included all western Balkans. Through him, Theodosius imposed Christianity in Thessaloniki that up to that time wasn't rife enough. Thessalonikians revolted in 390 and killed Buterichus and his guard. Theodosius, to punish them, gathered them in the Hippodrome and slaughtered 7.000 Thessalonikians. Saint Demetrius didn't save them because they hadn't become Christians yet. Demetrius, who was slaughtered by "idolaters", was proclaimed martyr and saint. The 7.000 Thessalonikians who were butchered by the Christians of Theodosius were not proclaimed even martyrs. Theodosius himself was proclaimed by the Church as "Great", as a man of God. Besides his name says it; Theo-dosios (God-given). The massacres he performed weren't crimes because he did them in the name of God. Since ever the fascists and chauvinists acted against holy and sacred in God's name and the church was a hive of autarchy and chauvinism: in God's name, of course.

The other leader of the Goths, Alaricus, devastated Thessaly and then turned south towards Peloponnese. There, he was restrained by Stilicho who had come from Italy and was of Vandal descent. So, a Vandal, Stilicho, defended Peloponnese from the Goth ally of Byzantium, the Christian Alaricus. In official history they tell us that the barbarians Goths devastated Greece. They don't tell us, of course, who sent them and whose mercenaries they were. Since we talked of Thessaloniki, it's

worth mentioning that the fortress of the city was built by Theodosius' general Ormisds, of Persian descent. A large part of Theodosius army was Persians.

Thus, these Gothic mercenaries, like others Germans, Vastarnes, Franks, Huns, Alans, etc were settled in Constantinople and represented the Germanic lobby. The emperor Theodosius 3rd (715-717) was of Gothic descent. Empress Eudokia was the daughter of a German general, as were also the generals Gaiana, Vitalian, Aloueth, etc. The Alan patrician Aspar had such power that he succeeded to enthrone Leon the 1st (in 457-474 AD).

As the German lobby acquired great influence and great participation in the army and administration, Leon the 1st staffed the imperial guard with fighters from Isauria, near Syria, of Asia Minor. Other emperors did the same and brought Armenians, Phrygians, Isaurians, Cappadocians, Persians, Scythians, Khazars, etc. The army, after the fourth century, was composed in total by foreign mercenaries. The leaders of the mercenaries acquired gradually strength and entered the power game.

The emperors were proclaimed by the generals and Patriarchs. Up to the Justinian dynasty in the 6th century, the emperors were Latins, Illyrians, and Thracians. After the 6th century, the emperors were Armenians, Phrygian, Cappadocians, Isaurians, Paphlagonians, Lydians. Not even one of them was Greek or from Greece. For about five years Irene the Athenian (797-802) was empress, following the death of her husband Constantine the 6th, because her son was underage.

The emperors and their generals from Anatolia brought their families and guards with them. This, of course, created disappointment to the Balkanians. Since the time of Constantine the Great (324-337 AD) that the emperors imposed Christianity, they were bringing missionaries from this area. Besides, Christianity was shaped and developed mainly in Syria, Cilicia and Cappadocia of Asia Minor. They made use of the faith and fanaticism of those fresh Christians to expand their dominion and consolidate their power. The main reason that the emperors adopted Christianity, and later the Greek language that was used by it, was the inclusion of all those belligerent peoples, but also their countries, under their rule. It served their aims since, at that time, the biggest accumulation of wealth existed in the East.

The same norm was applied by the Muslim Chalifs in the 7th century. The Arabs were peaceful and inglorious subordinates of the Romans like us, the Balkanians. Mohammed and his Chalifs infused religious fanaticism to the fresh Muslims and they succeeded, not only to chase away the Romans from their areas but to take over Persia, Palestine, Syria, all of North Africa, Spain, southern Italy, Crete. They even besieged Constantinople and Thessaloniki. They succeeded on conquering Thessaloniki (904) and looted it, in the name of Mohammed. They took with them 22.000 Thessalonikians and sold them as slaves. The Christians of Theodosius and Alaricus devastated it in Christ's name, the Arabs in Mohammed's name. There is a difference, though. The Arabs were barbarians and fundamentalists, while Christians were simply practicing their holy duty, thus it cannot be characterized as barbaric and fundamentalist! Only when they beat us up, it hurts. When we beat up others, we feel nothing! Only when they uprooted Constantinopolitans or Greek Cypriots, this act was barbaric. When we uprooted Macedonians, it was a holy duty.

The Arab Saracens kept Crete for 135 years (824-961). When the Byzantines recaptured it, they took the last emir Aziz Abdul and granted him a big estate outside of Constantinople. His children got Greek education, were Christianized and participated in the Byzantine administration as Greeks by the name of Anemades. Today's Helaklion was built by Arabs and had the name Handakas. This name the Cretans kept also after the recapturing of Crete by the Byzantines and changed it only in 1830. This means that the Arab population wasn't removed from the island. Besides, there were often rebellions against the Byzantines the same time that we had the revolts of the Bogomiles in Macedonia, of the Vlach-Bulgarians in Bulgaria, etc. This forced the emperor Alexios Komninos to send his son Isaac with many colonists and 12 aristocratic families to alter the composition of Cretan population and stop rebellions.

For the same reason Justinian the 2nd moved 80.000 Slavs to Asia Minor (700 AD) and about 10.000 Mardaite Syrian fighters in Greece. Nikiforos the 1st (802-811) in order to break up Slavs of Peloponnese and Sterea Hellas, that with great difficulty had been subdued by Stavrakios, settled foreign populations from Asia Minor. The fact that the Christianization of the Slavs of Greece was

made between 800 and 850 shows that the populations of Asia Minor were Christians and purposely were moved there to spread Christianity.

The Byzantines brought mercenaries also from other European lands. Roussel came with a body of Normands, Franks, Oguzes, Patzinaks mercenaries. With Kegenis as their leader came 20.000 Pechenegs. The Varangians were a mercenary army of Russians, Scandinavians and English. Also Scythians and Khazars from Caucasus were their allies. The emperor Constantine the 5th took as his wife a Khazar woman, that's why his heir was named Leon the Khazar.

Andronicus the 2nd Palaeologos brought mercenaries from Catalonia. He gave his daughter in marriage to their leader Roger De Flor. When he did not need them anymore and they started to become a threat, he tried to get rid of them. They formed a mercenary army of 8.000 men of which 1.100 were Christianized Turks, and after having looted Thrace, Macedonia and Thessaly in 1311, captured the Thema of Greece and became hegemonies of Athens for 75 years. Byzantium didn't bother them at all nor cared to liberate the Athenians. The archbishop of Athens, Makarios, bothered to liberate them many years later, in 1394. And this not because he cared for the Athenians but because the Venetians, that succeeded the Catalans, had put a Latin Bishop in place. Moreover, he didn't collaborate with the Byzantines but with the Turks. The Turks captured Athens, except the Acropolis. The Venetians counter attacked, recaptured Athens, arrested Makarios and led him chained to Venice. No one asked the people nor took them into account. Makarios counted them just as a flock that was taken from him by the Catholics.

After the Catalans, Athens was taken by the Venetians with Acciaiuoli and after them by the Turks. The Palaeologan, in fact, brought the first conquerors and never cared to chase them away. Now, why are they saying that Greece was liberated after 400 years of slavery, I do not understand. Before the Turks, Greece was occupied by the Latins, (1204), Franks, Catalans, Genoans and Venetians. The medieval castles that were saved in Greece were built by them and not by Greeks. Of course, before 1204 it was occupied by the Romans and Macedonians. Since the battle of Chaeronea in 338 BC, an independent country that is called Greece does not exist. Those who talk of 400 years of slavery it means that they consider themselves a continuity of all those colonialists. They were, hence, a mixture of tens of peoples and not Greeks.

The emperors and hegemonies cared only of their own interests and with this in focus they acted. The people didn't count, not even in the least. They granted whole areas to other hegemonies against an exchange, without asking the people. Often, huge prefectures or islands were granted as dowry to princesses. The people went together as part of the dowry of the bride.

Byzantine hegemonies didn't have between them some sort of racial, cultural or religious solidarity. They only felt for their own interests. The Latin crusaders that captured Byzantium were called by the Byzantine emperors. Alexios the 4th called them, giving them in fact a huge amount of money for their campaign. Thus, in August of 1203 the crusaders entered Constantinople and proclaimed him emperor, by overthrowing Alexios the 3rd. Alexios the 3rd Angelos in 1187, by an agreement, had granted the Venetians unlimited privileges. Alexios had emptied beforehand the public treasury and fled to the Sultan of Ikonio. Against a handsomely fee, he helped him to capture the throne of Nikea, that was founded by Theodor Laskaris, but was defeated. Subsequently, Laskaris made of alliance with the Sultan of Ikonio and attacked the empire of Trebizond (laskar in persian means strong).

The empire of Trebizond was found by the kings of Georgia. Andronicus the 1st Komnenos was overthrown from the throne of Constantinople and murdered, in 1185. His daughter Rusudan went to Constantinople in 1183, when her father became emperor. After his overthrowing, she took her two nephews, Alexios and David, and went to her aunt Tamar who was queen of Georgia. When in 1204 Byzantium was seized by the Latins, the king of Georgia took advantage of the situation and expanded his kingdom towards Pontus. There he installed as hegemonies his Paphlagonian-Georgian in decent nephews that later found the autonomous state of Pontus. They allied with the Latins that occupied Byzantium, against Theodor Laskaris of Nikea. The Seljuks of Ikonio intervened and turned them into tax subordinates to the Sultan. If they had conscience of common origins, they should have allied with Laskaris against the Seljuks and Latins. The last king of Pontus, David, was subordinate to the Sultan Mohammed the Conqueror, during the occupation of Constantinople. The

accord of alliance foresaw, except the yearly tax, also the granting of 800 Pontian mercenaries for Mohammed's army. Alexios and David, who found the state of Pontus, settled there but did not take with them Byzantine families and guards but Georgian ones. To this is due the fact of the preservation of the old Persian-Greek dialect of Pontus, that became Persian-Greek-Georgian, at the end.

The other Romaic-orthodox state that was created after the occupation of Byzantium was the Despotate of Epirus. This, too, didn't collaborate with the Romaic-orthodox state against the Latins. On the contrary, it collaborated with the Franks hegemon of Achaia, Wilhelm Villehardouin and the king of Sicily Manfred, against the Romans of Nikea. In the battle of Pelagonia (1259) they were defeated by Michael Palaeologos.

Michael Palaeologos of Nikea signed a treaty of alliance with the Genoese (Nymphéo 1261). They agreed to displace the Venetians from Constantinople. Michael would be the commander emperor because he had an army, while the Genoese were more of a naval power. The Genoese ensure huge privileges. Among them was the establishment of naval and commercial enterprises, without paying any kind of duty taxes and the total concession of Galata quarter, of Chios, of Samos, of Thasos and other islands and ports. They entered Constantinople without any resistance. Simply, they respected also the privileges the Venetians had with the 1187 agreement.

After settling in the city, Michael became emperor only in name. William Villehardouin, who was captured in the battle of Pelagonia, in order to gain his freedom, granted him the Despotate of Mystras. In all of these conflicts the people don't matter to anyone of them, but the people also are in total apathy. These are conflicts between hegemonies with the participation of mercenaries and despots.

In order to survive, emperors had to collaborate at times with Genoese, at other times with Venetians, with the Bulgarians, the Serbs, the Hungarians, etc. They only have this right. Not the people. The agreement of Nymphéo (1261) foresaw the uniting of the two churches, with the subordination of the Patriarchate to the Pope. Without the support of the Catholics, Byzantium could not survive anymore. A big part of the clergy and the flock reacted against it but couldn't do otherwise. Finally, a union (subjection is the right word) was signed in Lyon (1274). The reaction of the clergy continued and provoked frictions. The clergymen participated now openly in intrigues for the seizure of power. The next emperor, in order to secure their support, became anti-union.

The following decades Constantinople was theater of political and religious confrontations. Each side collaborated with various foreign hegemonies in order to seize power. To achieve it, of course, they granted privileges and parts of the empire to them.

John Kantakouzenos, to assure the alliance of the Serb hegemon Stefan Dushan, granted him Thessaly, Macedonia (except Thessaloniki) and western Thrace (Skopje accord 1342). Dushan made Skopje his capital and was proclaimed emperor of Romans and Serbs. Kantakouzenos allied with the Ottomans and he is the one that brought them first time to the Balkans. Finally, with their help, he overthrew John 5th Palaeologos and became emperor. But the Ottoman allies stayed in the Balkans. They were confronted by the Serbs who were defeated in the battle of Evros (1371), where today's borders of eastern Greece are. So, the Serbs defended the borders of today's eastern Greece and not "Hellenism" and "Romaic-Greeks". At that time, no hegemonies or people who self-characterized as "Greeks" did exist. The Serbs were defeated also at the battle of Kosovo (1389) and their kingdom was dissolved. In the battle of Kosovo had participated also Albanians, Bulgarians, Polish and Hungarians. In that army participated also fighters from other peoples, but anyone who doesn't belong to some kind of state entity is not mentioned. History records only the strong. The Roman-orthodox of Constantinople did not participate, since they had signed with the Ottomans a friendship agreement. The same fate awaited the Bulgarians whose capital, Tirnovo, was occupied in 1393 and their state was dissolved.

After the occupation of the Balkans, the imperialists knew that their turn was coming. Emperor Manuel the 2nd Palaeologos, in order to gain the help of the Hungarian king, granted him the fortified city of Messimvria that, like Thessaloniki, hadn't fallen into the hands of the Ottomans, yet; Its people "went in package" with the gift. The Hungarian king, with some help from England, France, Germany, Venice, was defeated in Nikopolis of northern Bulgaria (1396).

Manuel despaired and went to the West to look for help. There he stayed for three and a half

years but achieved nothing. The great Mongol commander Tamerlane, though, managed quite well. In 1402 defeated the Ottomans in the battle of Ankara and dispersed them. Manuel gets encouraged and returns to Constantinople. But Tamerlane leaves to the East and dies in 1405. The Ottoman regrouped quickly and became a threat once again and besieged Constantinople in 1422. Manuel realized that the kingdom doesn't have a future anymore, he puts his son Andronicus the 2nd Palaeologos who was commander of Thessaloniki and, as chronicler Frantzis writes, he sells it, in 1423, to the Venetians for 50.000 ducats. Thessalonikian people "went in package" and weren't asked by anyone. In order for the clergy not to react, the Venetians bind themselves not to place a Catholic bishop and to respect their privileges. In 1430 the Ottomans besieged Thessaloniki. The monks of Mount Athos that had properties belonging to them in the city (metochia), in order not to lose their privileges they had during Byzantium, came to an agreement with the Sultan. They'll help with the occupation and he'll respect their privileges. According to written information of the 16th century, the monks of the Vlatadon monastery of Thessaloniki showed the Ottoman besiegers an effective way for the city's occupation. That is where it is owed the fact the Ottomans didn't take away any of their privileges, among them huge pieces of land they possessed from which they had large profits. Saint Demetrius neither helped nor was remembered by anyone. Today they honor him as the protector of the city of Thessaloniki, those who sold it for money or privileges. Much later, when Sultans deducted a big part of the monasteries' estates, profits became smaller and monasteries got poorer. Today, however, they own enough stores and high residential buildings in Thessaloniki, but they obtain also quite enough profit from Saint Demetrius' icon.

During Byzantium many monasteries existed inside big fortified capitals and, of course, were falsely called monasteries. Besides the huge estates and land the emperors granted them, they had money donations for the building of churches, hostels and halls, from the public treasury. This, of course, was done with profit in mind. These monks that had no relevance whatsoever with real monks of early years of Christianity that lived monastically in deserted remote areas, were always in support of kings and feudal lords. They influence the masses on their account, in the name of God. Even today the political parties of power avoid conflicts of any kind with the Hierarchy because they know that they influence the masses quite seriously. That's why they don't touch their privileges. Privileges they had during the Romans and the Ottomans, they still have them in today Greece, where the medieval ages haven't gone away, yet. They sit and talk if they should separate the state from the church, although this is obvious in democracies. Finally, after only a three days of siege, the Ottomans took Thessaloniki and destroyed a big part of it. The heir of Manuel, John Palaeologos the 7th, made a last effort to gain the support of the Pope. He offers in exchange the uniting of the Eastern Church with the Catholic one, that took place in the Synod of Ferrara-Florence in 1439. The appeals of the Pope found some acceptance only in the eastern European kingdoms that had problems with the Ottoman aggressions themselves. The Hungarian John Hunniad led an army of Hungarians, Polish and Romanians but was defeated in Varna in 1444.

Nine years later came Constantinople's turn (1453). The emperor had very small capabilities at his disposal and even fewer allies. The city was defended by mercenaries under the leadership of Genoese and Venetians. Their general was a Genoese, the admiral a Venetian. The people were divided. The anti-unionists clergymen that had been disappointed by the submission of the church to the Pope, cultivated a defeatist climate. They spread that it's "God's will for the city to fall". The phrase "kreitoteron fakiolion Tourkou i kalyptan Latiniki" (better the turban of a Turk, than the hood of a Latin) of the most famous anti-unionist, Lukas Notaras, became a slogan in the mouths of the monks. Leader of the anti-unionists was the later Patriarch Genadios Scholarios, who fled to Adrianople where he stayed under the protection of an Ottoman friend of his. Constantine Palaeologos wasn't helped by his brother Demetrius who was the despot of Mystra. Demetrius had collaborated with the Ottomans repeatedly and they returned the favor. They kept him as commander of Mystras for seven more years after the fall of Constantinople. In 1460 they transferred him and made him responsible for the collection of taxation in the area of Enos. The emperor was helped only by the unionists of the aristocratic classes together with their subordinates. The people of the surrounding prefectures were completely indifferent and apathetic and simple spectator of the battles between dynasts, since they didn't consider the matter as their own. The Polis (Constantinople), of

course, fell in 29-5-1453.

THE FANARIOTES AND THE "GREEK GENUS"

Mohammed the Conqueror, after the occupation of Constantinople, persecuted the unionists that together with the Catholic Genoese and Venetians resisted him. The anti-unionists clergymen and the aristocrats that had prepared the fall of the city he rewarded richly.

He proclaimed Patriarch the leader of the anti-unionists Genadios Sholarios and established him, with official ceremonies, in the Patriarchate in Fanari district where many of the anti-unionists aristocrats had their mansions. With a Sultan's edict ("Veratio") even more privileges were granted to the Patriarchate, besides the one's it had during Byzantium. The Patriarch from now on will be the representative of the Christian Orthodox Genus (Rum milliet). In fact, he proclaimed him Ethnarch of the Romans. That's where the roots are of the passion of bishops to appear as Ethnarchs. The Patriarch and the bishops undertook also other duties, like the collection of taxes, the regulation of education, administration and judicial affairs of the subjects of the Genus. Then, founded the "Great School of the Greek Genus", so to create officers that would embody the institutions of this Genus. Thus, due to the treacherous collaborations of the anti-unionists hierarchy with the Sultan, the Romaic Genus (Rum milliet) that the bishops today call "Greek Genus" was created. It is in fact a technical product of the collaboration of the bishops with Mohammed the Conqueror. Greek was only for the official language, but as on the aspect of descent it was a mixture of tens of peoples and, of course, not ancient Greeks that at the time did not exist as a people.

Mohammed used the anti-unionists aristocrats and intellectuals in his state mechanism. The anti-unionists craftsmen and big merchants he made suppliers of the public institutions. Thus, he created a new class of privileged Romans that later, because of the area they lived, were called "Fanariotes".

Mohammed behaved in a clever and diplomatic way. It is not enough to just occupy an empire, but you must keep it. He had studied Byzantium well enough and knew of the influence the aristocrats and the bishops had on the masses. It was proved by the Byzantine power that lasted so many centuries due to the support it had from them. Mohammed relied on the anti-unionists because out of their ambitions and rivalries against the Catholics, they did not want any support from the West. For him the threat was the West. Moreover, the patriarchates cultivated a submissive concept on the Christian subjects. It is not a coincidence that they condemned and had excommunicated all the rebellions of the Christian peoples, including the Greek revolution of the 1821.

Mohammed knew also that he cannot rule his enormous empire with the illiterate easterners. Thus he used the educated and experienced anti-unionists Fanariotes aristocrats and intellectuals. He appointed them in high government positions. In the diplomatic section in particular, almost all of them were Fanariotes. To them he assigned also the collection of taxes. To be precise, he sub-rented it. A part of them was kept by the Fanariotes and the rest they gave to the Sultan. The larger the amount of taxes they collected from the people, the larger was their own share. Supplies of the huge army, the palaces, the institutions and other state services he entrusted also to Fanariotes craftsmen and merchants. This is how the "demonic Greeks" became wealthy and the renowned byzantine families were created. These privileged Fanariotes that were the crutches of Romaic power; they became the crutches of the Ottoman power.

Obviously it wasn't easy for the people to react, but they didn't stay apathetic. To begin with, they stood favorably to most of the rebellions and supported them. Many Christians who saw the treacherous behavior of the bishops became Muslims and others came to contact with the Catholic Church,

Thus, the phenomenon that was observed during Byzantium continued. All subjects of Byzantium that were followers of the dogma, were leaving the Patriarchate on the first given opportunity. First to leave were the monophysites of Egypt, Palestine, Syria and due to the oppression they had been subjected to, sided with the Arab Mohammedans. It must be taken notice that these people weren't Arabs. Afterwards, the majority of the Christians of Asia Minor joined Mohammedanism with the Paulicians first. A great part of Ottoman army against Byzantium was ex-Romaic-orthodox. The population exchanges of 1923 revealed that only 1.220.000 from Asia Minor and Thrace had remained orthodox of the tens of millions orthodox people of Byzantium. Today, the hierarchy of the Patriarchate appears as the pillar of Orthodoxy, but, actually, tens of millions of people changed religion because of them.

In the Balkans a big portion of Serbs, (Bosnians), Albanians, Macedonians, Thracians and Bulgarians and mainly the persecuted Bogomiles joined Mohammedanism. They may have thought if the bishops became the crutches of the Muslims why shouldn't they become directly Muslims themselves.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate for many centuries now was Ecumenical only by name. It wasn't recognized as such neither by the subjects of the Romaic nor the Ottoman state. One of the reasons was that it had got away completely from right orthodox teaching. The other, and most serious, It had converted into an exclusive club of privileged. From the 9th century and on, only wealthy Greek-speaking Romaic-orthodox persons were appointed Patriarchates and bishops. In order to be called "Ecumenical", patriarchs and bishops should have been appointed also Albanians, Arabs, Bulgarians, Russians, Armenians, etc. That's what the Catholic Church is doing therefore it can be called "Catholic". Today's Pope is a German; the previous one was a Polish, the one before an Italian, etc. Recently, we lived the replacement of the Patriarchs of Alexandria and Jerusalem. Battles took place so they would not fall in the hands of Palestinians and Egyptians. By what logic, to the thousands of Arabs Christians we must impose our own Patriarch? They relied on the "privileges of Genus". But when and where God gave privileges to some against some others? Is this, what Christ taught? To be called Ecumenical, the Patriarch must be elected, like the Pope, by representatives from all orthodox churches. If that's not done, he's Patriarch only of the neo-Greeks. Besides, only the Greek Church half-recognizes him. Only in Greece Fanariotes are part of the political power and thus, by controlling education, they hide the real role they played through the centuries. They beautifying the history of Byzantium and exploit it. In the cathedrals and churches they put the Romaic imperial flag with the two-headed eagle, exactly because they represent the imperial politic-religious dogma.

THE GREEK REVOLUTION AND COUNTER REVOLUTION

The Ottoman Empire during the 16th and 17th century was very strong and continued to expand. It had occupied of the north shores of the Black Sea (Euxinus Pontus) and had cut off Russia's road to the Aegean and the Mediterranean. In the northern Balkans it occupied Budapest (1541) and even besieged Vienna (1683) which was land of the "holy Roman empire". Somewhere there, the expansion stopped and decadence and retreat begun.

During all this period the Byzantine aristocratic families and the Patriarchate were the Sultan's main supporters. The Fanariotes were appointed hegemones of the prefectures, diplomats (Great Interpreters), ministers, Great Viziers, etc. In the organizing of the campaign against Vienna had participated Alexandros Mavrokordatos (1636-1709) who from 1673 was Great Dragoman (interpreter) of the Sublime Porte. After the defeat and retreat of the Ottomans, he was considered jointly responsible and was condemned to death. He was imprisoned and had to waste a large part of his estate to gain his freedom. Years later he won back the office of interpreter and "of top Secrets". He signed, on behalf of the Sultan, the Karlowitz Treaty (1699) with the Austrians. Besides being a dignitary of the Sultan he was also a dignitary of the Patriarchate (Great Sacristan, Great Logothete). Wherever the ottoman dominion expanded, so did the Patriarchate dominion.

But also other members of Mavrokordatos family were appointed as high dignitaries and hegemones of Moldovlachia. The same happened with other fanariote families, too, such as Mourouzi, Karatza, Kantakouzenou, Gika, Soutsou, Ypsilante and others. The father of Alexandros Ypsilante, until 1806, was with the Ottomans, but afterwards went with the Russians. To this is the reason why A. Ypsilantes was an officer of the Russian army against the Ottomans. Commander in chief of the Turkish army during the 2nd Russian-Turkish war was the Fanariote Nikolaos Mavrogenes.

The success of the Austrians and Russians troubled the Ottomans. Russians and Austrians started to arouse also other Christian population inside the Ottoman dominion. The Austrians in the north-western Balkans, while the Russians in the east and in the north. These Christian populations had to be checked. Of course, the Ottomans used their Christian allies for this purpose, namely the Patriarchate and the Fanariotes.

They abolished the autocephalous (autonomous) Archdioceses of Bulgaria, with its seat in Tirnovo, and of Macedonia, with its seat in Ohrid. They gradually appointed, in the bishoprics, bishops of their confidence. The Archdiocese of Ohrid was abolished by the Sultan after a suggestion by the Fanariote John Ypsilante, in 1767. The autocephalous of Ohrid was supported by the Austrians. The reason was that in Macedonia there was a strong unionist movement. Many Christian subjects supported the Union of the Churches, because thanks to this they hoped for help from the West. The Patriarchate unleashed a propagandistic attack against the unionists that continues on until our days.

When they speak of unity, they don't mean unity of the people but the unity of the flock under their tutelage, as do the politicians. Except the abolishment of the archdiocese of Ohrid, they also started an ideological campaign against the Macedonian and Latin languages. Macedonian was a relative language to the Russian and Russia had become the number one threat to the Ottomans and the Patriarchate. Moreover, Russia uses Cyrillic writing, which had been created in Macedonia. Therefore Macedonian makes the population much susceptible to Russian influence. Latin made the population susceptible to the westerners, mainly the threatening Austrians.

Due to the activities of Mavrokordatos toward the Sultan, the Athonian Academy (1749) was created that produced urgently teachers of Greek. Schools were created in Macedonian towns that taught only Greek language. Then, they sent missionaries in disputed areas, propagandizing in favor of greekness. The most re-known preacher of this kind was Kosmas Aitolos (1714-1779).

Kosmas, with a mediocre education, was appointed by the Patriarchate as teacher in Lobotina (slavic name of Nafpaktia). Afterwards, they sent him to the Athonian School of Mount Athos. When he graduated, the Patriarch Chrisanthos didn't send him somewhere as a teacher or a priest, but to a political journey that lasted for almost twenty years. Except of trying to prevent Islamization, he tried in every which way to convince the populations who spoke other languages in western Macedonia and Epirus, to only speak Greek. To overcome the resentment of these indignant populations towards the greek speaking Patriarchate, he took quite progressive positions for that time. He spoke of social justice, equality of women, and mercilessness of landowners. Now, they remembered all these! His sole aim, though, was to promote the greek language and through it the Patriarchate influence. His mission, actually, was clearly political. Thus, since he struggled to enlarge the flock of the Patriarchate, he was proclaimed saint by them. They did this much later for expediency reasons. Almost all saints were from the East and mainly wealthy and children of wealthy people. They were only exponents and servant of their ecclesiastic dogma, along with emperors and dignitaries. They don't recognize saints of other Christian dogma or Church. This is how they were enlightened by the God of their selfishness. "Ego eimi..." (I am...).

In Moldovlachia, its hegemon Constantinos Mavrokordatos in 1740, and in the frame of reforms that were a series of laws for its "modernization", imposed on the church the establishing of the Romanian language, instead of the until then used slavonic. Today's Romanian, although classified among the Latin languages, has the syntax and many language elements of slavonic. It seems that God besides privileged people and clergymen has privileged languages, as well.

This Patriarchate campaign brought many fruits. In many areas, where the population was bilingual, Greek displaced Macedonian and Vlach languages. Of course, this was made easier in urban centers, where the population had as their second language the international Greek. During this period Greek surpassed Macedonian in many areas, such as Serres, Nioousta, Kozani, Siatista, Kastoria, etc. To this is due the fact that many villages and towns have Macedonian names but their people became Greek speaking. The Vlachs that became Greek speaking were made Sarakatsani, while the Greek speaking Albanians became Arvanites. Macedonians who became Greek speaking were made "more Greeks than the Greeks". But, the use of the Greek language by the Fanariotes, collaborators of the Ottomans for political reason, made it unlikeable to the resisters and this worked favorably for the Macedonian language. It happened, in fact, something similar to what happened in Greece during the last century where the demotic was the language of the resisters and democrats, while the katharevousa (purified language) was the language of the oligarchy. The Ottoman Empire, of course, had fallen into deep crisis that nothing could cure.

Obviously, Russia didn't stay with its arms crossed. It unleashed a war against the Ottomans in 1768 and simultaneously tried to arouse the Balkan people to rebellion.

In February 1770 the Russian brothers Orlof disembarked in Peloponnese and together with local warlords chased away the Ottoman forces. The revolutionaries at first had great success, but the Ottomans reorganized and suppressed the revolt in July of 1770. The Orlofs managed a major blow to the opposing navy, but were forced to anchor in Paros where they remained until the end of the war.

In Macedonia George Papazoles, (a descendant of Papa Tzole) from Siatista Kozani (both are Slav names), who was a captain of the Russian army, succeeded to arouse many Macedonians.

The rebellion though did not generalize; the Ottomans suppressed it and destroyed the revolted villages. Among the destroyed villages there was also the village of the leader of the revolution of Vermion (1822), Tassos Karatasos. It was the village Dobra, of Veria. Dobra means good, in Macedonian. It is mentioned everywhere with its Hellenized name Thovra.

In that war, Russia was the victorious one and ended with the Kioutsouk Kainartzi treaty (1779). The terms of the treaty weren't only in favor of Russia, but also of the Christian population in the Balkans, as well. Russia was proclaimed officially as their guardian. At that time, many Christians immigrated or started free trade with Russia. Many merchants and ship owners took advantage and gained large profits. That's how the strong fleet of the Aegean islands was created, which played a significant role in the revolution of 1821.

The big western powers did not like, as would be expected, what occurred and made them turn their attention to the Balkans. The threat that Russia could prevail in these areas was visible. If the Orlof movement had prevailed in Greece (1770), Russia could've easily convinced the neo-Greeks that they were Hellenized Slavs, since hundred of slavic toponyms reveal the settlement of Slavs in Greece. The westerners in order to confront this danger started to promote in Greece the ideology of the neo-Greeks originating from the ancient Greeks. In 1778 Austria occupied northern Serbia and Bosnia.

THE "HELLENIC REPUBLIC" OF REGAS VELESTINLES (FERAIOS)

Two are the most significant events that influenced the situation in the Balkans at the period of time. One was the visible infiltration of Russia in the Balkans. This awoke the western empires, mainly after the revolts of the 1770's decade and the Kioutsouk Kainartzi accord, which recognized Russia as the guardian of the Christians in the Balkans. They were looking for ways to infiltrate there themselves.

The other very significant event was the French revolution of 1789. Secular rebellion overthrew the royal regime and established a democratic one. The conservative and autarchic values were put aside and their place was taken by progressive ones. The French revolution talked of emancipation of the people and the ideas spread all over Europe. They were the first that talked about Europe of the people in contrast of Europe of kings and oligarchy. In the revolutionary texts of that period, use is made of the term "Bougres" that had revolutionary content. "Bourges" were the Katharoi, namely the movement of the persecuted Christians of the 12th century who had chased away the armies of the Pope and kings of the epoch. It was a similar to the Bogomiles movement in Macedonia.

The revolutionary waves of the French revolution reached the Balkans. It was accepted and spread by the enslaved people of the Balkans and by the Greeks, first. I remind once again that by "Greeks" I mean the Greek speaking people. The Greek intellectuals and students in Europe got active and sensitized the European public opinion on the subjected people of the Ottoman Empire. A romantic pro-Greek movement developed in Europe that influenced definitively the forthcoming developments.

Pioneer in spreading and exploitation of this liberal and democratic stream in the Balkans was Regas Velestinles. Regas was born the year 1757, in Velestino, Thessaly that was located near ancient Feres. The name of his birthplace has slavic origin but he is of Vlach descent. For this reason the name Velestinles, by which he used to sign, is avoided. The name Feraios was stuck to him later. Christoforos Perraivos, also a Vlach from Pourles of Olympus, was one of his closest collaborators, Yorgakis Olympios from Livadi Olympus and many others. Makedonski, who was a chieftain of Macedonians, Serbs and Bulgarians, and fought by the side of Vladimirescu in the rebellion of Moldovlachia, was a Macedonian of Vlach descent, hence his surname. Vladimir hence the surname Vladimirescu, is of slavic origin, as well. In his declaration to all nations, Rigas mentions the Vlachs as a distinct nation.

Regas was the inspiration of the idea of "Greek (Hellenic) Republic" that would've included all of the people of the Balkans from Peloponnese (Moreas) up to Moldovlachia (Romania). In his

"*Thoureos*" (war song), he mentions explicitly Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbs, Montenegrins, Vlachs, Thracians, Macedonians, Albanians and Turks. He doesn't mention any Slavs simply because there were no people that defined themselves as such. When we say "Slavs" we mean slavophones. Regas in the "Greek Republic" includes all races, religions and languages but as official language will be "the common to the Romans dialect", that is Greek.

This they do not specify to the neo-Greeks, thus they think that Regas speaks only of Greeks of descent or of mother tongue. Up until that period, that started in 1770 there wasn't a people that defined themselves as descendants of the ancient Greeks. It was at this time when the cultivation of this idea started and, actually, outside of Greece, by the known philhellenes and Greek speaking Balkan people that lived in Europe. Until then, the concept of "Hellenism" or of "Romans" existed but had no tribal meaning. Attempts during the previous centuries by some intellectuals to re-create a "Greek (Hellenic) nation", were of a total failure. The most significant one was the attempt of Georgios Gemistos or Plethon and his collaborator Bessarion, during the 15th century, when they propagandized the conversion of Byzantium to a Greek state. The effort got no response from the people at all, whilst the Patriarch Genadios Scholarios characterized Plethon an "idolater", he burned his books and excommunicated him. Bessarion, in disappointment, joined the Catholic Church.

The ancient Greek spirit came in the area after 1770, via Europe and mainly due to the French revolution. To be precise, it was the spirit of the then French revolution, colored by ancient Greek color. This Greek spirit was expressed by Regas and his followers, that wasn't nationalist but socio-politic-cultural. The philhellenic movement of Europe, the intellectuals and the diplomacy of the westerners cultivated the idea about the contemporary Greeks being descendants of the ancient Greeks. Slowly and gradually they imposed it and any Tom, Dick and Harry, Greek speaking or not, accepted it gladly.

Regas in 1797 created his "*Charta tis Ellados*" (Charter of Greece) that reached from Peloponnese to Vlachobogdania (Romania). He also worked out the constitution of "Greek Republic", the so called *New Political Administration* that was the adaptation of the French Constitution of 1793. He also wrote two hymns: *Thoureos* (war song) and *Paianas* (victory song).

The liberal declaration of Regas and his followers provoked intense alarm to the conservative regime of the Ottoman Empire. The Ecumenical Patriarchate which was the crutches of the regime, was also alarmed. Since Regas was a member of the Romaic Genus as officially was the Christian Genus called, the Patriarchate excommunicated and condemned him. The Patriarch Gregorius the 5th condemned his liberal ideas as "satanic" and prevented his flock to follow him. For this purpose, he actually printed a small book that he distributed to the faithful, by the title "*Fatherly Teaching*". It included a poem of a Fanariote poet by the name Iakovakis that presented the views of the Patriarchate with lyrics. Some of the verse said: "Everyone, where he was called, he must stay there, and doesn't turn against the kingdom..... he goes after God, the ruler of them-the dean of goods and guardian of their lives, above all the Bible says to make prayers and rituals-for the sake of our kings, always-and be convinced of their superiority, since that by God's will rule the states-and everyone that stands against this rule, stands against the command of God.... "

The "*Fatherly Teaching*" falls into the hands of the enlightening "teacher of the Genus", Adamantios Korais, who was in Rome. In order to rebut it, he published the "*Brotherly Teaching*". Among other things, he writes: "either his Beatitude has lost his mind or he has been transformed from a Sheppard to a wolf, so to tear to pieces the Church of Christ. The author of the book defends and vindicates the tyranny of the Turks, cries over the abolition of the Papal power, invites, with words he does not dare to express, also the Greeks to submit to tyrants, hastens to convince them with testimony from the holy Bible."

Indeed, Napoleon in the spring of 1796 crosses the Alps and descends Italy calling for "the liberation of the people from their tyrants". He abolishes the colonialist states and weakens the Pope on his secular powers. This alarmed Patriarch Gregorius the 5th, thus he published the relevant book. Luckily, he wasn't followed by all the clergy and in particular the lower clergymen, many of whom played a leading role in the struggle.

Regas and his collaborators printed their revolutionary declarations and got ready to start their revolution. They estimated that the most appropriate area to begin it would be Roumeli or Moreas

(Peloponnese), as they are remote, mountainous places but also close to the West. The French had occupied Ionian Islands, which they intended to use as a bridge head. Regas sent the package with the printed declarations to Trieste to his collaborator, Antonios Koronios, and also a letter by which he asked him to go and pick it up. The letter fell into the hands of a big merchant, Demetrius Economou from Kozani, on whose business Koronios was employed. Economou was against the revolution, as most merchants were. They didn't want any changes in the regime because their interests were served best as things were. Thus, he handed the letter to the Austrian authorities and as soon as Regas arrived in Trieste, he was arrested and the printed declarations were confiscated.

Austrians didn't want the liberal French spirit to expand in their region and had allied with Turkey and Russia against France, which represented a common enemy to their regimes, thus the enemies became allies. Therefore, they handed Regas and six of his collaborators to the Ottomans, who imprisoned them in a fortress in Belgrade and on 24th of June 1798 they were strangled.

Perraivos, since he had a French passport, was set free by the Austrians after French ambassador's intervention. He went to Corfu (Kerkyra), where he printed the revolutionary songs of Regas, and from there he went to Parga. He propagandized Regas' ideas and supported the rebellion of the Souliotes. The bishop of Ioannina Ierotheos got informed of his actions and exorcized the Pargians to chase Perraivos away and others known persons "of French morals[...] and atheist Volterians" because "he, with someone Regas Velestinles from Thessaly, [...] intended to revolt against the mightiest Sultan, but the almighty God punished their actions with death, as they deserved..." Later, Perraivos went to Cephalonia from where he continued his work.

Bishops and landowners of Ioannina had sided with the conqueror also some other times. They were among those that in 1430 came to an agreement with the Ottomans to surrender their city, so they could keep their privileges. In 1611 their city was besieged by an apostate bishop, Dionysios of Larissa, who with other Thessalians and Epirotes had revolted. The local fief holders and bishops sided with the conqueror and dispersed the revolutionaries. Dionysius was deposed by the Patriarchate as "daring and thoughtless who studied apostasy against the kingdom of Sultan Mehmet and many senselessness intended to do." Dionysius was called by the people "Philosopher" and by the Patriarchate "Skylosopher" (dog-philosopher). Here it is again the orthodox godfathers' art of slander.

The discovery of Regas and of his collaborators' plans, as well as their deaths, postponed the planned revolution. The Souliotes were defeated by Ali Pasha of Ioannina and their leaders fled to the Ionian Islands (Eptanisa). The same happened with the other Greek armed bodies that, with Kolokotronis in the leadership, arrived to Ionian Islands. The revolutionaries knew that apart the revolutionary struggle they needed also favorable international timing and the support of the great powers, too.

In 1799 a mixed Russian-Turkish fleet occupied the Ionian Islands and temporarily chased away the French. A period of turmoil followed until 1810, when the Ionian Islands were proclaimed Independent State, under the guardianship of England. The revolutionaries from now on had to do with the English guardians. The English, up until 1815, when France was defeated, were negative to all revolts. Kolokotronis, Tzavelaioi, Botsaraioi and others joined the English army. In France the oligarchic regime was re-installed and the liberal spirit in Europe entered a phase of retreat. These became negative factors for the developments that followed in the Balkans.

FILIKI ETAIRIA (FRIENDLY SOCIETY) AND FANARIOTES

In January of 1814 in Odessa, three small merchants decided to create a revolutionary organization that would prepare the revolt of the Balkan people against the Ottoman yoke. They were Nikolaos Skoufas from Arta, Athanasios Tsakalof from Ioannina and Emanuel Xanthos from Patmos. Their aims and principles were the same as Regas Velestinles. Besides, the organization was joined by the former collaborators of Regas. Patriots of all nations of the Balkans became its members. Their organization was called Filiki Etairia (Friendly Society).

The leaders of Filiki had experienced all previous attempts and are aware of the political

realities of the time. They must create a strong revolutionary movement and secure alliances.

They approach the Greek revolutionaries that had fled in the Ionian Islands. Greeks I call from now on all the followers of Filiki Etairia irrelevant of descent. For instance, to Ionian Islands fled Arvanites from Souli and other areas, but also Muslim Arvanites revolutionaries that are falsely called Turk-Albanians. M. Botsaris, Tzavelas and other Arvanites guerrillas' leaders joined the Albanian regiment of the English. Constantine Androutsos, brother of Odyssea Androutsos, served as sub-commander of the Albanian regiment,

Theodoros Kolokotronis with his Albanian friend Ali Farmaki from Lala, Elias, in 1809 planned a common Greek-Albanian revolt with the aim of creating a bilingual, bi-religious state. Official languages would have been Greek and Albanian (the dialect of the Arvanites) and religions Christianity and Mohammedanism. The prevalence of the English in the Ionian Islands at the end of 1809 changed the events and the plan was abandoned.

During the following years the Arvanites played a decisive role in the Greek revolution. Actually Arvanites were called those who came from Albania, as we call Kozanites, Thrakiotes (Thracians), Anatolites (Easterners). Those that were Christianized were called Arvanites and those that were Muslims were called Turk-Albanians. The most famous Arvanite was Karaiskakis. They carried the heaviest burden of the struggle in the sea. The most renowned of them were Miaoulis and Bouboulina. They were actually the most conscientious on the principles of the Filiki Etairia.

The leaders of the Filiki approached some of the hegemones that had tendencies of autonomy from the Ottoman Empire. Among them were the hegemon of the peasants' revolt in Moldovlachia, Vladimirescu, the hegemon of the Serbs Karageorgevits, the hegemon of Vidin Pasvanoglou and even Ali Pasha of Ioannina.

When the movement became strong enough they went in search for some leader of the revolt. In 1818 they approached Ioannis Capodistrias, who at the time was minister of Foreign Affairs of the czar of Russia. He refused because he knew that the ones he served were against such a revolt. Ali Pasha of Ioannina also refused, possibly because he feared that after the success of such pan-Balkan revolt, the revolutionaries would turn against him. He actually betrayed the Filiki to the Sultan.

They approached Alexandros Ypsilantes who was an officer of the Russian army. He accepted. His father Constantine Ypsilantes was, until 1806, hegemon of Moldovlachia, appointed by the Sultan. As he was anti-French, he was deposed by the Sultan and joined the czar of Russia.

The leaders of the Filiki had estimated that the revolution must begin in the Peloponnese that was near the English occupied Ionian Islands, or from Moldovlachia that was a semi-autonomous Ottoman hegemony but had no Ottoman army. Finally, it started in Moldovlachia under the leadership of Alexandros Ypsilantes.

In his proclamation Ypsilantes wrote, among other thing: "Here, our friend homeland Greece lifts in triumph its pre-paternal flag! Moreas, Epirus, Thessaly, Serbia, Bulgaria, the archipelago islands, in other words Greece in its whole has taken up arms...." This is exactly what he meant as "Greece"; all of the Balkans and not just the later kingdom of Greece. This was confirmed in practice, since they started the revolution in today's Romania.

Ypsilantes invaded Moldovlachia, where many revolutionaries had gathered and assembled the Sacred Battalion and where the locals had revolted under Vladimirescu leadership. To arouse the local population he spread rumors of having secured the Russian support. The czar of Russia, however, had denounced the revolt. In addition he permitted the Ottoman army to invade Moldovlachia, something that was forbidden based on a between states treaty. The Moldovlachian revolutionaries felt betrayed by Ypsilantes and started to differentiate. They weren't willing to fight for Ypsilantes, because anything but satisfied they were by Ypsilantes and other Fanariotes rule, on their own land. Disbelief reached to such a point that many locals joined the Ottomans. The highlight of all of this division was the murder of Vladimirescu by Ypsilantes' men. Ypsilantes' forces were left without local support and consequently the Ottoman forces destroyed easily their army. Many of them who survived, went down to Greece where they continued the struggle.

In Greece the revolt was organized by local chieftains. They had great support from the local populations, from other Balkan revolutionary forces and the European philhellenes. Head of the Serb,

Bulgarian, Thracian, Macedonian, Dalmatian forces was the Serb Chatzi-Christos heads of the Macedonian forces were Tasos Karatasos, from Dobra, Kozani (Kali Panagia, after 1926) and Angelis Gatsos (Gele Gatsov) from Sarakinovo Pella. In the two years, 1821-1823, they succeeded to prevail in Peloponnese, a big part of mainland Greece and many islands of Argo-Saronico and the Cyclades.

After the first successes of the revolution, the organization started also a diplomatic struggle. The revolutionaries were inexperienced in such matters and gladly accepted the experienced Fanariotes, who were arriving in the liberated areas.

After the first revolts in which the Fanariote Ypsilantes pioneered, mistrust was created between the Sublime Porte and Fanariotes high dignitaries, who were at the services of the Ottoman Empire. The Sultan suspected that behind the revolts was the Patriarchate and the fanariote families. Patriarch Gregorius the 5th condemned all the revolts, circulated his *Fatherly Teaching* and suggested to the flock "slave's obedience to the rulers". The Sultan, though, in order to avoid more revolts, decided to hang the leader of the Genus that was the Patriarch. He gave the order to the Grand Interpreter of the Sublime Porte, the Fanariote Stavrakis Aristarchos. He, in order to convince the Sultan that he was a loyal servant, carried on with the order and hanged Gregorius the 5th, who, by this way, became "national martyr".

Fanariote dignitaries of the Sultan started to doubt about their future. Since the Ottoman Empire was in doubt and started to stagger, many of them left and went to revolted Greece. Obviously, they didn't go there to fight but to play the same role they played in Byzantium and Ottoman empires, namely to play the role of the ruler. Bonafide and pressured revolutionaries accepted them out of need. The Fanariotes, together with the local landowners, slowly removed the chieftains from the National Assembly and Temporary Government. They wanted, in fact, to displace them from the leadership of the armed forces, too. A characteristic case was what happened after the battle of Peta, where commander was the ex dignitary of the Sultan, the Fanariote Alexandros Mavrokordatos. As president of the Executive, in 1822, he took the command of the 2.000 men and in Peta, near Arta, clashed against the forces of Omer Vryonis, suffering debacle. Two thirds of the philhellenes and half of the Roumeliotes revolutionaries were killed.

This event enhanced the authority of the chieftains and saved them temporary. The result of the disappointment of the chieftains against the governmental staff was that many of them sided with the Ottomans. In the battle of Peta there were also Geek chieftains by the side of the Ottomans. One of them was Yorgos Varnakiotes who had started the revolution in Epirus and had occupied Agrinio. Disappointed by Mavrokordatos and the other Fanariotes, he sided with the Ottomans. After the disaster of Peta, the chieftains' sought for a truce, so they could regroup. For this purpose, Varnakiotes intervened. Then, Karaiskakis was accused as a suspect for collaboration with the Turks and he was condemned. He was granted pardon, but he was always accountable to the governmental officers. Fanariotes did the same in the revolt in Greece, as they did with Vladimirescu in Moldovlachia. Fortunately, Karaiskakis was saved temporarily due to the struggle in Roumeli where he was appointed commander-general.

When the Omer Vryoni's threat was over, the antagonisms between governmental clans and chieftains intensified. A civil war broke out, of which the official bibliography mentions very little.

The Fanariotes and landowners were the favorites of the foreign powers. They represented the local oligarchy and thus they were their natural allies. The financial aid from donations and loans from abroad were given to them. Thus, having the money, they bought off or appointed their own commanders in the army.

General Makriyannes describes very graphically the machinations of the government in which he himself was attached. He writes, among other things: "The ever-Enlightened Mavrokordatos also agreed, a Fanariote himself, on the plan to dispose of the military [...]. They are classified, they are paid heavy wages. The fighters suffer. The families of those killed, those of whom that are young, they want for themselves [...]. The fighters' families become beggars and ask to go back to the Turks. They had them slaves but they clothed them, looked after them and they ate. In their own country they are beggars [...]. The family men and honest people have suffered by them all they didn't suffer by the Turks...".

Yannis Vlachoyannis, who publish in 1907 the memoirs of Makriyannes, wrote: "Androutsos

was destroyed because the government forces under Gouras, who campaigned against him, were paid bigger salaries and thus attracted most of the army that served under Odysseas". He mentions that in the payroll they wrote thousands of nonexistent names and took the salaries themselves. "Thus, many from the mainland entered Peloponnese as chieftains, due to the rebellion under this Government, and became rich via the money of the newly contracted loan". Only those that will read the whole book of the memoirs will get a clear picture of all that had occurred in that period.

Eventually, against a large financial reward, Gouras killed Odysseas Androutsos. Kolokotronis and many other chieftains, whose soldiers in a large number went by the side of the governing group for better salary, were arrested and imprisoned. The leaders of Filiki Etairia (Friendly Society), that had prepared the revolution, were pushed aside completely. The civil war ended with the absolute rule of the Fanariotes and the landowners, their allies.

But in May 1824 occurred something that the governing elite hadn't predicted. Ibrahim Pasha with his Turk-Egyptian fleet and army invaded the islands of the Aegean Sea and destroyed the Greek fleet and many of the islands. In February of 1825 he invaded Peloponnese and destroyed whatever he found before him. The inexperienced in war commanders of the governing forces were unable to confront them. Only Papaflesas successfully resisted against them in Maniaki, where he died a tragic death. In April of 1826 Kioutahis (Resid Mehmet Pasha) occupied almost all of mainland Greece and Mesolongi. The revolution substantially had been stifled, except some points of resistance. The government, due to the great danger it faced, released the imprisoned chieftains but the army had become weakened. In April 1827 Karaiskakis was killed in conspicuous way from a stray bullet and not during a battle. The Greek guard of Acropolis surrounded and it all seemed to be lost.

The Greek Revolution indeed was finished in the spring of 1824. The little revolutionary forces that were left, played a minimum role in what followed next. The big role, though, will be played by the Great Powers of the time.

THE FOREIGNERS ROLE IN THE CREATION OF THE KINGDOM OF GREECE

The Great Powers observed from the beginning the revolution with great interest. The main role was played by England that had occupied the Ionian Islands. There was taking refuge all the persecuted revolutionaries and civilians. It wanted the creation of a small oligarchy state in the mode of all European states, including France after 1815. It didn't want a all-Balkan "Greek Republic" as Regas and the Filiki wanted. It worked methodically for that purpose.

The Ionian Islands for many centuries belonged to the Venetian dominion. The language of the administration structure, education, of intellectuals and the upper class, was Italian. This fact if mentioned by some persons, it could be said it does not stand. It is confirmed, though, by the Constitution of the United State of the Ionian Islands. The Ionian was an independent state but was a member of the British Commonwealth and was governed by an English commissioner.

Article 4 says: "Established language of the state is Greek. Therefore is declared that the ethnic language be made highly educative, as fast as possible for use of conducting all of governing acts and judicial situations and it's about time for it to be recognized as the only one acceptable, in all official papers".

"Article 5. Due to inability at this time of immediate realization of this intent, due to the common matters being conducted generally in Italian, it is ordained all public affairs, during the casting of the first parliament's period, to be carried out in Italian, except the affairs belonging to the lower courts, in which the government thinks maybe is the proper time for introduction of the ethnic language, and thus the general use of it be accelerated".

This means that even after the abolition of the Venetian occupation by Napoleon in 1797 and until the adoption of this Constitution in 1819, the official language was Italian. The English wanted it abolished in the Ionian Islands, in fear of the creation of an Italian state, sooner or later, which could easily annex the Italophone islands to it. Therefore they imposed Greek that was the second spoken language. Obviously, they helped for this aim, too. In 1824 the English High Commissioner Maitland

found the Ionian Academy. The first Greek academy, thus, was created by the English and not the Greeks. The first Greek newspaper, *Greek chronicles*, was published in Messolongi by the Swiss philhellene Mayer.

The English did something else of significance. With article 3 of the Constitution, it was defined that "the predominant religion of the Ionian state is of the Greek-Orthodox Church" although the Ionian Islands belonged ecclesiastically to the Catholics. They granted them to the orthodoxes, so they would lessen the influence of the Catholics.

To the Greek-Arvanites that went to the Ionian Islands, they cultivated the European derived idea of being descendants of the ancient Greeks. This is what they did to replace the multiethnic Balkan Greek idea, with a monoethnic. The Greek speaking people accepted it with joy and the Albanian speakers and the others didn't object to it. If it takes this in order to win your freedom and live better, why not be ancient Greek?

Rega's *Thoureos* was spread and circulated only up to the point that the other peoples weren't mentioned (Serbs, Bulgarians, Thracians, Macedonians, etc) that Regas also called Greeks. His other hymn, *Paianas* that starts with the verse "all nations are fighting" was discarded. The slogan was: one nation, one language, one religion, one state. And if this nation obtained historical deep roots in time, it would be "brotherless" and foreign to the other Balkan people. Where will the other people find so deep in time roots? Since then the neo-Greeks feel brotherless and foreign towards the surrounding "barbarians". This serves wonderfully the purpose of divide and rule.

The one religion was imposed also by the foreigners. On the position of Regas and the Filiki Etairia that spoke of all religions that existed in the Balkans, they had put one: the Eastern Orthodox.

The first Constitution voted in December 1821 in Epidaurus, defined in the article a': "established religion of the Greek dominion is the Eastern Orthodoxy of Christ's church". In article b' defined: "all indigenous natives of the dominion of Greece that believe in Jesus Christ are Greeks...". Therefore, try not to become Christian and, of course, Orthodox. President of the National Assembly was the Fanariote Alexandros Mavrokordatos. Catholics were excluded, Mohammedans and others, so that won't have any influence in the new state, Catholics from the West and Mohammedans from the East. Of course, the other dogmas weren't prohibited, but were the reason for someone not to be considered "pure Greek". You choose and take. Men usually choose with criterion their interest. This is approximately how the new thoroughbred orthodox nation arose; "descendant of ancient Greeks".

The summer of 1827 the revolutionary movement was defeated. The leaders of Filiki Etairia and the revolutionary chieftains had been sidelined completely. The National Assembly and Temporary Government were totally controlled by the Fanariotes and landowners. The Great Powers that until then hadn't shown any direct interest for the independence of Greece, they do I now. Commander-general of the fleet was appointed the English general Richard Church, and Chief of the fleet is, the also English, Admiral Cochran. From now on, we can talk neither of a revolution, nor of "Greek Republic".

In April of 1827 the National Assembly decided to proclaim Governor Ioannis Capodistrias.

Capodistrias was born and raised in Kerkyra (Corfu). He was a descendant of an aristocratic Italian family (Vitori) and his real surname was Capo D' Istria. It derives from the name of the area of the peninsula of Istria, in the north-east side of the Adriatic where the family had settled, before moving to Corfu. They were one of the Venetians aristocratic families that governed the Ionian Islands. He also had in fact the title of Count. The French revolutionary forces had abolished the oligarchic establishment in 1797, but it was reinstated by the Russian-Turkish forces when they occupied the islands in 1799. The Russians and Turks declared the independence of the Ionian State and placed an oligarchic government. Then, Capodistrias rose politically, taking over sequentially the position of commissioner, minister and secretary of State. During the period he developed ties of friendship with the czarist establishment of Russia. He participated in the suppression of the anti-oligarchic revolts in Ionian Islands, until 1807, when French forces re-occupied the islands. After the French, the islands failed to the possession of the English. Capodistrias left and went to Russia where he served the czarist establishment, in high government positions, reaching up to minister of Foreign Affairs. In 1818 the Filiki Etairia proposed him the leadership of the freedom struggle, but he refused it. In 1822, instead of going to his country and help the liberation struggle, he settled in

Switzerland where he connected with bankers' circles. There, he was found by the oligarchic Greek government representatives and they proposed him the leadership of the new state (April 1827). He made his contacts with the governments of the Great Powers and waited.

The 6th of July 1827, a meeting was called in London, with representatives from England, France and Russia. The three allies decided to intervene, so to solve the Greek affair. They invoked a call by the Temporary Government and the fact that, because of lack of order, the navigation in the area was impeded. They proposed to the Sultan to recognize Greece as an independent state, but tax subjected to him. They had also a secret article in their agreement according to which, if the Sultan refused, within a month they would intervene together to impose their decision.

The Sultan, who had already succeeded on suppressing the revolution, rejected the proposition of the three powers. Then, the three Greats went on with their plan. A mixed English, French and Russian fleet gathered in Navarino on the south-west of Peloponnese and totally destroyed the Turkish-Egyptian fleet (8-10-1827). Capodistrias got convinced that the Great Powers have decided to create an independent state in Greece and he went there and took over its government, in January 1828.

The protector powers sent a message to the Sultan to withdraw Ibrahim and his forces from the region. He refused, because, although the allies had prevalence on the sea, on land, however, they did not have forces. The dissolved Greek army was unable to confront Ibrahim despite they had cut off his reinforcements by sea. Some spasmodic effort were of no success. Thus the Great Powers decided to act. They agreed with the French proposal to send an army to Greece. A French force of 15.000 soldiers disembarked in Greece on August of 1828. The Sultan understands that his opponents weren't joking and withdraws his forces without battle.

The Sultan, though, refused to recognize the complete independence of the new state. Hard negotiations followed as of the borders of the new state and the amount of tax it would pay, yearly. Greece would be tax subjected to the Sultan. Russia, though, had unleashed a new war on April of 1828, which ended with an overwhelming victory of Russia against the Ottomans on 10 September 1829. They forced, then, the Sultan to recognize the independence of Greece, without being tax subjected to him. Thus, without any participation of Greece in those wars, it became an independent state. Independent but only from the Ottoman Empire and not from the protector powers, to which it became a protectorate. With this Greece had the Macedonians to put up during the years that followed and not the "Greek Republic" of Regas and Filiki Etairia. And this is the reason why I quoted, synoptically, this whole history.

The main Greek Revolution ended with the defeat of the revolutionary forces during the civil war in 1823-1825. Subsequently, continuous minor revolts manifested against the new oligarchic regime.

Capodistrias did not include in the administration and in the regular army the leaders of the Greek Revolution. Most of the fighters were left unemployed and homeless. He also refused to distribute land to the peasants, despite the fact that the three fifths of them were landless. The Ottomans, who were ready to leave, sold their *tsiflikia* (estates) at depreciating prices. They were bought, though, by big landowners, the Fanariotes and their foreign allies that later get richer by exploiting and reselling them. The poor were unable to buy any land as they were pauperized by the struggle and exploitation. Their struggle wasn't vindicated. They simply had changed bosses.

The leading teacher of the Genus, Adamantios Koraes, besides the *"Brotherly Teaching"* that had published to rebut the servile *"Fatherly Teaching"* of the Patriarchate, published many more. He characterized the Fanariotes "turk-princes" and the oligarchic Ionians as "scabies lords". In 1830 he published two pamphlets: "what is in the interests of the liberated from the Turks Greece to do, so it won't be enslaved to the Christians with Turkish manners", and by which he accuses Capodistrias of being a tyrant, a tool of foreign oligarchy, and called on the people to an armed rebellion. Indeed, many armed revolts took place against the new regime. One of these was that of the Maniates, that were the first to start the revolution. All of them were suppressed with slaughter by the government's foreign army and by government orders. Admiral Miaoulis himself turned against Capodistrias who sent the Russian fleet against him. Culmination of this confrontation was the murder of Capodistria by the Maniates Constantinos Mavromihales and his nephew Yorgos.

Temporary successor of Capodistria was the Fanariote Alexandros Mayrokordatos who acted in order for the protecting powers to send a hegemon. Thanks to the Ottomans he was governor of Moldovlachia, while many other Fanariotes were dignitaries, that had this habit. Thus, he pursued foreign protectors to ensure the power of the Fanariotes Genus over the insubordinate Greeks.

The foreign protectors enthroned king the Bavarian Otto, who brought with him about 5.000 Bavarians, with whom he embodied the state mechanism. A descendant of them is the ex president of New Democracy party, Miltiadis Evert, who -as a pure Greek- is one of the toughest on the name issue of the republic of Macedonia. Many leaders of the Greek Revolution reacted and tried to arouse the people against the new bosses. But they get arrested by the government of the foreigners, were tried and imprisoned. Among them was also the leader of the Greek Revolution, Theodoros Kolokotronis. The English prosecutor Masson proposes the death penalty for high treason and only because of popular mobilizations forced Otto to give a pardon. Among the imprisoned with Kolokotronis was also Demetrios Karatasos-Tsamis, son of the leader of the Macedonian force that took part in the Greek Revolution. The ruling class in the new kingdom became the alliance among Bavarians, Fanariotes and the local landowners. It took long time struggles for the Greek people to get basic democratic rights. They made continues struggles to take the power in their hands, but until today they succeeded very little.

In the Kingdom of Greece hands the ruling class became the Fanariotes with the local landowners and the foreign adventurers that had come with Otto. Together with them, the ex-collaborators of the Ottomans from Constantinople and the Danubian Hegemonies started arriving and getting appointed to state offices. The big Fanariote merchants, suppliers of the Ottoman state, became suppliers of the Kingdom of Greece. Thus, the ruling class of Byzantium that continued to be the ruling class during the Ottomans became the ruling class of Greece.

A branch of this class is the Egyptian Romans. Egypt, since Alexander time, ceased to be an independent state and became a foreign colony. Alexandria and Cairo were the seats of the colonists. Romans imposed Christianity so they could annex it to their empire. They found the Patriarchate of Alexandria so they could ensure the spiritual submission of the Egyptians. The revolts of the Egyptians, of course, were continuous. The Egyptians quickly understood the role of this Imperial Patriarchate and distanced themselves from it. They created their own Christian dogma and Church and they are known as Copts. Like the Bogomiles of Macedonia, Copts, too, had a character of resistance. Justinian persecuted them and slaughtered more than 30.000 Egyptian Copts, while the Patriarchate excommunicated them as heretics and schismatic. When in 640 the Mohammedan Arabs invaded Egypt the Egyptians -although they weren't Arabs- accepted them as liberators and sided with them. The Orthodox Patriarchate, which they called "Imperial", disappeared, as well as the roman ruling class. The "barbaric" Arabs were proven less barbaric than the Romaic Greeks, respected the religious rights of the Christian Coptic and not only respected them, but also adopted Hellenic philosophy. Thanks to them the Greek literary work and Greek spirit were preserved in Egypt and later passed to Western Europe.

In 1517 the Ottomans occupied Egypt. For the same reason they upgraded and gave the Patriarchate of Constantinople its privileges, they upgraded also the Patriarchate of Alexandria. To it belonged, from now on, all the Christians of the area, Roman, Venetian, Frank, etc. The Alexandrian Romans became collaborators of the Ottomans, undertook offices and supplied the public offices, thus growing rich.

When in 1798 Napoleon invaded Egypt, the defense of the Mameluks was supported by the navy, whose admiral was the Roman Nikolaos Papazoglou or Papadopoulos, and by the artillery, in which leaders were the "Greek" brothers Gaeta. Commander of the Cairo police was the "demonic Greek" Vartholomeos Serras with origin from Chios island (Bartholomei-el- Roumi, Vartholomeos the Roman). The police force was composed mainly by Greeks (in language) but was named "Mameluks battalion" because they were in the service of Mameluk Turks. Napoleon defeated the Ottoman forces. The Egyptians grasped the opportunity and revolted against the previous regime and chased away their main support that was the Roman Greeks. The "demonic Romans", however, in order to save their acquired possessions, turned to the side of the French invaders. The French, who obviously were seeking for allies, accepted them because among the big merchants that were

protected by the Roman dignitaries, there were many Franks. Thus, Serras became, during French rule, chief commander of Cairo Police. The Egyptians continued their resistance and Serras who knew the area well, was the most adequate to suppress the guerillas on the cities. Papazoglou created three Greek battalions that numbered about 1.500 men. In 1801 the French occupation ended and Egypt returned to Ottoman rule. The Romans continued with them their old role. As it's obvious, all of the rebellions of the Egyptians against the foreigners, turned also against the Roman Greeks. Thus, many of them immigrated to Greece which was a paradise for all kinds of colonialists. They allied, of course, with the Fanariote regime, which they enforced. The Patriarchate of Alexandria never had any impact and never was respected by the Egyptian people. In the eyes of the people it was an institution of the colonialists. It had a flock only when it was supported by the colonialist powers. When colonialism ended, it was reduced to a sheppard without a flock.

Among those who went to Egypt and got themselves rich was also the family of ex president of the New Democracy party, E. Averof-Tositsa. I mention it, because as leaders of opposition in 1982 he resisted with passion against the repatriation of Macedonians political refugees.

The kingdom of Greece became a paradise for colonialists exactly because it was a protectorate of the westerners and the Fanariotes. The English incorporated to it the Ionian Islands, in 1864. The protecting powers expanded it even more in 1881, by granting to it Thessaly and Arta. The kingdom didn't make any kind of war to posses them. It simply guaranteed the interests of the protecting powers. It started by itself a war in 1897 to annex more lands, but failed very badly. The army was dispersed and the Ottomans would have occupied the whole country if the protecting powers wouldn't have intervened. As penalty, war compensations were imposed to be paid to the Ottomans. In order for those obligations to be paid off, Greek people were paying up until the 60's. It was the special taxes levied on matches, cigarettes, alcohol, etc. We Macedonians had also to pay, although, during that period, we were not subjected to their kingdom.

During the war of 1897, the figure of an army officer was worth of distinguishing. He resisted more than anyone and didn't allow the dispersion of the army he commanded. He was the colonel Constantinos Smolenskis. His surname is certainly not Greek. Smola means resin in Macedonian, thus the name of the mountain Smolikas, in northern Pindos. Probably, his origin was from that area and could have been a descendant of Macedonians that went and helped the Greek Revolution. He became an idol of the Greek people and many officers incited him to become a dictator, so to put an end to the state maladministration. He refused because this was against his principles. After the revolt in Goudi (1909) he became commander of the army, which means he had democratic principles. His slavic in origin surname didn't allow him to be honored by the official historians as he should have been.

WHO REVOLTED IN 1821 IN MACEDONIA

Macedonia was a central area of the Ottoman Empire and according to the estimate of the Filiki Etairia, it wasn't easy to start the revolution from there. A Macedonian force under Yorgakis Olympios and Makedonski had taken part in the rebellion of Moldovlachia.

A first attempt of revolte in Macedonia was done by Emanuel Papas, in Chalkidiki. E. Papas was from Ntovista Serres. He was a Greek speaking Macedonian, but the name of his place of birth shows that it was a slavophone village. It is one of those villages where the Greek language was imposed during the Patriarchate campaign in the 18th century. In 1926 was renamed to Emanuel Papas. The same happened to nearby villages Topoliani (Chryso), Novo Selo (Neochori), Veznik (Agio Pnevma), Sokol (Sykia), etc.

In the old days the people of the area between Serres and Drama were called Darnaci or Darnakides. Even today some of the villages are called like that. Dar in Macedonian means gift or charisma; even the charisma by God. Darnak is the charismatic. In plural woyld be Darnaci (Darnakides, in Hellenized form) which means charismatic people. To the East there are the Pomaci (Hellenized- Pomakoi). It derives from pomagaci that in Macedonian means helpers. Pomagaci became Pomaci=helpers. Thus, they were neighbors, the Charismatics and the Helpers. Two

Darnakides that came to the hot springs of Pozar told me that they were descendants of the charismatic soldiers of Alexander. Today, they tell the Pomakoi that they are descendants of the Agrianes archers, who were indeed an assistance force in Alexander's army. The idea was passed to the Darnakides a few decades or centuries earlier, so to convince them that they are of glorious Greek descendant. To convince someone to become your flock and join your corral, you have just to convince him that he is a sheep of the same race as yours. Before the 17th century they didn't talk much about ancient people. Of course, it's not excluded that names may have very deep roots in time.

The following curious fact also happens. The word dar (charisma) constitutes a synthetic of the names Iskandar, Sikandar, Alexandar. Sakam or iskam in Macedonian means I want. In revolutionary songs during the period of Ilinden, iskam is used. Also today is used in many Macedonian dialects. Consequently, iskandar or sikandar is the one gifted with strong will. Alexander the Great though, to the eastern people is known by the name Iskandar or Sikandar. Some of the cities he found are called up until today by the local people Iskanderum or Sikandarum. But also the Kalash, in northern Pakistan, have Macedonian name. Kaleshi in Macedonian means dark, of dark complexion.

In the customs and habits of Darnaci and Pomaci there are residues of Bogomilism. Similar names with Pomaci-Darnaci, probably of satiric character, are encountered also in other areas, like Sourdi-Malourdi in Kozani. The residents of our prefecture called the neighboring residents of Morichovo "Turlaci". Turlak in Macedonian is turd. They, in turn, called our people "Oulaci". Oulak means silly. Satire was a characteristic element of the Bogomiles.

Emanuel Papas thus disembarked in Mount Athos in April of 1821 and in collaboration with the monks attempted to organize the revolt. The Patriarchate had condemned the revolution on one hand, but most of the lower clergy followed the revolutionaries. In the beginning the results were good, but the attempt didn't have the anticipated sequel. The Ottomans threatened the Abbots of the monasteries that they will abolish their privileges, so they withdraw their support to E. Papas and purged the revolutionary abbot. The sudden death of E. Papas meant the end of the revolt.

More massive was the revolt on the mountainous area of Vermio, Pieria, Olympus. Leaders of this revolt were Tasos Karatasos from Dobra of Veria, Angelis Gatsos (Angel Gatsov) from Sarakinovo of Moglena (Sarakini Pella) and Zafirakis from Naousa.

The revolt started in the beginning of February 1822. The revolutionaries occupied Naousa and the villages around it and in the 21st of February entered Veria. They couldn't hold it, though, and left. The Ottoman forces counterattacked but were repelled in Dobra monastery, with great losses. This angered and forced Ebu Lubut, Pasha of Thessaloniki, to lead a large expedition force himself, and besieged Naousa at the end of March. The battle was uneven and Naousa fell in the hands of Lubut Pasha on the 13th of April. The Ottomans, because they were enraged by the great losses they suffered, but also in order to discourage all other revolts, destroyed the city and slaughtered a large part of the population.

The revolt and the destruction of the city of Naousa is quite projected in the modern Greek official history. There is no mention, though, of a lot of significant elements concerning the identity of the revolted people.

Leader of the revolution was Tasos Karatasos, born in the village of Dobra, which is seven kilometers north-west of Veria, in 300 meters of altitude. The village got its name from the monastery that existed in the area, dedicated to Dobra Bogorodica. In Macedonian dobra means good and Bogorodica is Mother of God (Boga means God and rodica is the one that gives birth). The monastery and the village are known to the Greek-speaking people with its Hellenized name, Thovra. It was renamed in 1926, by the bureaucrats, in Kali Panagia. In all of the literary work Karatasos birth place is mentioned as Thovra and very few modern Greeks know what the name means.

In 1770 Dobra took part in the revolt known as Orlofika. Protagonist of that revolt was the collaborator of Orlof, lieutenant of the Russian army, Yorgos Papatzolis from Siatista, Kozani. The Siatistinians were what we call today bilingual Macedonians. The names of places that end in tsa(ca)-sta have slavic origin or influence. It is also one of the villages that became greek-speaking after the mid-18th century, under urging of the Patriarchate. The surname Papatzolis is the hellenized Papa-Tzole.

Siatista, just as Naousa, were towns where the Greek language displaced the Macedonian one. Thus, the Siatistinian Theocharis Tourountza who, three decades later, was hanged together with Regas Velestinles, being betrayed by the pro-patriarchate big merchant from Kozani, Demetrius Economou, is presented to us as Greek. The voevoda Alexandar Tourountzev from Xino Nero, Aminteo, who has the same surname and an ancient Macedonian name and fought for the liberation of Macedonia in 1903, they present him to us as a Bulgarian; the Greek pen.

The Ottomans suppressed the revolt led by Papatzolis from Siatista and destroyed Dobra. Karatasos family that participated in that revolt, moved to Tsatal (Dichali or Dichalevri) where, together with other uprooted families, created the Dichalevri settlement.

Co-leader of the revolt was Angel Gatsos (Angelis Gatsos) from Sarakinovo, Moglena (Sarakini, Pellas). The village is located 20 km north-west from Vodena (Edessa) and about 10 km south of Pozar (Loutraki), at 600 Mt of altitude. The forces of Gatsos (the u is read as v or f for Macedonians) consisted of fighters from the villages of the regions of Vodena, Moglena, Ostrovo and Giannitsa. In these provinces, there was not even one single greek-speaking village. Even today, in most of these local villages they speak Macedonian.

Zafirakis was born in Naousa where he was a notable and played mainly a political role. Naousa back then was called or Negousta or Niaousta. The locals of the area still call it Negous, even today. The city's name, o the river Arapitsa's name and other names of the area reveal slavic origin or influence. The same happens with the surnames of local Naousa people. The local traditional celebrated testify about Bogomiles.

After Naousa, the outraged Ottomans, due to their great losses, destroyed many more villages that are hardly mentioned in official bibliography. They are Dolno Grammatikovo (Kato Grammatiko), Gorno Grammaticovo (Ano Grammatiko), Osliani (Agia Fotini), Drazilovo (Metamorfosis), Koutsoufliani (Agios Pavlos), Fetitsa (Pola Nera), Ramnitsa, Gorno Selo (Ano Vermio), Dolno Selo (Kato Vermio), Arkoudochori, Marousa, Choropan (Stenimachos), Iavornitsa (Trilofon-Nea Kouklena), Tsornovo (Fytia), Koutsochori, Doliani (Koumaria), Souva Livanta (Xiolivado), Dobra (Kali Panagia), Koumanits (Komninio), Dolna Louzitsa (Tripotamos), Gorna Louzitsa (Ano Tripotamos), Topliani (Georgiani), Tsarkoviani (Mikri Santa, Agios Ioannis), Karatasi (Mavrodentri). Also some of the villages in Pieria were destroyed such as Skotina and Touria. Touria was about five kilometres north of Katerini and in 1926 was renamed in Ganochora. In parenthesis are the names they were renamed in 1926. The village Arkoudochori and Koutsochori had greek names and weren't renamed. Marousa was left with the old name, while the rest of them never got resettled with people, thus there was no need for them to be re-baptized.

Almost none of the burned village was greek-speaking. From those "slavophone" villages came the leaders and most of the revolutionaries. Everyone, however, called them Macedonians. These were the Macedonians that carried the biggest burden of the revolt, these were sacrificed, and these were destroyed. These fought for the liberation of Macedonia.

Who has right to be called Macedonian, more than them? Maybe, do the apathetic collaborators of the Ottoman forces of occupation Greek-speakers? Or, maybe, do the colonists that later settled in Macedonia?

The names Slav-Macedonians, Bulgar-Macedonians, Slavophones, Slavs, Rumanian-Vlachs, etc. were not used for them by nobody. These were invented later in order to slander and undermine the Macedonian liberation struggle but also to put in doubt their rights. Slav-speaking, Latin-speaking, Greek-speaking at that time, felt among them as brothers. Conflicts between them due to language differences were never mentioned, not even by the most fanatic Greek-mongers. The negative feelings that exist today among Greek-speaking towards mainly the Slav-speaking and Latin-speaking are because of those who wanted to divide them, with the purpose of ruling over them. That's the reason why they started to slander the non greek-speaking, with protagonists the slanderers of the Imperial Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Among the revolutionaries there was a large number of Vlachs from the area of Olympus and Grevena. Their leader, Yorgakis Olympios, was killed, with many other fighters, one year earlier in Moldovlachia. Filiki Etairia whose member was Karatasos, gave great importance to that effort because on the one hand it provoked distraction and on the other it tried to cut off reinforcement to

the Ottomans of Roumeli and Moreas. Therefore, it sent the fighters to help in the area of Naousa.

The participation of the greek-speaking populations seems very small and it is not recorded, because the greek-speakers were the most content, and many of them were landowners and dignitaries. The Ottomans, besides to Turk-Albanians, were granting large land areas to greek-speaking patriarchates, so to reward them for services rendered. They are those that Adamantios Koraes named "Turk-princes". The greek-speaking villages of Roumlouki were on flat land that was not proper for guerilla warfare. Besides there were the people of the Patriarchate that had condemned the revolution and for the sake of their privileges they were suggesting "slavish obedience to the rulers". Thus, they did not participate to the revolt and were not destroyed.

In the west side of mount Vermio a large part of greek-speaking population, had become Muslims (Valaades) and were in line with the Ottomans. In the north and the east, from where the forces of Gatsos were formed, there wasn't even a single greek-speaking village. The closest greek-speaking native village from the village of birth of Gatsos, Sarakinovo, is at a distance of about 50 km away and more than 80 km from Thessaloniki. On the mountainous area of Emathia and Pieria, the villages also weren't greek-speaking. Vergina was called Koutles and the next to it settlement was Barbes. Polydendri was called Koukoba. Livadi Pierias was named Boltsista, Paliampela was called Lontgino and Aeginio was called Limbanovo. Thus, the big burden of revolt in Macedonia was carried by non-Greek Macedonians.

The villages that were destroyed remained without inhabitants for a long time. All of the people that were saved settled in deserted Naousa, in Veria and surrounding villages. In the deserted mountain villages started to settle Vlachs from nearby areas and Epirus, who were persecuted by the Ottomans because of their local mutinies, there. They settled and revived the destroyed mountain villages. Until 1926, though, the names of the villages remained the same. It was then that they changed the names of the settlements, but the names of the landscape remained the same. Thus for instance Gorno Selo that the Vlachs called Seli or Sel, was renamed Ano Vermio, but the area continued to be called Seli, that became well known everywhere due to its ski resort.

The forces of Karatasos and Gatsos estimated that the aim of holding the front in Macedonia wasn't feasible, and decided to support their co-fighters in the south. About 300 Macedonian fighters went south and fought until the end, thus helping the liberation of Greece. During the civil war they stood by the side of the local chieftains. In all the popular revolts against the Fanariotes and their local and foreign allies, they stood by the side of the struggling people. The Greek resistance movement unfortunately was defeated and so were the Macedonian fighters.

Tasos Karatasos died in Nafpaktos in 1830, unappreciated. His son Demetrios or Tsamis, was among those imprisoned with Kolokotronis, Plapoutas and other fighters. He participated in the organization "Real Orthodoxes". Only thanks to the popular revolts of the Greek people they were freed. Angel Gatsov, with his Macedonian co-fighters, was pushed aside and they were not accepted in the regular army. They granted them an area near Atalanti where they lived and died in poverty. Demetrios Karatasos is also mentioned with the name Tsamis. In Macedonian exists the name Mitso, Mitsi, Mitse, Mitsa, corresponding to Demetrios. By a change of the order of syllabies, Mi-tsa becomes Tsa-mi. The real name of Yorgakis Olympios was Tartages, from the family of Lazei, that took part in the revolt of Naousa.

Because of people's pressure, Otto reinstated some of the most potent chieftains, among them Tsamis-Demetrios Karatasos that in 1828 was commander of an army force. He kept trying to sensitize the circle of Athens' government for the liberation of Macedonia, without any success whatsoever.

In 1854 the Crimean war started, between Russia and the Ottoman Empire. Karatasos thought it was an opportunity for revolt in Macedonia, since the occupying forces would have been employed in Crimea. But nobody was sensitized in Athens. Karatasos created his own forces and in the 6th of April disembarked in Chalkidiki. At the beginning he had some success, but not even the monks of the monasteries of Mount Athos helped him, nor did the government. Thus in June he returned to Athens. The government was the mouthpiece of the English-French powers that during that war were fighting by the side of the Ottomans, while the Patriarchate continued to be their crutches.

Karatasos got disappointed by the regime of Athens and tried to find support in Europe. He

traveled to France, England, Rumania and ended up in Serbia. While he was doing consultations with its hegemon Milos Obradovich, he got sick and died in 1860. On his gravestone the epigraph is written in two languages, greek and macedonian.

In the kingdom of Greece, the Fanariotes became the ruling class together with local landowners and foreign adventurers that had arrived with Otto. Since, exactly, they had no relation whatsoever with the fighters of "Greek Republic" of Regas Veleshtinles and Filiki Etairia, but they were their persecutors, and not only they didn't help but persecuted non-stop the Macedonian fighters.

THE REAL MACEDONIAN STRUGGLE

The Macedonians never ceased to care for the liberation of their land. During the Russian-Turkish war of 1877-78 they didn't have a well enough organized revolutionary movement. In that war Turkey was defeated and forced to sign the Saint Stephan treaty on March 3, 1878. By this, it recognized Bulgaria as an independent state. In it Macedonia, except Chalkidiki and Thessaloniki, was included. The Great Powers reacted and the Saint Stephan treaty was abolished by the Berlin Convention (July 1878).

In 1878, under the instigation of Greece, a Provisional Government of Macedonia was created in Litochoro, Pieria. The initiative was taken by the Episcopo of Kistrus who was, of course, a tool of the fanariote regime. By a pleading it asked for the annexation of Macedonia to Greece. The memorandum, since it had no popular base and amplitude, wasn't taken into account at all, by the Great Powers.

In many places of Macedonia, revolutionary groups were created with the aim its liberation. The most significant of them all was created in Eastern Macedonia. In October of 1878 the revolutionary forces occupied Resna and expanded to Tzoumayia, Petric, Melnik and surrounding areas. They formed a Macedonian Revolutionary Committee and printed the "Declaration of Principles" that was a sort of a temporary constitution. In the articles of this declaration was clear that they were fighting for an autonomous Macedonia, in which the equality and rights of all ethnicities that live in Macedonia would be safeguarded. The land would be distributed to the landless people, but the Turkish landowners will keep an adequate part of their land. They call on the Macedonian clergy to boycott the Bulgarian Exarches and form autonomous bishoprics. Their military equipment came from the Macedonians of the diaspora and mainly from Bulgaria, Serbia, and Rumania. The Great Powers of the West think that Russia is behind the uprising. They do not want a friendly state to Russia to have an exit road to the Aegean Sea. Moreover, this was the reason why they annulment of the Saint Stephan treaty that gave to Bulgaria an exit to the Aegean. Their pressures had as a result the hindering of the supplies to the revolted and the revolt to be suppressed.

After the Berlin Convention, consultations started to sort out the unsolved issues resulting in the Conference of Constantinople (1881).

To these processes Macedonians tried to intervene by forming a wider political alliance. Their contacts led to the creation of a temporary Macedonian Government in 1880. They formed a National Assembly of 32 representatives that are: Dimitar Yanev from Smardes, Kastoria, Christos Kramontos from German, Prespa, Elia Isailov from Kicevo, Ilio Bozinov from Klantorabi, Florina, Stoyan Mircev from Prilep, Nikola Petrushev from Veles, Ali Efendi from Piskopia, Debar, Moustafa Idriz from Gostivar, Kosta Elioglou from Krushevo, Ramiz Arifi from Korytsa, Yanaki Papazoglou from Bitola, Petar Nikolov from Stip, Georgi Dimitrov from Tzoumayia, Konstantin Antonov from Velickovo, Kocansko, Ivan Georgiev from Kumanovo, Gerasim Mitrovich from Skopie, Stoyan Civeovski from Rosoki, Debarcko, Argyrios Karakostas from Serres, Vasil Greko from Vrbik, Kastoria, Tanio Christov from Ossiani, Gianitsa, Vasil Simon from Voden, Delio Stoyanov from Armencko, Florina, Elia Cvetkov from Starkovo Prespa, Georgi Christov from Valandovo, Traiko Georgiev from Gradiste Kumanovo, Dimitar Angelovich from Varbeni Ohrid, Georgios Anastasis from Thessaloniki, Christo Georgiev from Kavadarci, Michael Dimitrov from Bansko, Anastas Panagyri from Melnik, Anastas Dimitrovich from Ohrid, Ivan Georgiev from Serres. The presidency was composed of Vasil Simon from Voden, Dimitrovich from Ohrid and Ali Efendi, an Albanian from Piskopia, Debar.

In the official texts, the Protocol, the Manifest, the telegrams sent to the embassies of the Great Powers in Thessaloniki, everywhere they speak expressly of Macedonians, Macedonian people and Independent Macedonian State. Their slogan was "Macedonia for Macedonia-Equality". All

nationalities are represented, linguistic and religious groups. Their principles are democratic, like in all previous movements in which the Macedonians participated.

The initiative was accepted with favorable comments by the diplomats, Russian and Romanians in particular. But, there was no support by any great power and there wasn't an organized popular movement to pressure.

The Macedonians, headed by Yorgakis Olympios and Karatasos, had participated in 1804-1806 in the liberation struggle of the Serbs. Led by Olympio and Makedonski had participated in 1821 to the uprising in Rumania. Headed by Karataso and Gatso has participated to the struggle to liberate Greece. Now, that their turn had come, no one reciprocated. In those countries oligarchic and chauvinist regimes had prevailed that only had grabbing in their mind. Thus, the Assembly of Constantinople in 1881 didn't satisfy the request of the Macedonians. Turkey recognizes officially the semi-autonomy of Bulgaria, East Romylia becomes an autonomous hegemony and Thessaly and Arta were granted to Greece, officially. In 1885 Bulgaria annexed East Romylia without essential reaction from the great powers and the Balkan states. Macedonians were left with the bitterness of the betrayed. They are the only Christians together with the Thracians to be left enslaved to the Ottomans.

THE INTERNAL MACEDONIAN REVOLUTIONARY ORGANIZATION (I.M.R.O.)

After the great losses it suffered, the Ottoman Empire toughened its stand against all the peoples that were still its vassals. The Macedonians had to deal most with a wounded and enraged power. The surrounding oligarchic states all they thought of was how to grab.

Serbia wants to reach downwards to the Aegean. Besides, the largest part of Macedonia was under its possession for few decades, before the Ottomans occupied it in the 14th century.

Bulgaria annexed East Romylia with no resistance, in 1885, and does not forget that the biggest part of Macedonia was granted to it by the Saint Stephan treaty.

Greece got the "gift" from patron powers, in 1881, of Thessaly and Arta, which opened its appetite for more. Besides, it is the most loyal ally of the Westerners in the Balkans and expects from them reciprocation.

Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople had high defections. During Justinian (6th century), its power reached from Egypt to Armenia and the Balkans up to Danube. In Egypt, Palestine, Syria Christians monophysites, coptic, paulikians, etc., sided by the Arabs and then the Ottomans. The Armenians of Byzantium made their own Patriarchate with its seat in Constantinople and Jerusalem and took with them other disappointed Byzantine Christians. In the Balkans each of the peoples that became autonomous made their own autocephalous church. But also the autonomous Archbishoprics became collaborators for the empowerment of the people. This happened for example with the Archbishopric of the Serbs or the Archbishopric of Vidin, that sub-helped the state of Bulgaria, or the Literature and Ecclesiastic School of Ohrid that contributed in the creation of the State of Samuel. And that's the reason why the Patriarchate abolished in mid-18th century those Archbishoprics with the support of the Sultan. Later, when the Balkan people started becoming autonomous, they made their own autocephalous churches and thus the flock of the Patriarchate diminished. Even the sister church of Greece was proclaimed autonomous in 1830. The Patriarchate characterized it schismatic and only in 1850 their relations were reinstated, without abolishing its autocephalous status. The same happened with the Romanian and Serbian churches the following years.

In 1870, the Sultan, under strong pressures was forced to recognize the creation of the Bulgarian Patriarchate. It was named Exarchy and had its seat also in Constantinople. Except Bulgaria, it joined it also Thracians, Macedonians, Albanians, Serbs populations that were disappointed by the horrific role that the Romaic-orthodox Patriarchate played. But even before the creation of Exarchy, Macedonian population resentful of the Patriarchate, had separated from it and joined the Catholic Church.

Bulgarians tried to arrogate all those who joined the Exarchy. They presented them as

Bulgarians just as the Patriarchate presented their followers as Greeks. Macedonians reacted, in particular students and intellectuals. At first the Bulgarians didn't give much attention to the matter, but later begun to worry.

The Bulgarian publisher of the newspaper *Makedonia* in Constantinople, Petko Slaveikof, published on 18th of January 1871, a lengthy article in order to weaken the Macedonian current. Among other things, he wrote: "Finally the Macedonian Matter was published and appeared in the press. We say "finally" because the matter isn't a new affair. We heard of it ten years ago from a few all over Macedonia. Basically, we accepted the words of these young patriots as a joke [...] the same way we were thinking ourselves two years ago, when new discussion with some Macedonians showed us that this affair is not only empty words but concept that many want to realize. We had difficulty and grief when heard such words [...] many times we heard from Macedonians that they are not Bulgarians, but Macedonians, descendants of ancient Macedonians. Macedonists never showed us evidence for these views [...] Since ancient Macedonians lived on these same lands, why not the people of today cannot be of Macedonian blood? They are the real Macedonians, the Macedonists conclude and are calmed by their big discovery [...] the Macedonists probably think that national affairs will always be handled by northern Bulgarians [...] and that the Macedonians will be put on a secondary place. That's what the words of Macedonists mean "we were liberated from the Grecians, just to fall into the hands of others?"

Slaveikof, in fact, accuses the Macedonians to cleave the Bulgarian people. Of course, the same accusations come by the Serbians and Greeks, too. All call them Macedonians, but Bulgarian Macedonians, Serbian Macedonians, Greek Macedonians.

By an order of the Exarche, Slaveikof toured Macedonia and informed him about the propaganda exercised on Macedonians by the Unites, Greece and Serbia. They are passing to them, he writes, "catastrophic ideas that they are not Bulgarians, but Macedonians, namely something higher than Bulgarians, (descendants of Alexander) [...] The first consequence of this propaganda is: disbelief toward the Exarchy and secret reaction against its goals to unite them ecclesiastically". Indeed, many communities in Macedonia had come in contact with the Catholic Church for their accession to it. Actually, in 1859 the archbishop of Kukush (Kilkis) had joined the Catholics. This is what the Orthodox Church calls Unia (union) and in that period it begun to take big dimensions. Often the relations between Orthodox and Catholics exacerbated due to the unionist current in Macedonia.

The Romaic-orthodox Patriarchate knew that a possible liberation of Macedonia will mean more loss of flock. The danger of ending up like the patriarchate of Alexandria, Jerusalem and Antioch was visible, thus it fought in legal and illegal ways so the Ottoman dominion won't be restricted any more.

This is the environment in which Macedonians acted, during the last decade of the 19th century.

Besides the negatives, there was also a very favoring circumstance. The Ottoman Empire entered into a deep crisis and falters. This is something that encouraged Macedonians. Small revolts started and the fermentation for the creation of a new liberation movement.

On 23rd of October 1893 in Ivan Nikolov's bookstore in Thessaloniki a group of Macedonians gathered and decided the creation of a revolutionary organization. Its aim was to rid Macedonia from Ottoman tyranny and the distribution of the land that was in the hands of landowners to the landless peasants. In the Macedonian state all ethnicities will participate equally with freedom of all languages and religious doctrines. Their central slogan would be "Macedonia to Macedonians".

The organization took various names until it ended up to "Vnatrešna Makedonska Revolucionerna Organizatsia" (V.M.R.O.) that in English means "Internal Macedon-Adrianople Revolutionary Organization" (I.M.R.O.). The initial core was composed by mainly intellectuals from Thessaloniki, among them the bookstore keeper Nikolov on whose house the founding meeting took place, professor Dame Gruev, doctor Christo Tatarchev, professor Petar Poparsov, teacher Anton Dimitrov and professor Christo Batantziev. A bit later the teacher from Kukush (Kilkis) Gotse Deltsev joined them, who emerged as the ideological and political leader of the organization. He became, namely, similar to Regas Velestinles. Moreover, the principles of V.M.R.O.-I.M.R.O. were the same as those of Regas and the Filiki Etairia. Exactly the same were also the forces that fought against them.

Except the Ottoman regime, they were also the oligarchic kingdoms and the Fanariote establishment.

The declarations of the organization found great acceptance mainly among intellectuals and rural population. Peripheral organizations were created in the whole of Macedonia, but also to Macedonians of the diaspora. The biggest Macedonian community of the diaspora was in Bulgaria and mainly in Sofia, that was the nearest Christian capital and there many Macedonians studied and worked.

The Bulgarian regime tried control the Macedonian organization. Some insiders put by the regime convened in 1895 a conference of Macedonian organizations and created the "Verhoven Committee" (High Committee) whose members were called Verhovists and were bulgarizing (Bulgaromani). In the conference participated most of the organizations although among the initiators existed questioning. On one hand, they wanted the support and friendly stand of Bulgaria, as well as of the other neighboring states, but on the other hand they feared that what happened with the East Romylia and Thessaly could happen again. Those areas were annexed by Bulgaria and Greece, but for the common people nothing had changed. Only the bosses changed. For this kind of changes they weren't willing to fight.

The Internal Organization of Macedonia convoked in the summer of 1896 a convention in Thessaloniki where only patriotic Macedonian organizations representatives participated. The convention was held in secrecy and decided the creation of a secret organization named "Taina Makedonska Osloboditelna Rivolutsionerna Organizatsia"-T.M.O.R.O. (Secret Macedonian Revolutionary Organization). The aim was, indeed, autonomous Macedonia but it allowed bridges toward Bulgaria, Serbia, and Greece. They knew that in order to succeed, they need the support of their neighbors and also their friendly stand. When this trend became stronger and prevailed all over Macedonia, could not be kept secret any longer and thus was renamed to "Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization". The "internal" was put exactly to emphasize that the struggle must depend on internal Macedonian forces. Dependence and support by external forces would've meant dependency by them. That's the reason why the neighboring monarchist regimes undermined its struggle. The followers of this organization were called "Centralists" due to the Central Committee that directed it. The armed guerillas were called Komites, from Komitet which in Macedonian means committee. The word is Latin, thus is the Commission that governs the European Union.

The Bulgarian regime never gave up its efforts to control the organization with insiders, ransom, even with murders of Centralists. The Athenian regime in collaboration with the Patriarchate influenced patriarchate population not to support the liberation struggle. In 1897 indeed, in order to forestall the developments, it declared a hurried expansionist war, but not only wasn't successful to annex lands from Macedonia, it risked of losing its freedom, instead. But it was saved by its western protectors.

The undermining struggle was taken over by the positioned bishop of the Romaic-Orthodox Patriarchate. They made a call to patriarchate population to abandon the organization and slandered it in every way. In this sector they are scientists. The most usual slander was that behind it was hiding Bulgaria and that's why they called them collectively "bulgarians"; or the Pope, thus they called them "schismatic Unionists". Among the Macedonians, of course, there was a pro-Bulgarian part that argued that only Bulgaria can liberate them. These were called Bulgaromani. The Patriarchates that were pro-Greeks were called Grkomani, and the pro-Serbs, Srbomani.

THE ROLE OF GERMANOS KARAVANGELIS

The most renowned positioned bishop of the Patriarchate was the bishop of Kastoria, Germanos Karavangelis. He studied at the Theology School of Chalki were, after, he was appointed professor. The information elements I present about him are from his own memoirs that the Etairia Makedonikon Spoudon (Macedonian Studies Society) published in Thessaloniki in 1959.

So, Karavangelis writes that in 1896 he was appointed local episcope in the Peran district of Constantinople. In order to show his work against the unionists, he mentions that he drifted by deceit a unionist cleric near the gate of the Patriarchate. "There, I waited with two bailiffs that caught the

apostate and dragged him in the courtyard of the Patriarchate [...] we called in secret a barber and after he shaved his white beard and hair, we put on his head a fez and let him go as mister Ilarios, looking like a grocer of Fanari, under the jeers of young punks".

In 1900 he was appointed bishop of Kastoria, by proposal of Fanariote Nikolaos Mavrokordatos, who was Greek ambassador in Constantinople. His friend K. Tsoukas, who was at the welcoming, writes: "...the nice entourage appears, mounted on beautiful horse, kavasides armed and Turkish zapiedes were accompanying them". As Karavangelis writes, the commander of the Greek-Turkish border was a friend of his and for kavasi (bodyguard) he had a Turk-Albanian, Emin.

He writes that: "the slavophone villages [...] had defected to the Exarchy and, actually, as more in time the gangs are multiplying with the appearance of new chieftains like Tsakalarov from Smardessi, Koles from Mokraina, Kotas from Roulia, Mitros Vlahos from Konoplati, Kostantov from Kastanochoria, Korsakov from Kostenetsi, Gelev from Tirsia, another Koles from Dobrolitsa, Nikolas from Konoplati, Alexis from Exi-Sou (which in turkish means Sour Water), Pantelis from Banitsa, Lazos Papatraikov from Diben, Kouzos, the teacher of bulgarian from Blati, Christov from Tsaritsani, the mayor Yangov from Zagoritsani, Guranov from Bulgaria, Loukas that was a Vlach from Kastoria, and a bunch of others [...] everyday more orthodox people defect [...] their committee gets stronger". In fact, he writes, that all of the chieftains were from the surrounding villages, except Guranov who, obviously, came from another area. But he says he is from Bulgaria, to support the impression he created about Bulgaria.

He failed to succeed on convincing the orthodoxes to return to the flock of the Patriarchate and searched for other ways. He went to the embassy in Bitola (Monastery) and asked for help from the government of Athens. He didn't find immediate response and, hopeless, returned to Kastoria. He thought: "I should have tried to detach a Bulgarian chieftain and convince and transform him and make him into a Greek chieftain. Therefore I decided to meet Kotas from Roulia [...]. As a chieftain of the Bulgarians he had killed Kasim Agha, thus, he was an outlaw, condemned to death. But his village Roulia a few years ago was Greek and he himself before joining the Committee was an orthodox..." He arranged a meeting and told him "You are Greeks since the time of Alexander the Great, and the Slavs came by and slavized you. Your looks are Greek [...] I will send you south to meet the Greek (Danish) kings and I will send your children to Greece to get an education". He admitted it and we agreed, he will take over the protection of the villages of his area and I the obligation to support his forces [...] he sent me his children [...] and after I sent them to Pavlos Melas [...] and they were put in the Delios Lyceum and after in the military school of Evelpidon (army officers) [...] to Kotas I sent immediately a month wage, ten gold coins for himself and two for each one of his boys, namely his brave men.

Thus, Kotas from "Bulgarian komitatzis" became Greek. By the exactly same method he bought off kapetan Vangelis from Strebeno, and some others. With the same method some Fanariotes in 1821-27 bought off some chieftains of the Greek revolution, paying them better wages, thus weakening the revolutionaries of Filiki Etairia, Kolokotronis, Androutsos, Karaiskakis, etc., defeated them and became the new bosses of Greece. Now they came to Macedonia to do and achieve the very same thing.

In order to draw Gelev to his side, he became a slanderer, spread that Gelev's wife went with Tsakalarov: "And after all" added "I know also other things about Tsakalarov. Two men that together take to the mountains are like brothers. Their wives, thus, must be holy to each other. This and that, you ought to know, will bring great misfortunes [...] Finally, I convinced them [...] Then, I told them I'll give them a month's wage because it's a shame for them to take money from poor peasants; three golden coins for him and one and a half for his braves".

Karavangelis admits that the Komites took contributions from the peasants and those they were killing were the sold out traitors. But to Athens he sends many letters where he talks about "lots of money from Bulgaria" and "blood thirsty Bulgarians who murder Greeks".

Up until the Fanariote slanderers arrived in Macedonia, in the Macedonian liberation struggle there has not been observed a single confrontation between greek-speakers or non greek-speakers Christians. Not even the most fanatic anti-Macedonians mention such incidents. In particular any greek-speaking villages or any greek-speaking Macedonian wasn't touched, not even one. Also not

even one of them helped the Fanariotes in that dirty struggle of theirs. Only some thieves were recruited vis a salary, like Karalivanos, Visvikis and others.

About Karalivanos, Karavangelis writes: "In Macedonia, for many years acted, as the leader of a predatory gang, Karalivanos, with origin from Thessaly, that was an ex junior officer that fled from Greece due to a murder he committed. He, in 1899-1900 had captured as prisoner a very wealthy Greek-Vlach from Kleisoura, mister Simotas. But Simotas' son in law it seems that, in defense, caught Karalivanos and he, in order to free himself, killed him with a knife. But he freed Simotas, after receiving a ransom and after he wandered him in almost all the mountains of Macedonia. He had committed also other crimes of the kind".

Karalivanos with his "gang of predators" became his chieftain and joined Pavlos Melas. In Siatista during the Turkish attack where Melas was killed, he was in the house next door but left with his men.

He tried to buy off also Mitros Vlahos, who was chieftain in Korestia. So, he writes: in 1906, after an agreement with Kalapothakis, I sent a letter to the notorious felon and chieftain Mitros Vlachos from Konoplati, with a pseudonym, where I promised him [...] to send him to Greece, where he'd be given a capital of money on hand and good monthly wage of ten golden coins for life, educate his children in Greece and make them officers of the army, if he was willing to leave the struggle against Greece, to which he had nothing against since he was a Vlach and to calm down. Then, he answered me [...] and advised me to leave his Komitet alone, otherwise he'll kill me and send my skin to Kastoria [...]. Seeing that the Greek forces were unable to catch him or kill him, I thought of destroying him in another way. A few months before the Bulgarian uprising in Smardesi had gathered almost all of the Bulgarian Committee, Sarafov, Tsakalarov, Mitros Vlahos, Karsakov, Koles, more than three hundred men. I was informed. What do I do? I ran to the Kaimakami and told him "I surrender you, tonight, the Bulgarian Committee." He, right away, informed the army of Monaster (Bitola), Korytsa [...] and a force of 800 men [...] then besieged Smardesi [...] the Committee escaped right inside their hands". Subsequently, he describes how he was informed about the night Mitros Vlahos spent in Zoupanista, where he sent one of his collaborators to "accompany that night a Turkish detachment and cover all exits of the village Zoupanista. 'Then, I ran to Kaimakami and convinced him to send an army force at night [...] in a way that Mitros exit would be impossible [...] and there he was killed with most of his force".

But the collaborator of the conquerors sends continuously letters to Athens and speaks of "traitors and blood thirsty Bulgarians komitatzides". He calls them Bulgarians, all the time, to deceive their receivers. If he had told them the truth, that it was all about the indigenous Macedonian revolutionaries of Kastoria, he wouldn't have been able to ensure their support. Finally he succeeds.

In Athens, one more "Macedonian Committee" was created by chauvinists, with president Kalapothakis, publisher of the newspaper *Empros* (Forward). In his newspaper he published the letters of Karavangelis and other chauvinists, thus, gradually, succeeded in creating a climate of support to Karavangelis' struggle. So, we have a Macedonian Committee in Macedonia that fights for its liberation, one in Sofia and one in Athens that sought to undermine, in fact, the real Macedonian Committee.

ION DRAGOUMIS

In September 1902, Ion Dragoumis was appointed secretary of the Greek Consulate in Bitola (Monaster). Ion is a descendant of a Fanariote family of dignitaries and politicians. They have origin from Bogatsko (Vogatsiko- Kastoria), a mountainous settlement between the town of Hroupista (Argos Orestiko) and Lapsista (Neapoli-Kozani). The Greek names were given in 1926. For centuries they had the, perhaps of slav origin, Macedonian names, therefore the family had "slavic" roots. They might even be "bulgarian" if we accept that Samuel's hegemony (976-1018) was a Bulgarian one as

the Greek historians tell us, since the area was central in that state. The name Dragoumis comes from the "slavic" Dragoumir (Irenaeus= peaceful) or possibly from Dragoumanos, which means interpreter. Dragoumani were called the high ranked diplomats of the Ottoman government. His great grandfather Markos was a diplomat of the Sultan. He was the secretary of the admiral of the Ottoman fleet and a candidate for the hegemony of Moldovlachia. The eruption of the Greek Revolution, together with the other Fanariotes, brought to an unfavorable position also Markos. So, he was forced to flee to revolted Greece.

In Greece he didn't take up arms to help the liberation but did what all Fanariotes did. He entered the National Assembly and participated in the intrigues for their prevalence over the revolutionaries. With the prevailing of the Fanariotes and their imported allies, the Dragoumis family participated in the mechanisms of power. Nikolaos, son of Markos, became secretary of the National Assembly, secretary of Capodistrias and minister of Foreign Affairs in 1862. Against them the Greek people and democratic officers revolted. Ion's father, Stephanos, became secretary of the Minister of Justice and for a few months, Prime Minister in 1910.

Ion studied law that never practiced, but did practice diplomacy and politics. His Fanariote predecessors subdued the Greek Revolution and became the core of Greek oligarchy, thus replacing the Ottoman one. Ion, by his own application, came to Macedonia to play the exact same role against the Macedonian revolutionaries. His closest collaborator was Karavangelis.

The revolutionary forces of V.M.R.O.-E.M.E.O. since 1902 started a more intense revolutionary action. Their most spectacular being the blowing up of the Ottoman bank in Thessaloniki, the central post office and the steam ship "Guadalquivir" in the spring of 1903, that was anchored in the city's port. They blew up the central bank, digging tunnels under a store which was across from it, which they rented for their purpose. They did all of these to draw the attention of the international community that, in fact, begun to be sensitized.

These events alarmed Karavangelis. In case of reformatations in Macedonia, these will be done with ethnic criterion, which are represented by ecclesiastic communities. But the patriarchate communities continued to have defections and Karavangelis has not succeeded in his efforts to convince and bring them back. His influence is limited to only a part of the people of Kastoria and very few villages. In most villages they refused to accept him, while in others they accept him in the same way as they accept also the Exarchy bishop. In many villages he entered violently. He writes in his memoirs: "in Konoplati, the village of Mitros Vlahos, the Bulgarians refused to give us the keys of the church. Then, I along with my kavasis (bodyguard) Emin, with our guns on our shoulders, I with a Malingher and he with a Gras, we broke the door with axes and entered and I held a liturgy, without anyone daring to prevent me".

This tactic, though, included dangers. So he was forced to create an armed force of body guards. He bought off, as mentioned, Vangelis from Strebeno, but wasn't enough. He wrote to Melas to send him ten Cretans, from those that were hanging around Athens without having anything to do. Some of them had fled Crete due to problems with the law, which then was under occupation. They, of course, came only for the wages and not for patriotic reasons, as they themselves tell us. If it was about patriotism, they would have gone to fight the Ottomans in Crete, their homeland, and in the Aegean islands, that were still subdued.

Thus, together with the soldiers that the Turk-Albanian lieutenant Rustem-bey gave him, he forms a strong force. He writes: "this way they became all together about 50, Greeks, Turks and Albanians, 25 of Rustem-bey, 15 of Vangelis and 10 were the Cretans." After the Arvanites village Lehovo, they passed by Strebeno that is the Vangelis village and went directly to Zelenich (Sclithron). "For twenty five years a patriarchate arch-priest hadn't entered Zelenich, a village of 350 families. The village had four Bulgarian, namely Exarchy, priests and one of them actually was a Greek from Peloponnese who was bulgarized [...] the Bulgarians came but wouldn't give the keys of their church. "Stop the jokes" I tell them, "I will perform the liturgy. I have an army. Brave young men, each one of them, All are army officers. The time you knew has gone. We'll pass you all through our blades" [...] but nothing happens. They don't give us the keys. Then, Kaoudis gets up and grabs the Muhtar by the neck, ready to slaughter him. Fortunately, I stopped him on time. Kaoudis, then, as he had him down on the ground, with his shoe hills he broke his teeth. So, finally, he gave the keys.

"We'll burn your village" I was telling him, pointing at the Cretans. This way, finally, we had the liturgy in their big church and during the liturgy many Bulgarians also came, because they were terrorized". In the same way he entered many other villages, too. The coming of mercenary forces from Greece and their collaboration with the Ottomans, as it was expected, alarmed the leadership of V.M.R.O. This is considered as one of the basic reason they accelerated the uprising. Many analysts estimate that it was declared hastily and that's why it didn't have the expected results.

The revolution was announced the 20th of July 1903, the name day of Prophet Elias and that's why is called the Ilinden Revolution. Karavangelis writes: " Suddenly, one morning we woke up and saw all of the mountains around us being black. The revolution spread from Aliakmon river up to the Bulgarian borders, including both Thrace and Macedonia".

In the revolution participated both exarchy and patriarchate Macedonians. Even Kotas that Karavangelis had bought off. "Kotas lived on the mountains. They feared him, so they did not bother him, but he also was forced to take part with them in the uprising".

"Commander on the Greek-Turkish borders was my friend Hussein Husny pasha. He came with an army in Kastoria to confront the revolutionaries. But the Bulgarians were in control of the situation and they waited inside Kastoria for a month until some reinforcements arrived. Once he gathered 10-15 thousand armies, he went out to hit them [...] The Bulgarians saw him and ran there to hit him. And they did hit him. But now the army was strong, all brave Albanians. He scattered them immediately, burned the surrounding villages and dispersed the revolution. From there he went to Korestia, burned their villages and returned winner and triumphant. Hussein Husny pasha, after my own solicitation, didn't burn mixed villages nor those that once were Greek, but only the clearly bulgarian [...] Then, 300 more or less bulgarophone peasants took refuge in the Cathedral [...] Almost all were bulgarophone Greeks. But with them came also some bulgarizing people and asked me to pardon them [...] and some others, who were Bulgarian [...]they were begging me. "Save us". Then, I took the occasion and asked them to make declarations that they are returning to Orthodoxy and that from now on they belong to the Patriarchate. In heaps there were arriving the declarations, from all the up to then bulgarizing villages, to the Government and the Archbishopric".

In Kastoria there was a High School where the classes were given in the local Macedonian language by local professors. Many of the Macedonian revolutionaries had studied at it. But, since there wasn't a recognized Macedonian church, it was under the supervision of the Exarchy. For Karavangelis it was Bulgarian. He writes: "But now, after the Bulgarian revolt, I exploited the outrage of the Turks, I entered the High school and scattered whatever I found in it. Furniture, utensils, desks, teachers' tools, maps, libraries [...] Destruction was such that since then the school never reopened, again. But also the schools of the outdoors surrounding area were burnt. It was then, when we killed the director-general of the Bulgarian Committee in Kastoria and Florina, Lazo Papatraikofv. He was the director of the schools of Florina and Kastoria.

In order to terrorize all of the Macedonians that hadn't subdued yet, he used paid off assassins. So, he writes: "with the Turks of Zerveni Mitos from Tsarnovista, who was one of my most trusted collaborators, had very close relations. Well, through him I came to agreement with two young Turks from Zerveni, 25 to 30 years old, [...] he gave them a list of proscribed Bulgarians and promised them five golden coins for every head that would fall. Thus, one day that they were in the Kastoria market, while the Bulgarian peasants were returning to their villages at night, the two Turks set up an ambush [...] and when the peasants approached, they fired and killed two of the proscribed, from Bulgaroblatsi. The next day they were given ten golden coins".

Thus, the "Bulgarians" of Kastoria, according to Karavangelis, were forced to become Geeks. They are today's "Greek" Kastorians who are proud for something they ought to be ashamed of. Obviously, most of them don't know the way their ancestors became Hellenized by the ruthless Greek-hucksters and Christian- hucksters. Nor they know whose creation is the "Greek Genus" and who they honor in the face of Karavangelis, whose statue was erected in Kastoria.

If the revolution was made by the Bulgarians, as the anti-Macedonian propagandists are saying, after it was subdued, the revolutionaries would've fled to Bulgaria for protection and not to Karavangelis. The ancestors of today's Kastorians did it.

The revolution, in fact, spread all over Macedonia and the revolutionaries proclaimed an

autonomous Macedonian state with its seat in Kruchevo, a mountainous town above Bitola.

WHO REVOLTED IN 1903 IN MACEDONIA

The anti-Macedonian propaganda in Greece and in Bulgaria tries to present the revolution as Bulgarian. This serves well both sides. Bulgaria wants to present it as Bulgarian in order to have footholds upon Macedonians and Macedonia. It always had aspirations to expand up to the Aegean.

This serves also Greece. By presenting the uprising as Bulgarian, it gets more convincing to its protecting powers that do not want the expanding of Bulgaria to the Aegean. Thus, they stand negatively towards the revolution and favored its undermining. Moreover, Athens regime and mainly the para-state chauvinists of the Greek-Macedonian Committee ensured the support of the internal public opinion. If they were to say that they were fighting the Macedonian liberation movement, they wouldn't have had the support of the deceived people and the philhellenes. By saying that they fight the "blood thirsty Bulgarian invaders that are persecuting the Hellenism of Macedonia", they ensure the support of the people and the participation of "makedonomachoi" (Macedonian fighters) at least against paid salary.

All Macedonians called their land Macedonia; even bulgaromani and grekomani. The same happens with the Greek-speaking people of Macedonia but also with the so called "makedonomachi" (Macedonian fighters) that come from Greece. No one calls it Northern Greece or Southern Bulgaria. The same goes with all of the ambassadorial authorities of Greece, Bulgaria, Serbia and the Great Powers, the same do also the bishops of the Patriarchate and Exarchy. The same happens with the name of Macedonians. While they all call them Macedonians but in Greece they call them Greek Macedonians, in Bulgaria Bulgarian Macedonians, in Serbia Serbian Macedonians and (after became 1945 Yugoslavians).

Depending in the church they joined, Macedonians were characterized Bulgarizing or Hellenizing. Those who joined the Patriarchate are characterized Greeks, those who joined the Exarchy are characterized Bulgarians. For the Vlachs who participated in the uprising, the characterizations are two: bulgarizing or Bulgarians or romanizing or Romanians. Obviously, they call themselves Vlachs and struggled for an autonomous Macedonia.

As these views could be considered just as of Macedonians that had suffered brain washing by various propagandists, we have to observe some of the opposing views. The most interesting and yet the most valid are the reports of the official representative of Greece in Macedonia.

Great interest present all what Ion Dragoumis writes, since at that time he was secretary at the Greek consulate in Bitola (Monaster). In his calendar, in the reports to the ministry of Foreign Affairs, the texts and his thoughts (Ionos Dragoumis- *Ta tetradia tou Ilinden*- edited by Petsivas, Athens 2000) he writes:

"Their committees showed them as likely the picture of freedom. In the orthodox villages the Committees and their gangs say: "Macedonia to the Macedonians", they aren't forcing them from the first moment to become schismatic nor to abolish their Greek schools and make Bulgarian ones. They don't want bulgarism, they want autonomy and to convince them even more that they are telling the truth, they assure them that Greece is in agreement with Bulgaria and the others, and supports the revolution.

So, most of the Macedonians will revolt." (February 1903).

On February 28th, 1903 he writes in his calendar: "Macedonians from abroad continue returning en masse to their homes, particularly from East".

On 25th of July 1903, when the revolution has already broken out, he writes to his father: "We have a Slavic revolution in Macedonia [...]. All of the slavophone populations followed the Committee, orthodox and schismatic, and most part voluntarily."

On 12th of February 1904 he writes: "leader of the Committee here is Naum Christov, agent of New York Insurance [...] Christov therefore seems to be one of the three men of Macedonia that direct the Internal Organization. One has its seat here, one in Thessaloniki and one in Skopie. The Internal Organization, according to the Austrian consul, this year it is independent from Sofia, and has only representatives in Sofia with whom it corresponds. These representatives are Tatarchev and Mateiev."

In the spring of 1904, the government of Greece sent four army officers in the revolted area in

order to conduct a check on the spot. They were captains Al. Kontoulis, An. Papoulas and lieutenant G. Kolokotronis and sub lieutenant Pavlos Melas. In the report they drafted, they write: "During our invasion we were accompanied by a group of seven armed men [...] under chieftain Kapetan Kotas..." The word "invasion" reveals they feel and self-characterized as invaders. They continue further on: "However, Kotas was reluctant to do anything against a schismatic. In this contributed quite a lot also the ex-army officer Yankov of Bulgarian origin, from the village Zagoritsani, Kastoria, whom Kotas had toured safely all over Macedonia and accompanied him up to the Greek-Turkish borders. Yankov left excellent impression as much to Kotas as to the populations of Macedonia and all of them mention his name with utmost respect. He speaks against Tsakalarov [...] and in favor of the Greek state as greatly capable of contributing in the liberation of Macedonia, with the common consent, though, of all of its Christian populations. During his speeches he made sure, with proper ways, to implant to the Greek Macedonians a Macedonian consciousness, independent of other races, and so diplomatically he practiced his work that he was able, with art, to carve on the Macedonians the general ideas of autonomy..."

In their report they report on the case of Kotas that "During the year, the so called, here, "year of the revolution", he fought bravely against the Turkish army, without discrimination of Orthodox or Schismatic, seeing one Christian brotherhood and one Macedonia [...] the education of his two children in Athens' "lyceum Deliou" financed by the Etairia, his lately trips to Athens and the ... treatment and honors, convinced Kotas [...] that the Greek race [...] is destined to free and save Macedonia from the Turkish yoke and Catholicism and Tectonism which are driven by faithless Bulgarians. [...] therefore we propose to be arranged a monthly wage for him of no less than ten Ottoman liras, which he shall be receiving on time."

Similar treatment they suggested for kapetan Vangelis of Strebeno, Kastoria: "He, being imprisoned in the prison of Chalkida and having to serve still a ten year sentence, managed to escape [...] he was able, due to his collaboration with the Turkish army, to become well known and to influence Christian orthodox populations". That he was a convict and collaborator of the occupying army, it didn't count at all. They proposed the same to be done for the buying off of other Macedonians, too.

About Mitros Vlachos, who wasn't bought off, they have other characterizations. They write about the campaign of the Ottoman army "for the discovering of a Bulgarian guerilla gang, lead by thief-fugitive D. Vlachos (vlach-speaking Greek, unfortunately) with which it fronted...". Mitros Vlachos was a fugitive and wanted by the Ottoman regime, just as all the other members of the resistance. But, in their reports they speak explicitly of Macedonians and of Macedonian language.

In East and Central Macedonia was sent, for the same purpose, Yiorgos Tsorbatzoglou, 2nd interpreter of the Greek embassy in Constantinople. In his confidential reports that are stored in the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the year 1904, he is very revealing. He makes a clear distinction between Committees, of the "purely Bulgarian and purely Macedonian".

Tsorbatzoglou writes: "but the contrast of goals and sentiments of the leaders of the Bulgarian Committee on one hand, and of the leaders of the Macedonian Committee on the other, and in particular of the Macedonian chieftains, didn't take much time to be expressed in various ways. Thus [...] confrontations took place in Macedonia, among members of the two Committees".

About Bulgaria's influence in the Macedonian movement, he writes: "Both on the higher dream of Macedonians as on the relevant program about the real revolution of Macedonia, the political aspiration and will of Bulgarian Hegemony don't exercise any influence whatsoever". He adds, in fact, that many "bulgarian teachers came to rupture with the Exarchy that had appointed them». It's known that many of the Macedonians bulgarian teachers indeed collaborated with the Macedonian Committee, in total independence from the Bulgarian Exarchy, either covertly inside the villages or in its knowledge, as fugitive Macedonian apostates, on the mountains. I think the same of the chieftain in Gianitsa region, the Macedonian bulgar-teacher Argyris, that it is not unlikely [...] that he visited many of our villages preaching, as Macedonian, the independence of the flag of the Macedonian Committee from Bulgarian and Greek politics, and always displaying respect for the ecclesiastic and ethnic traditions of those to whom his preaching was addressed." And he specifies: "Macedonian chieftains and maybe also the very leaders, by one and only term of contract drew up until now their strength: the term to aspire to nothing else but the freedom of Macedonians".

On the accusations about persecution of Greek-teachers, he writes: "... was killed only one, the others were diligently freed together with Greek priests, so to preserve and promote inside the country Greek ecclesiastic and education regime".

Of the accusations on murders of patriarchate notables, priests and teachers, he writes: "The 300 or 350, up to now, of our victims by the guerrilla's knife were victims not of Bulgarian anti-hellenism or any other Bulgarian notion but simply clear revenge by the gangs' members or rather victims of the feeling of self preservation of the accused or many times slandered by party opponents as dangerous persecutors and fanatic traitors of guerrilla hideouts".

Indeed, the later published memoirs, reports and correspondence of that time, proved the estimate of Tzorbatzoglou that the Macedonian revolutionaries punished only the traitors and collaborators of the powers of occupation. They did, namely, what the resistance organizations did and annihilated the collaborators of the Nazis forces of occupation during the Second World War.

In this regard, Tzorbatzoglou adds: "I dare, though, to believe that it is impossible for me to be deceived by these impressions of mine: that as of the revolution today in Macedonia, it is not Bulgarian and that not only Hellenism hasn't suffered any damage whatsoever by its up to today's progress, but great benefits have been drawn from it".

Of the broadness of participation in the revolution, he writes: "in the country uprising is much broader and deeper spread of what is commonly thought [...] all, without exception, the villages and big landownerships are already initiated in the common idea of liberation, and are Greeks (patriarchates) fanatics the most distinguished representatives of revolutionary gangs inside the cities and villages and they aren't few of them that are secretly armed followers of the gangs".

For the participation in the Krushevo uprising, he writes: "the orthodox Greeks (the patriarchate), as the ex-bishop of Pelagonia informed me, had collaborated with the guerrillas on brotherly togetherness for the cause of liberation [...] the only factors of the revolt that the Greek Macedonian supported and hid were not Bulgarians, but as himself, pure Macedonians".

On Central Macedonia he writes: "In Central Macedonia, at least what I have before my eyes, no force appears purely Bulgarian or purely Bulgar-Macedonian and not even one Bulgarian chieftain dared to consolidate his mission in the name of Bulgarian ideas. Almost all of the chieftains that prevailed since ever or prevail now at this moment in Central Macedonia, in fact the most proper center ever of the revolution, which is composed by the regions of Tikfes, Gevgeli and Doiran are Greek (patriarchates) Macedonians and fanatic orthodox, indeed [...] For clear study of the different graduation and manifestations of this feeling in Macedonian-speaking sectors of Greek zones (he means patriarchate zones) of Macedonia [...] in Goumentsa [...] the fear of the prevailing of pure Bulgarians in the country inspires in them outrageousness, as it does the perpetuation of the Turkish yoke".

Also Tzorbatzoglou calls the language Macedonian and the Macedonians Macedonian-speaking. He writes in the report of the 27th of March 1904: "It's perplexing how all of Hellenism keeps on calling the language bulgarian [...] Thereof, I fear that some day it might be proven that Alexander, rising from his grave, would easier understand this supposed bulgarian dialect than he would understand the more Greek idioms of a Cypriot or Peloponnesian peasant".

They also call the language Macedonian Pavlos Melas, as well as his heir in the anti-Macedonian struggle, Giorgos Tsontos -Vardas. In fact, Vardas writes on 22-10-1906: "I recommend they act in America [...] to send me a book of the Macedonian language, if it exists, so I can learn it". On 25-10-1906 he writes: "I'm trying to learn Macedonian, but I have great difficulty".

MACEDONIAN AND ANTI-MACEDONIAN STRUGGLE

The Macedonians that participated in the Ilinden uprising with the goal of liberating Macedonia were the same Macedonians as those that revolted in 1821. They were the same as the ones that, after the destruction of Naousa and surroundings villages, went down to Greece and fought for its liberation.

In the liberation struggle of Macedonia, though, something tragic happens. The patriarchate Greek-speaking Macedonians are absent. The propaganda of the Patriarchate's bodies and of the Athens regime had made them inactive. Something that must be pointed out, though, is that the overwhelming majority of them weren't hostile, nor they undermined the revolution. Not even the worse anti-Macedonians don't mention of any confrontation between Greek-speaking and non Greek-speaking Macedonians that took part in the revolution. Over the centuries, language had never become the reason for hostilities or disputes. Hostility was cultivated by those that wanted to divide

them in order to rule them; those who used the international Greek language as a tool of political and spiritual power. Thus, from an international language of the spirit they turned it into a miserable and awful language of chauvinism.

The Kingdom of Greece instead of reciprocating, as it owed, to the Macedonians for their support for its liberation, did exactly the opposite; it undermined their struggle. The consulates of Greece with their bodies aided, in various ways, the forces of occupation.

The consul of Greece in Bitola, K. Kypraios, writes in his report number 554/24-7-1903: "Past Friday, Bulgar-speaking orthodox peasants came to me and informed me, confidentially, that on 20th of July, Prophet Elias name day, the revolution will be announced and they pointed out to me the gathering spots of the revolutionaries. About this I didn't fail to inform the General Commander..." He exploited the peasants trust and became an informer of the forces of occupation.

On the 26th of July he signs the report the secretary of the consulate, Ion Dragoumis, had prepared and where it was written: "revolting populations are convinced that they are struggling for their liberation and it's not possible to stop in any way their revolutionary morals. But also Vlach-speaking and Albanian-speaking stand in favor of the movement, not because it is Bulgarian but because they think of it as liberating, therefore many of them are participating in it, while the rest of them don't show eagerness to react against it". For the consulate, though, he writes: "When it is within our possibility, we help the Turkish authorities for the repression of the movement, but without success, or I think is possible any more to stop, through our agents, the revolutionaries..."

On July 29 1903 they write: "Kleisoura wasn't occupied. There was though a battle outside of the town during which about 60 of the Bulgarians were killed, having fallen into an ambush by the army which was headed by some Giuzbasi and Kapetan Vangelis". Kapetan Vangelis, as it is known, led a force of Karavangelis' mercenaries, among them ten Cretans. His force was hidden in the cathedral of Kastoria for a few days, and after the counter attack by the Ottomans forces it participated in operations with them, against the revolutionaries. Dragoumis writes in his diary, on 15th of March 1904: "Vangelis from Strebeno was invited to Florina a few days ago by the Kaimakami and had got an order also this year, as in the past one, to continue to chase after Bulgarians gangs having under his command a twenty men force. And he has already left to Sorovic (Amynteo) having taken in advance a monthly wage of 500 grosia, from the Kaimakami".

The revolutionaries were informed of the dirty role the bishop of Kastoria and his mercenaries played, as well as of his collaboration with the forces of occupation. Naturally, they confront them exactly the same way as traitors of all liberation movements are confronted, all over the world: they chase them and whenever they can, they kill them. In a similar way the Greek resistance organizations confronted collaborators of the Nazi occupation forces.

Many villages that under pressure of things of things, had joined the patriarchate Archbishopric, they seceded again. Many of them joined the Exarchy and others joined Catholicism (Unionists). Dragoumis, on 12th of January 1904, writes in his dairy that: "information given by mister Angelopoulos, 60 families from the village Kostenetsi, 40 from the village Bobista and the entire (!) village of Zagoritsani handed petitions to the Kaimakami of Kastoria by which they ask to convert to Catholicism".

In order for Zagoritsani (Vasiliada, Kastoria) to comply, the mercenary raiders from Greece will devastate it a few months later. This is how Karavangelis described the raid:

"Zagoritsani was a village of about 600 houses, Bulgarian and Greek". Greek he calls the patriarchates and Bulgarians the "schismatic". "In the church, one Sunday the Bulgarians were having their liturgy, the other Sunday the Greeks. At the end, ours were left only 60 houses and they started to flinch [...] On the eve of 25th of March 1905 (Vardas) had hided himself in the woods across the village with about 300 men, among whom were kapetan Kaoudis, kapetan Makris, kapetan Boulakas, a bandit named Goudas with his son and many others. Early in the morning they entered the village and the shooting started. All those who resisted, they killed them and put fire at their houses. On that day 79 Bulgarians were killed and unfortunately also some of ours, although slavophones but valuable [...] Meanwhile army forces came from Kastoria and Kleisoura. A while later, when the army was near enough, it yelled to the guerrillas "teslim" (surrender). But ours shoot once and the Turks left right away. Thus ours were left free, wandering and killing the whole day throughout the village..."

It is a significant day the 25th of March they chose. It's the day of the national celebration in Greece. Eight decades earlier, about 300 Macedonians headed by "bilinguals" Taso Karataso and Angeli Gatso that then were called plain and clear Macedonians, went and helped Greece in its liberation struggle. On the 25th of March 1905, Greece instead of reciprocating for the Macedonians help, it sent mercenaries murderers and slaughtered the people of Zagoritsani and other villages. For these slaughterers the Patriarch Bartholomew and the Archbishop Christodoulos held a celebration in memoriam on September 2005. It was in commemoration of 100 years (1905-2005) from the destruction of Zagoritsani and the other Macedonian villages. For them they were not murderers because the murders were done for a "holy" cause. They forced the Macedonian population to enter the flock of the Patriarchate and thus, today they are part of the flock of Bartholomew and Christodoulos. Besides, their Fanariotes ancestors recruited them, fanaticized them and sent them to Macedonia to murder innocent Macedonians and burn defenseless villages.

They tell their flock to "love thy neighbor" and help the needy, but they hate the neighbor when he doubts their autarchic power. Instead of love thy neighbor they cultivate hate for thy neighbor when he doesn't behave like a sheep and won't join their corral. The suffering Macedonians they not only did not help, as they owed to do as Christian orthodox brothers, but they even persecuted them using filthy methods and in collaboration with the occupying Ottoman forces. They tell their flock to repent, but they not only don't repent for their crimes they committed against Macedonian people, but continue on praising their criminal ancestors.

The bishop of Thessaloniki, Anthimos, with his statements on the Macedonian matter aspires to become the new Karavangelis. The TV station of the Archbishopric, channel 4E, transmits the filthiest broadcasts against the "Bulgarian komitatzides". Anthimos knows quite well who they called and still today call "Bulgarians". He does exactly the same as some locals do by calling the refugees "Turkish-seeds" (Tourkosporoi). He thinks that the locals must tolerate him and keep their mouths shut. He retains the "monopoly" to shout from the floor of the church and to unleash threats against the Macedonians that dare raise their heads up. He is not a Macedonian, not even a Greek by origin. He comes from Pyrgos, Elias, and his surname is Rousas, which reveals he is a descendant of Slavs in Peloponnese that were Christianized and hellenized in the 9th century A.D. Rus in slavic means blond, thus the name of Russia. There is also the name Rousa (Xanthi, in Greek). Rousas will be Xanthopoulos in Greek. "Poulos", that are the ending of the surnames of Peloponnese, derives from the Latin and means small or offspring. Roussopoulos, namely, is slavic-latin and it means the offspring (small) of Rousa.

From the floor of the International Exhibition of Thessaloniki, in the presence of the Prime Minister, he unleashed threats against "the few inside the borders, droplets". Those "droplets" all they ask is respect for their rights and reinstatement of the injustices. They did not ask Anthimos to go back to his homeland, which is not Macedonia but Peloponnese. Neither had they asked bishops of Macedonian origin to be appointed in Macedonia. Or, maybe, is this not unjust? Is it not unjust for the Cyrillic writing and the language of the Thessalonikians Cyril and Methodius that was created and developed right here, to be persecuted? Which injustices are they condemning in their churches, since they are the most unjust? Karavangelis with his mercenaries by murders, arsons and terror forced the Macedonians of Kastoria to enter his corral and abandon their cultural identity and accept the one he enforced on them. Anthimos unleashes threats against all Macedonians that balk from his notion on the Macedonian matter. "Ekas oi veviloι" (out with the impious) he told us. Who has the right to engage with the Macedonian matter more than indigenous Macedonians? Maybe he who is not Macedonian, does? He aspires to finish the work that Karavangelis begun together with other bishops and won't tolerate contradiction inside the borders. This, internationally, is called fascism. Unfortunately this flourishes in Greece under the facade of Hellenism and Orthodoxy, due to the tolerance of the deceived people.

Anthimos is a prime example for someone, who wants, to understand the role the bishops played throughout the centuries. They are the ones that cultivated chauvinistic views on the rights of the Genus (race) over other countries and other populations. Everything was theirs. Besides, this Genus was all of their creation. They fanaticize people and pressure political leaderships towards chauvinist policies. They bless Greek guns, their correspondent Bulgarian bishops the Bulgarian

ones, Serbs, the Serbian, Turks, the Turkish and they push them to confrontations in which they don't participate. Afterwards, they will curse - with love thy neighbor- the neighboring enemies and will comfort the death stricken mothers, telling them that their children died for holy causes. Subsequently, they will continue profiting from the rituals and in memoriam mass and will speak hypocritically about peace.

It is not enough for them that arbitrarily the names of cities, villages, rivers, mountains were changed in the part of Macedonia that was annexed in their dominion, but they demand to change the name of the part of Macedonia that is outside Greece. It is not enough for them the oppression of Macedonians inside Greece, many of whom they uprooted from their homeland, but they persecute them even outside the borders. Irrationality is not a Greek element, but anti-Greek. Chauvinism, greediness, disrespect and intolerance are not characteristics of a real Christian but of anti-Christ. Anthimos and his alike are practicing obviously abuse of the term "Greek" and "Orthodox Christian". They use them for evil and anti-greek purposes. Only self-criticism, repentance and public forgiveness will save them. It will also save the country from dangerous adventures. If God is as they say, there is no doubt that he'll send them where they should be.

Those "droplets" that Anthimos mentioned will never forget the dead of Zagoritsani and of the other Macedonian villages. Nor they will keep their mouths shut, because they have a duty to talk. It will be in the interests of the country if he and his alike shut their mouths. The fanariote brutality is the blackest stain in the history of poor Macedonia. Anthimos will do well to read the memoirs of Karavangelis, if he hasn't read them yet, so he'll know whose heir he hopes to become. His chauvinist declarations reminded me that he represents exactly those that financed and armed the hands of the invaders in 1908 that burned my village and murdered more than 15 Pozarites because they dared to leave their flock. Anthimos would do best to mind his own flock. No Macedonian ever was or will be obliged to stay in a flock that's full of manure and rodents.

Many more destructions like the one in Zagoritsani were taken place by the gangs of the Fanariotes. Karavangelis and Dragoumis. Most of them they themselves mention in their memoirs, dairies and reports. When they wrote them, full of pride for their achievements, they didn't think that someday they'll be get publicized.

Zelenits, the village where Karavangelis, in the spring of 1908, went with a force of 25 Turk-Albanians, 15 mercenaries and 10 Cretans to force them to accept him he later hit it again.

He writes in his memoirs: "In 1905 there was a bulgarian wedding in Zelenits. The force of Kaoudis found out about it, entered the wedding and because they turned out the lights, he started shooting in the dark, killing 15-16 Bulgarians. But the bride and groom weren't killed. They did this because there were members of Bulgarian gangs within, and so to scare the Bulgarians."

The event is also described by the Cretans Karavitis and Kaoudis that took part in the raid. Kaoudis, in fact, describes the looting made by the Poulakas gang in the priest's house: "The group of Poulakas filled the house [...] I went upstairs and what do I see, a big hall and the priest's wife standing right in the middle of it, scared, holding a lamp. They had opened two-three chests, clothes spread all over and them searching through the clothes and in the corners for booty".

In another part, Karavangelis writes: "Another chieftain was Ioannis Boulakas, also a Cretan. [...] Near Belkameni was the village Negovani where there were two priests, one rumanizing and the other albanizing. One day of heavy winter that was snowing densely, Boulakas went to Negovani, enter their houses and beheaded them".

If today's Cretans knew what role their co-patriots performed in Macedonia, they would be ashamed to have the same descent with them. The reading of the memoirs and correspondence of the Cretans, Tsontos Vardas and Karavitis, Kaoudis, will suffice to them to get the clear picture of what they did in Macedonia. Of course, most Cretans that came to Macedonia were ultra-chauvinist, loafers, bandits and outlaws. With statues of this kind of people they filled our homeland.

The arson of my village, old Pozar that I described in the introduction, they seldom mention because it is not considered one of the big hits. These kind of arsons and assassinations of smaller groups they performed many and I don't consider it purposeful to mention any more. They are all written in the memoirs and correspondence of the ones that performed them.

WHO AND WHY SENT THE MERCENARY FORCES IN MACEDONIA

The Ilinden uprising didn't manage to liberate Macedonia. The Patriarchate, Greece, Bulgaria and to a smaller extent Serbia, undermined it, while the Great Powers, they didn't want further shrinking of the Ottoman Empire. The extensive destructions and assassinations, though, sensitized international public opinion as well as their governments. Thus, they pressured the Ottoman regime to make reforms, grant more rights to the subjected Macedonians and larger participation in the administration. In fact, they appointed European commissioners in the police: Italian for West Macedonia, English for Central, French for East and Russian for North.

These reforms alarmed the fanariote establishment. They meant more freedom of ethnic, cultural and religious choice for the Macedonians. The European commissioners wouldn't allow anymore the scandalous favoring of the Ottoman administration for the patriarchates. Karavangelis is alarmed and writes that: "Italian officers organizers of the police that also had a political mission and many times involved scandalously even in administration affairs in favor of the Bulgarians".

In case of further autonomy of Macedonia in future time it would be done with the criterion of ethnic-religious communities. But the patriarchate community had been weakened a lot, particularly after the revelation of the dirty role of the collaborators of Karavangelis and Dragoumis.

On July 16th, 1905 Karavangelis writes to his cousin: "Time is passing and we haven't won even one village: the reason is that Cretans come and go and the locals are despised... I don't know if new forces have come or not, certain is that winter is coming and we were unable to prevail in the country [...] This moment, I got a letter from Mr. Vardas: I see he has no men and so summer is passing".

This was the way Karavangelis was winning villages: the violence of mercenary forces. That's the reason why he constantly writes letters that embellishes with crimes "of blood thirsty Bulgarians" and the dangers of shrinking of his Hellenism. His Hellenism plays the role of a political flock.

Ion Dragoumis, as he admitted in his reports, that had helped as much as he could the occupation forces during the uprising, rejoiced with its suppression and the destruction of Macedonian villages. He was surprised by the size and participation of the Macedonian populations and mainly the patriarchates, in the revolution. Even Kotas took part in it with his forces, despite being mercenaries-followers of Karavangelis. Thus, they couldn't rely on Macedonians. Therefore, he estimates that there is no other solution than to bring armed forces from Greece into Macedonia.

On the 28th of August 1903 he writes to his brother in law, Pavlos Melas: "But it is necessary that our own come, without delay, and civil war must take place between Christians in the revolted regions, so it'll appear that Greeks are living inside the Saint Stephan zone".

On the 18th of December, 1903 he writes to his father who is an influential member of Athens regime: "How can I achieve here, small and alone, to put into action the plans I have in my mind? Invasion of rural Greek population in Macedonia [...] formation of teachers, priests and missionaries, blowing up of slavic monasteries at Mount Athos [...] murders of Bulgarians, ordination of secular persons to Bishops, formation of beneficial thugs, promotion of relations between Macedonia and Greece, enlistment of Macedonians in the army (especially bulgarian-speakers), upbringing of the children of notables, priests, teachers, bulgarian-speaking in particular, in free of charge, in Greece."

This was the sickening perceptions of Dragoumis to undermine the unity of the Macedonian people. The fact this would cost the lives of hundreds of Macedonians and the destruction of many Macedonian villages, churches, monasteries, schools, not only he didn't care, but was seeking it. They had to provoke civil strife between the revolutionaries and since they couldn't accomplish it by their shrinking influence in the area, they had to bring their own "beneficial thugs" from Greece.

That the influence of fanariote "Hellenism" was small in Macedonia is confirmed also by Tzorbatozoglou who in his 4th report on the 27th of March, 1904 writes: "The only that could be, under my own humble opinion, is a real utopia the entrance of Greek anti-committees to fight against those that struggle for the liberation of the country, Macedonian gangs [...] the only of all Macedonians that would join under such flag would be those few whose relatives were killed, at times, by the guerrillas".

K. Mazarakis who led the anti-Macedonian struggle in Emathia and Pella, informs us that two out of four army officers the government sent to Macedonia the spring of 1904, sent another

disappointing report. He writes in his memoirs: "Papoulas and Kolokotronis submitted confidentially another (report) too, in which they expressed disappointment. This brought a quarrel between Melas and Kolokotronis, resulting into a duel (I was a witness for Melas) with a light wound in the leg".

Mazarakis confesses that "the Bulgarians have gained almost all of the liberal and brave members. Many genuine Greeks have been persuaded by the idea of struggling against the Turkish tyrants through uprising. The language that was spoken and the promises to the peasants of the distributing to them of the manors and the land, contributed greatly in the support of the Bulgarian views.

"In Thessaloniki, apart of the countryside, spirits were acute, too. The Bulgarian organization certainly has prevailed [...] The Bulgarians that come from Kilkis, a prosperous town which was first to accept the schism since 1870, settle by the railroad station. Many are merchants. They maintain two schools, they also bring, from all over Macedonia, holders of scholarships there [...] It is curious that the Bulgarian community of Thessaloniki was first created by Greeks with origin from Bulgarian-speaking villages, quite well known today as significant genuine Greeks, whose names I omit. The first schools of Bulgarian language were also created by Greek teachers, male and female".

For the significance of the term "Greeks" and "Bulgarians", the Vlach, Alexandros Zanas, son in law of Penelope Delta, writes: "Patriarch Benedictus did not recognize the appointed by the Sublime Porte Exarch and proclaimed the Bulgarian Church as schismatic. Since then, all those who fall under the jurisdiction of the Bulgarian Exarchy will be considered not only "schismatic" but also Bulgarians, while conversely the patriarchate orthodox were Greeks, irrelevant of the language they spoke, bulgarian or koutsovlachic". Namely, the terms "Greek" or "Bulgarian" didn't have ethnic meaning but religious. This they never explained to the neo-Greeks, so they could deceive them and use them easily in their anti-Macedonian policies.

Mazarakis also explains the reason of the phenomenon: "the in Macedonia bulgarism derived from the hate among the community councils. The opposition became Bulgarian.... the haters of the Greek orthodox clergy, too. The contempt of the bourgeois that spoke Greek towards the farmers enhanced the reaction. Some bishops of the clergy were taxing mercilessly the peasant, while the Greek teacher was paid poorly". Namely, the bishops were taxing the non Greek-speaking peasants mercilessly and with these taxes they paid their teachers that imposed on them the Greek language and persecuted the local Macedonian and Vlach ones. The Exarchy behaved more diplomatically, allowing all languages and that was the reason that the Macedonian population joined it. Besides, it wasn't collaborating with the forces of occupation as the Romaic-orthodox Patriarchate did.

Mazarakis also cites the reason why the Macedonian revolutionaries were considered hostile by the Ottoman regime while the mercenary forces from Greece were considered friendly. He writes:

"Through Theodoridis, in a short while, I got to know Rahmi-Bey, a very young then land owner. This was the cause for him to give us asylum in his villages where we formed our first force [...] Rahmi -Bey was an educated, ideologue Turk belonging to a distinguished family that had close ties with the Greeks. He suffered for the maladministration in Turkey and felt hatred against the Bulgarians and had opposite interests as he could not tolerate to see his land being downtrodden by Bulgarian gangs [...] We gathered about 80 men in the manor of Rahmi-Bey, near the lake of Genitsa, where the formation of the force took place [...] I'm arranging the payroll of the men..."

Except the fact that he collaborated with the Ottomans, and the first force was created in the manor of Rahmi-Bey, he reveals that his men were under payroll. The Macedonian revolutionaries, just as all revolutionaries, not only don't get paid but they also pay subscriptions to the Committee.

He also reveals: "The Turkish Secret Police of Thessaloniki, composed unfortunately mostly by Greeks, among whom there was also the famed Panagiotis, had telegraphed to the Vodena police informing them about me.... where also was Nouri-Bey. We became friends [...] and indeed he remained loyal to me and the Greek struggle since then, being paid by the Greek consulate two turkish liras a month."

In Vodena he visited the Bishop in order to introduce him the commander of the anti-macedonian force, Cretan Manolis Katsigaris. He writes about the meeting: "The Saint of Vodena with the sweetness of Christ opened his arms embracing the avenger [...] and said, "You are good, Manolis, but you are not slaughtering as much as needed". Katsigaris came to Voden to slaughter "Bulgarians" in the region of the "Saint of Vodena".

Mazarakis estimated that he ought to start action from the Vlachs of the area, and explains why:

"The Romanian propaganda harmed Hellenism of Macedonia even more than the Bulgarian one [...] Nobody ought to be surprised that in order to wipe out the Bulgarians, we had to start from the romanizing [...] they were the informers, they were the suppliers of the Bulgarian gangs, with whom they allied.

"Mitros Vlachos betrayed to the Turks the presence of Pavlos Melas [...] Agras (army officer T. Agapinos) a brave, ideologue type of young man, martyred and was hanged by them. Moraitis and Frangopoulos by similar betrayals were murdered in Livadia, Karatzova. The romanizing of Patatsin attacked Spiromilios and wounded him [...] the malignancy of one man, Apostoli Margaritis, former Greek teacher from Avdella, created the "Macedonian Romanian Matter..."

Mazarakis, just like all Macedonians-pursuers, doesn't say that the Macedonian Committee punished as many as it could, for the hundreds of crimes they committed against the revolting Macedonian people and mainly against unarmed peasants. Nor Mazarakis mentions even one case where the slavophone-latinophone Macedonians hit a hellenophone or vice-versa. They think the Macedonians should have accepted their crimes without protests, without any kind of resistance. The resistance against the invaders was a crime.

Pavlos Melas was the first officer killed in Macedonia by the Ottomans, who thought that they were after Mitros Vlachos who was an outlaw, against large amount of money. He describes himself his first achievement. He enters Prekopana (Perikopi) with his force and surrounds the church where, at the time, a funeral was taking place. By the threat of his guns, he terrorizes the peasants and demands from them "to vow faith and loyalty to the Orthodoxy and secondary to make such announcement to the Kaimakami and the bishop. To the later (Karavangelis), they must go, within ten days the most, and ask him to send them a priest and a teacher of Greek". In order for them to believe his threats, when leaving the place, he takes as prisoners the teacher and the priest of the village and executes them in the nearby woods. "By this act I helped the villagers to come back to Orthodoxy and to declare, in a fortnight, their desire to the bishop".

Imposing on people of different political or religious choices by the threat of guns, by assassinations and terrorism, is an extreme form of fascism. But the fanariote propaganda presents Melas as a noble hero and martyr. How much of a hero he was he didn't prove it only by his behavior towards the unarmed peasants of Prekopana. In Siatista the Ottoman army surrounded only the house where Volanis and his team were. Melas with his team was outside of the army's encirclement and didn't help him at all. When Volanis' team ammunitions finished and seeing that there was no help from the commander, surrendered and were imprisoned. Melas was killed under undefined and unexplained conditions. The fact that the other members of his team left untouched and that the Ottomans didn't take his lifeless body, although they thought they were after the outlaw with a big price of his head Mitros Vlachos, shows that they hadn't even noticed the presence of the team of Melas in the house next to it. If they had noticed them, they would've arrested them like they did with Volanis team. Melas must have been shut in the back and suspicion is turning towards Lakis Pyrzas. Later, in his letter of resignation, Lakis Pyrzas talks with indignation about the many rapes of women by the "makedonomachoi". Among the residents there was a rumor that, among the raped women, was also Pyrzas wife. As his co-fighter I. Karavitis writes: "Volanis was taken to prison in Kastoria and not knowing of what took place with Melas and his fate, submitted a report to the Committee expressing his indignation, because, as he thought, Melas had abandoned him [...] After 3-4 days, though [...] he changed his report". Obviously, Melas didn't make an attempt to help Volanis. But in Greece, the information came of the "assassination of the hero-fighter Melas by the blood thirsty komitatzides".

THE ANTI-MACEDONIAN ACTION IN CENTRAL MACEDONIA

The actions of Mazarakis teams are the same as the actions of the other gangs of Macedonians-pursuers, in 1904. In 1904 he prepared the ground and the following year started his work.

The area of action for Mazarakis was exactly the same area where in 1822 the renowned revolution of Vermion took place, which ended with the destruction of Naousa and surrounding villages. The teams of Mazarakis extorted, persecuted, terrorized and assassinated exactly the same population that had revolted against the forces of occupation, in 1822. The exact, same population that after the suppressed Vermion uprising, created armed forces, led by Karatasos and Gatsos, went to revolted Greece and helped for its liberation. The kingdom of Greece, in turn, instead of reciprocating for its debt, did exactly the opposite. Undermined the Macedonian revolution and persecuted revolting Macedonians, in collaboration with the forces of occupation. Because the ingratitude and the betrayal were glaringly obvious, it tried to deceive its subjects and the international public opinion. It presented the revolution as Bulgarian and the victims of the atrocities of its mercenaries, as Bulgarians. The result of their dirty campaign of slandering of the Macedonians uprising is actually why, up today, many southern Greeks keep calling Macedonians, Bulgarians.

It would have been desirable that armed forces from Greece would have gone to the Macedonian-Bulgarian borders to confront the Bulgarians and bulgarizing Verhovists who wanted to annex Macedonia, or part of it, to Bulgaria. If they would have done this, then we would've seen how brave and skillful they would have been. Those forces, though, hit unarmed peasants and the liberation movement of V.M.R.O. that was already hit by the Ottomans. During the whole period of their presence here, they didn't kill even a single Bulgarian coming from Bulgaria. They didn't even approach near the Bulgarian border, but roamed over West-Central Macedonia.

Lieutenant Mazarakis, who led the forces in Pella and Emathia, describes as a first blow against the "Bulgarian komitatzides" the murder of 13 Macedonian woodcutters. After his disembarkation in some Katerini's shore, he proceeded towards Veria. Before he reached the monastery of Saint John Prodrome, which is between Kokova (Polydentron) and Koutles (Vergina), he found some scattered lumbermen huts. He surrounded the closest three and arrested 13 unarmed woodcutters. In order to explain the crime he was about to commit, he says that "they had to vanish, to be terrorized [...] they were a liaison, a net of communication between Macedonia and Greece, through which they secretly moved arms, Gras guns with which they armed Bulgarian schismatic forces against the Greeks". They tied them and walked towards Veria, crossed with raft the river Aliakmon and K. Garefis threw them, with their hands tied, into the deep river and "reaching them, he said: "The job is finished. The last boat-load is drowned". Later, Mazarakis writes: "For days now, after we abandoned Aliakmon River, various bodies appeared in its banks."

For the Greeks, for whom he says he came supposedly to protect them, he writes: "How sorry we feel, though, about the distrust and silence of these Greeks we meet [...] characteristic is the fact that the first denunciations of the passing of Greek forces, were done by these Greek-speaking residents, to the Turkish authorities..."

On the same issue another chieftain, I. Karavitis, who entered in Western Macedonia supposedly to protect Greeks, writes indignant about his meeting with some shepherds he was forced to threaten with his gun: "Together with the shepherd I called, several others moved on, too. "The rest of you stay back!", I yelled, "because I have bullets for all of you, I'll make you like sieve". Only the shepherd came, I pointed to him where to sit, pointing my gun at him. "Tell me, you dog, what are you and are there any Greek in this land?" I had become outraged, because I came to kill myself for the sake of Greeks in Macedonia and now wherever I presented myself, they wanted to destroy me or to betray me [...] this is how it happened and we were walking for ten days inside Greek-speaking zone but were unable to see one Christian friend, except of one mill owner".

The Greek-speaking people of Macedonia were never in danger from the slavophones or latinophones. Their overwhelming majority of them, peasants in particular, weren't moved by the presence of forces from Greece, nor helped them. The embodiment of neighboring Thessaly to Greece didn't bring about any changes of any kind, for the peasants and workers of Thessaly. Simply, they changed landowners and bosses. Decades of struggle were necessary, which resulted in the bloody rural revolt of Kileler in 1910. The government made distributions of unfertile land to the landless, after the settling of Asia-minor population in Greece. The only ones that collaborated with the persecuting forces were the bishops' men and the collaborators of the Ottomans, some wealthy landowners and big merchants and the ones that were bought off. It's well known what kind of people

can be bought off.

Precisely for this reason the Macedonians didn't want the involvement of Greece and Bulgaria. The Macedonian committee's opinion is mentioned by papa-Stavros Tsamis, from Pissoderi in a letter that's in the files of Monaster, 1902 AYE: "Because the leaders Petrov and Stoyanov say that from the Shopi (this is the name of a sub-group of Bulgarian ethnos) we don't want any help, as they could rule us afterwards and we will bring them water, because they will bring from Bulgaria their relatives and put them in royal jobs and we will once again be like now and, then, what would be the benefit."

This was confirmed after 1913, whereat not only nothing had changed for Macedonians, but they had suffered even worse than under the Ottomans. The chart of action of Centralists committee that exists translated in the Monaster files, pointed: "People must not be deceived by words, that it will be possible for them to get riddance from the yoke by Bulgarian help or any other force's, but, in the contrary, they must have the conviction that by their own work done and, later, by creating their own forces, they will recover their independence". To the instructors it suggests: "You must convince them not to expect any kind of help from Russians, Austrians, Serbians, Greeks, but to depend on their own strength. You must develop in them the notion that freedom is not given as charity to the people but is gained by the arms". The official regime of Athens knew very well that the revolution aimed to an independent Macedonia, but because it wanted to grab from it some parts, it undermined it and persecuted and slandered the Macedonian Liberation Movement. The phony picture it created for its own subjects continues to preserve even today.

Mazarakis says for his collaborators in Naousa: "A committee of notables was formed to help us, but it only did this in accordance to their own interests. And these were very big. Some of them have water saws in the mountains, some others manors with bulgarian-speaking in the valley and others were merchants that needed the Turks".

These "Greeks" landowners didn't want the revolution to succeed because then, their lands would be distributed to the landless "bulgarian-speaking" and "Aromanians". All the declarations of V.M.R.O talked of redistribution of the land and restoring of landless people. These were the reasons the patriarchate landowners collaborated with the Ottomans and helped the forces of Mazarakis. Obviously, they didn't go to fight with him, nor gave him men to embody his forces, but from his own forces many started deserting. Two weeks after the disembarking in the shore of Katerini (28-4-1905) and, to be precise, on 13-5-1905, he mentions "the expulsion of Bambalis, and the desertion of five of my men and six of Spiromilios ...". As he couldn't find replacements in the region, he says: "I thought of replacing them with locals, sending K. Garefis up to Olympus in order to recruit from the mountainous [...] Many of them were bandits, handsome and husky [...] I recruited them, got them used to discipline and they already get paid their salary every ten days, like the other soldiers, two and a half Turkish liras and from four to five for their two leaders..."

Thus, it is not a coincidental that the older Pozarites called Garefis chicken-thief and haven't any kind of respect for his statue.

It is no coincidence that Mazarakis chose to embody his forces with this kind of bandits and adventurers. Only this kind of men would be capable to perform murderous acts against defenseless peasants.

The peasants were indeed helpless. The army didn't protect them, since they had taken part in the Ilinden uprising and actually it favored their terrorizing. Most of the Macedonian forces had been dispersed and given up their weapons in the frame of reforms the Great Powers had imposed. It was their basic obligation after the granting of amnesty and more rights by the Ottoman authorities side. Thus, the Macedonian-pursuers gangs hit them without great difficulty. In their memoires they often mention assassinations of peasants on their way to work in the fields.

B. Stavropoulos, aka kapetan Korakas, who terrorized mainly the Vlachs of Vermion, mentions a characteristic example of the attack against unarmed peasants of Dolian (Koumaria). He writes: "Without losing any time, I decided to hit Doliani first, which "was buzzing" literally of romanizing. On 8th of March I gathered my men and suddenly attacked the Dolianites that were working in their vineyards. At first, it is true, they were startled a little. Afterwards, though, grabbed whatever they could find in front of them, sickles, hoes, stones and they came after us furiously and a

wild confrontation begun [...] two of them were killed and the rest of them run away [...] On the road of Doliani-Veroia I set an ambush and I killed two villagers..." Because he could not hit the village, he hit them the same way once more, in the fields: "On 6th of June 1908, in fact, I decided to attack and hit them as they were working in their vineyards [...] The first division moved and suddenly attacked them, killing two men. But right away the rest of the peasants, grabbing whatever they found as arms, came in front of us and with sickles, axes, wood and attacked my division".

Stavropoulos justified the attacks by saying that the "romanizing" had become tools of Romanian propaganda, performing crimes and had hit the "Orthodoxy". He doesn't explain, though, to his readers that the "romanizing" as well as the "bulgarizing" are also orthodox and that neither the "romanizing" are for Romania nor the "bulgarizing" for Bulgaria, but both sides were in favor of an independent Macedonia. Thus, his readers justify and accept well his criminal actions. The village Dolian, just as the other revolted villages of Vermion, was destroyed by the Ottoman army after the revolt in 1822. Now, the same revolted villages for the very same reason, namely the liberation of Macedonia, were terrorized and destroyed by the mercenary "Christian brothers".

Except those of the area from which the revolutionary forces were formed by Karatasos in 1822, Mazarakis pursued also the revolted villages from which Angel Gatsov (Angeli Gatsou) had formed his forces. Of course, the then called Macedonians, he now calls them Bulgarians. He writes: "The Bulgarians meanwhile are prevailing in the vilayet of Thessaloniki. Kapetan Apostolis from Voemitsa, Loukas, Karatasos from Ostrovo, Tsaousis and Manafis from Mesimeri, Tane from Gornitsovo and others."

Boemitsa, which was the village of the leader of the Macedonian forces of the swamps of Gianitsa, Apostol Petkov, was renamed Axioupolis, Ostrovo is today Arnissa and Gornitsovo is now Keli. Karatasos of 1822 from Dobra of Veria was a Macedonian, while Karatasos of 1906 from Ostrovo was a Bulgarian. One was a "slavophone" Macedonian from the south side of Vermion, the other a "slavophone" Macedonian from the north side of Vermion. All of these contributed so the elder Macedonians would say "God save you from Bulgarian bullet and Greek pen".

Mazarakis in a similar way faces also the village of Angelis Gatsou. He writes that "Sarakinovo was a center of bulgarism..." There he sent Spiromilios "so he can act against the around Sarakinovo fanatically bulgarizing villages." Spiromilios was wounded in the Vlach village of Patetsin (Patima) and left. In order for Patetsin "to conform according to the orders", they will burn it a few months later. It will be burned one more time by the "national army" in 1947 and it will vanish from the map.

The villages north of Vodena were terrorized by Mazarakis himself. So he writes: "Often we go to Vladovo, Mesimeri and Grammatikovo, where we make ambush against bulgarizing and romanizing". For Mesimeri he gets information that "all the fanatic bulgarizing every Sunday go to the monastery, that is half an hour walk outside the village [...] Their priest before was a Greek priest, but he was seduced by money [...] At daybreak the procession can be seen coming from far. The bulgar-priest in front and the rest following him, about 7 to 10 [...] but as soon as they enter the church yard, probably realized some kind of movement, run inside the church and bolted the door. Papakostas comes from the edge and with his team, they lift a heavy stone and break the door." A bit later, after the mission, Papakostas narrated to them how he executed the Mesimeriots that went to attend a mass.

Mazarakis reveals in his memoirs that the people of Naousa call him slaughterer. In mid-August 1905 the French journalist Paillares visited him. He claims "he wanted to find out who I was. I pretended I was a local. He vindicated my perceptions that our work was a national mission and not slaughter, something of which the people of Naousa are accusing me on the safe side and that I was going by the Gospel and not by the knife." It is of particular significance that the people of Naousa call him a slaughterer as they were in majority patriarchates and Greek-manists most of them, in comparison to the surrounding villages.

Another one slaughterer that slaughtered in the area of Naousa, Vodena, was petty sublieutenant Telos Agapinos, with the pseudonym Agras. By an order by Mazarakis, he had settled in the swamp area, east of Naousa, and terrorized surrounding villages with the purpose of restoring them to "Orthodoxy". The restoration, of course, was done by the knife and the gun. For him have

been written the most tearful and heroic speeches. The hero burned houses, assassinated, raped and blackmailed. At the end, they say, "the treacherous and sly komitatzides arrested him with deceit and hanged him".

How did they arrest him with treachery?

The report of the consulate of Greece in Thessaloniki writes: "Our own Agras started, a few days ago, a consultation with the Bulgarian leader Zlatan from Golisani (Lefkadia Naousas), so to persuade him to join our struggle [...] reaching the three hours away from Naoussa Gavran Kamin, they met the first force of Vlach-romanians, 18 men under some Michalis from Livadi, Karatzova, who received them in friendly terms and led them to the two hours away position of Douvartsi, in order to meet the leader. Indeed, reaching there they met Zlatan, together with some higher ranked leader, Georgi from Krousovo (?) and 15 men. All the gathered komitatzides were about 30, of which half were Vlachs (from Livadia, 2 from Doliani and 7 from Grammatiko). [...] During the discussion, although at the beginning they pretended that they wanted reconciliation [...] they started blaming for collaboration with the Ottomans and, finally, by an order of their leader Yeorgi they tied them all up and Agras with Done Mingas were abducted at 7 p.m. that very Sunday. The remaining four they kept during the night and let them go the next morning, on Monday. Of those, Zafeirios Logos and Yorgos Tolia came to the office and narrated the above". The report of the consulate doesn't say, of course, what bad act he had done and was punished by hanging, by the people's court that condemned him.

The American journalist Albert Sonnichsen that in the summer of 1906 had joined the Macedonian resistance groups of the swamp, in his book "Memoires of a Macedonian bandit" (Athens, Petsivas editions, 2004) describes the adventure of the 7 villages in the valley of Slanitsa (Episkopi, Naousa). The villages are: Vestitsa (Angelochori), Slanitsa or Piskopia (Episkopi), Golesani (Lefkadia), Gorno Kopanovo (Kopanos), Dolno Kopanovo (Chariessa), Zervochor (Zervochori), Likovista (Lykoyianni), Minostitsa (Monospita), Marinovo (Agia Marina), Yantsista (Agios Georgios).

Sonnichsen writes: "The Greek bishop of Veria hypnotized them, sucking their brain with "You are Greeks, you are Greeks". They, terrorized by the "soldiers of Christ", answered obediently "we are Greeks" even if they could not say it in Greek, instead they yelled it in a "barbaric" tongue [...] this happened many years before the conquerors made their presence in the area of Vodena [...] suddenly the peasants stopped paying taxes to the church, Greek schools emptied and rumors were saying that the villages were filled with weapons ..."

The "Saint" of Veria called Mazarakis and asked him to: "Write them a brotherly letter, but warn them about the plans of the faithless gangsters." The letter Mazarakis sent on 7th of February, 1906 wrote:

"To our brothers of the villages Marinovo, [...] we found out that [...] they are trying to make you negate your Greek descendant and your faith. We also have information that they are pressuring you to protest to the Europeans against the soldiers of faith. I am begging you to open your eyes and never again protest to the Europeans. Unfortunately, in the future I will be very tough with anyone that'll repeat something like that. They will be killed, their children and wives, as well. We will kill anyone that's not with us. I hope I become understadable and that you will obey. Your brother in faith Constantinos Akritas".

The peasants did not discipline themselves and they sent Mazarakis letter to the Balkan Committee of London. Thus, the "soldiers of Christ", on March 10th, hit the undisciplined Marinovo. Sonnichsen describes: "A group of armed men, about 50, entered the village and went to the house of the president of the local community, wearing masks. The president wasn't there at the time. The masked men started pulling the women and the children outside. At that moment, had sounded an alarm and 20 of the village guards started shooting at the "soldiers of Christ". The confrontation lasted almost half an hour: when guards from the surrounding villages started arriving, they chased the Greeks away, who fled in a disorderly retreat and so the peasants had the chance to kill five of them."

A similar incident Mazarakis describes himself, during an attack on the village Golesani (Lefkadia). Except the peasants, he writes that: "and from all the bulgarizing villages of the plain there were shootings. They were concerted and the plain was burning. We had to distance ourselves and go up to the mountains..."

The villages of the valley in order to protect themselves from raids had formed teams of

guards that Sonnichsen calls national guards. They had organized a good net of self defense that was hard for the mercenary forces to break. The Athens regime, though, gave great importance in the subduing of the villages of the plains. Village guard groups had to be eliminated at any cost and the villages had to be subdued. Thus, in the summer of 1906, it sent a larger number of army officers, sub officers, soldiers and mercenaries.

Among the army officers that came and settled in the Swamp east of Naousa, was Agras that in the fall had replaced Mazarakis. Together with sergeant Panagiotis Papatzanatea, he was the main organizer of the anti-Macedonian undertaking. With the reinforced now forces, he burned, assassinated, captured peasants, blackmailed.

Here is how Papatzanateas describes his "holy and national task".

"Matapas got a letter from the Centre for us to cut off the road Veria-Gianitsa, namely to kill several Bulgarians in order to scare the villages, so the Bulgarians won't be going to Veria anymore. Matapas told me that by the General Centre order I must go and cut off the communications on the road Gianitsa-Vodena, at any cost. By cut off communications they meant to slaughter on the road some Bulgarians, so to get the Bulgarians scared, who were sure that in those places Greek forces could not go [...] Near the village Vertikop (Skydra) after I had placed guards, I stayed waiting until 1:30 p.m.. Then, a group of seven Bulgarian peasants that were going to Vodena, showed up. We caught four of them, the other 3 managed to go away and saved themselves [...] The place was such that we could not shoot. One of the four was a Greek [...] We killed, though, the other three and I put on their lips a piece of paper, so it would show that they were killed by a Greek-Macedonian force. On the paper I wrote: "This kind of death enjoys all those who abandoned their orthodox religion and joined the schism of the Bulgarians" and under it, my seal. This I always did when I killed Bulgarians, to put on them such small paper."

Agras suffered of malaria due to the humidity of the swamp, thus he went up on the mountains of Naousa and Vodena where he kept on with the same terrorist task against the peasants and guards of self-defense. The big damage that these actions afflicted might've made him believe that some of the villages were ready to compromise with the "soldiers of Christ" and subdue to the bishop.

The official view is that he had agreed with the Committee's leadership to a meeting, but it did not keep its word. They obviously aren't telling the truth. If the leadership of the Macedonian forces had aimed to pursue a compromise, there was no reason to get this far. The meeting could have been held in the cathedral of Veria, or some other village that supposedly was ready to adhere, or in Naousa in the house of someone of mutual trust.

The information saved by the residents of the area where he was arrested and hanged, say other things. Agras was arrested by a Vlach force of resistance that handed him to the Committee, so he would be tried for the crimes he committed against them. It's possible that he might've had arranged to meet with some people that seemed to be ready to subdue to the Patriarchate. On his way to meet them, he was ambushed by a Vlach tseta (paramilitary group) and was captured.

This point of view is confirmed by the official written testimonies of that period. Alexandros Mazarakis in his report (#2544/12-6-1907, consulate of Thessaloniki) mentions that Agras "was captured via deceit, by Bulgarian guerrillas that made an ambush with the villagers of the Bulgarian village Sarmarinovo in the kaza of Niaousta..." In the escort of Agras there was also someone by the name Tolis that was used as a guide also by chieftain Constantinos Mazarakis. He considers him as "a suspect of betrayin to the Bulgarians [...] it seems that after a year, he collaborated in the betrayal and arrest of Agras".

For the betrayal to happen, it would mean that the leadership of the Macedonian forces had taken the information on Agras route from one of his collaborators. If there was an agreement for a meeting between Agras and the Committee, it's obvious that the Committee would have known his route and there would be no reason for anyone to talk about treason. Therefore, there wasn't any kind of an agreement. Moreover, if there was an agreement for a meeting, there would not have been any reason to set an ambush, which the official report mentions. Regarding the agreement with the Macedonian leaders, this was a fabrication of the propagandists, so the prestige of the "hero Agras" won't be weakened, but also the «treacherous Bulgarians" would also be lessened.

Agras moved west of Naousa, up on Vermion, where the Vlach villages had suffered quite a

bit by the actions of his gangs. In the ambush they set up, they forced them to surrender, disarmed them all, but did not kill them. It was a firm principle of the Committee that the prisoners had to be tried. The peasants reported that among those that arrested him was Giorgy Sdrou from K'drivo (Kedrona), settlement next to Grammatiko, whose wife he had raped and killed his brother. This had made him to become a protagonist in the planning of the operation. The information on Agras route possibly they got from one of his assistants who they present as traitor. Subsequently, they took them to the den of the Committee where they were tried. The two leading members of the Committee were Zlatan from Golesani (Lefkadia) and the mentioned "Yiorgys from Krushovo" was Giorgy Moutsitano. Moutsitano, who indeed was a Vlach, was from Krushovo, a town north of Bitola. He was a leading member of V.M.R.O. and participated actively in the Ilinden uprising. After the destruction of his town by the Ottomans, he continued the struggle by protecting mainly the Vlach villages that were targeted by the mercenaries. Besides Zlatan, he collaborated closely with Darlayianni, also a Vlach, who operated in the area of Dolian (Koumaria), Souva Livada (Xerolivado), Kosten (Kastania) of Vermion.

For the four of the five that escorted Agras there were no evidence of guilt against them, therefore they were acquitted and were set free. For Agras and Mingas, there was evidence for them to be sentenced to death, not once but tens of times. The fact that the peasants of the area were spitting and cursing him after his capture shows all they had suffered and how much they hated him.

Agras and others like him, under today's conditions, would have been tried by the international court of the Hague and would have been condemned for crimes against humanity. But the fanariote regime became the ruler in the area and proclaimed them heroes and martyrs. It also erected statues in the villages where they had committed tens of crimes. The statues of Agras and Mingas were taken down many times by brave Macedonians, but the authorities put them up again. The trunk of the nut tree on which Agras was hanged, it was put by the municipality of Edessa in the hall of the municipal building, evidently as a reminder to contemporary Macedonians that their ancestors punished someone of their criminal persecutors.

The Athenean state imposed Agras' name on one of the villages of the area, Vladovo, without asking anyone of the residents if they wanted it or not. It also imposed his name on the beautiful lake-nature preserve, thus defiling it. This, in international terminology, is called fascism.

In magical Pozar they erected the statue of the other slaughterer of the gang, Kostas Garefis: to him who terrorized and assassinated the Macedonians of the area that had revolted against the Ottomans in 1822, headed by Angeli Gatso from Sarakinovo. They who went, after its suppression, to struggled for the liberation of Greece. They present him as a hero that with self-sacrifice killed the "bulgarians" Karatasos from Ostrovo (Arnissa) and wounded fatally Loukas, but in the battle he also was killed. The truth is that there was never been a battle but a classical assassination. The consulate of Greece in Thessaloniki wrote in its report (#419/12-8-1906) that "a fight took place near Bachovo of the Vodena kaza, between Garefis Greek-macedonian force and the united bulgarian gangs of Karatasos from Ostrovo, Louka and Tsotso from Bahovo."

Karavitis, who had collaborated with Garefis, writes about the plot that Garefis together with the chief shepherd of the area, Karafilias, had set up. He writes: "When Garefis noticed that the chief shepherd was hiding besides himself also the komitadzides, forced him to admit it and together to think of a plan, so none of the komitadzides would be saved. Because the whole of the stockbreeding clan would be endangered, what could the poor Sarakatsani do, exposed to the mood of any criminal, both themselves and their property? [...] They decided, thus, the chief shepherd to empty his hut and to roast an ewe and invite the komitatzides there to eat and drink".

The co-patriot of Garefis, K. Liapis, writes in his book (*Figures of Magnesia – K. Garefis*, Volos, 1973) that "In one of them (huts) were the two notorious leaders, their secretaries, treasurer Tzolis, the elder Risto Veskos and maybe also the son of Tsotsos, in the other, the few men of Tsotsos, overjoyed after drinking, were singing "heroic" demotic songs of their country and the songs that praised the "achievements" of Karatasos.

The chief shepherd Karafilias, when the situation had normalized, revealed to his Bachovites friends what had happened. Garefis, besides having "heroically" threatened the whole stockbreeding clan with destruction, kept also the chief shepherd's brother as prisoner-hostage, thus he forcing him to obey to his orders. Garefis knowing the password and counter password (grozde-loumbenitsa) that

Karafilias had revealed to him, approached unbothered the hut and surprised them. His escort went after the unsuspecting Bachovite guard to eliminate him, while he himself went into the hut and started shooting "heroically" the unarmed Macedonians. He shot Karatasos in the face, wounded Loukas severely and old Christo Vesko on the leg. But the other Bahovite grabbed in time his gun and shot Garefis.

Garefis is the one who drowned 13 Macedonians woodcutters from Pieria, throwing them with their hands tied in the deep river Aliakmon. So happened Bahovo like the neighboring villages which are forced to honor Garefis, to be villages with a lot of woodcutters, co-nationals with the woodcutters that he had drowned.

GONOS, KOTAS AND LAKIS PYRZAS

Particular honor was attributed to the few Macedonians that were bought off. In our area, only the stooges of the bishops and the landowners collaborated and but even those just as informers and guides. The only case they mention and duly promote, so it'll show that there was Macedonian participation in the anti-macedonian struggle, is Gonos Giotas.

Gonos, up to 1904, was a "Bulgarian" and took part in the Ilinden uprising. Later he became "Greek" against payment and was persecuted his co-nationals. Of how many Macedonians followed him, he mentions himself in his "Summery report of my actions" he submitted to his employers, on 22nd of November 1909. The "Report" was published in April of 1993 in the magazine "*Historical and folklore topics*" that the Historical and Folklore Company of Giannitsa, "Philippos", edits.

So, Gonos writes: "In accordance with the order of the Centre, on July 1905 I formed a unit of seven (7) Gekides (Albanians) [...] 8th. At the same period, in agreement with Koumantari Gali-Pasha I surrounded the Bulgarian huts, apart from the army. On the inside, the affected by the men of Petrillou fell into such bewilderment the Bulgarians so that they abandoned the hut of Tsekri, leaving in it three dead." He states, in fact, that his unit was composed by Albanians and that he collaborated with the occupation army.

About the 1906, he states: "With the consent of the Centre in agreement secondly with Kumantar Hafez-bey, I took five men and jointly with the army patrolled for the discovering of komitatzides..." In his 44 articles he mentions many more collaborations with the forces of occupation and many assassinations of "Bulgarians" and "Romunon" peasants. He doesn't mention even a single Macedonian participation in his unit. For the role he played against his co-nationals, they erected a statue of him in Giannitsa and he is honored by the authorities, accordingly.

Kotas, who was bought off by Karavangelis, as he made the mistake to participate in the Ilinden uprising, lost the trust of his employer and had a bad ending. He was betrayed by Karavangelis himself to the Ottoman authorities which, being guided by his other mercenary, Pavlos Kyrou, arrested him and hanged him in a square of Bitola.

The consul of Greece in Bitola, D. Kallergis, writes in his report (#713/17-7-1904) in relevance to Kotas: "Pavlos Kyrou, as moreover he revealed himself, was ordered to lead the army to where Kote was, whom bishop Karavangelis intends to surrender to the Turks, firstly because he had lost his trust in him and secondly, as to give a new sample of faith and loyalty to the Turks.."

This traitor and collaborator of the forces of occupation, Germanos Karavangelis, the fanariote syndicate has proclaimed hero and "a mainstay of Hellenism". It also has him as a candidate for sainthood. They erected his statue in Kastoria, so that the indigenous Kastorians are "free" to pay honor to a criminal persecutor of their ancestors.

The fate of the other Karavangelis' mercenary, Lakis Pyrzas from Florina, although was better, but also tragic in a different way. Pyrzas, apparently, was more of an ideologue and had believed that the mercenary forces were helping the Macedonians in their struggle for liberation. When he saw, though, their real actions, he was disappointed and withdrew from the struggle. He went to Athens from where, on 2nd of May 1906, he sent a letter to the very prime minister, G. Theotokis, in which he expressed his disappointment of the actions of the forces of persecution. He didn't send it to the Greek-Macedonian Committee, because he had understood its role and had turned against it. He

writes, in fact, that "absolutely not even one Macedonian is a member of this Committee".

In his letter he mentions the unacceptable behavior of the Greek forces against the indigenous Macedonians, even the Grekomans (Greek loyal). He protests that even they are called Bulgarians and enumerates some of the assassinations of innocent Macedonians. Thus, he writes: "These facts, your Excellency, are a prolific picture of all that are taking place in Macedonia by the Cretans who are a real scourge that has engulfed the wretched land, with impunity and under the eyes of their co-patriots commanders they kill, rob, grab and rape virgins and women. The history of their presence in Macedonia is full of these shameless and barbaric actions [...] in the part most of debauchery, lewdness and shameful actions and plundering [...] I am in position to authentically say that their behavior, and foremost of the Cretans, has been way worse and incomparably more malicious than of the Bulgarians [...] The Commission (the Committee) [...] loudly approved their actions by the words of its representative member who at the appearance, last year, before him of two-member committee from Macedonia, which came and protested for their conduct and behavior in the prefecture of Monaster, with a satrap tone of voice, he answered them as follows: "We don't have the need of Macedonians, but of Macedonia". And this answer, that most foreign language- speaking Macedonians are aware of, against whom in particular was uttered, in combination with all the above mentioned similar and worse conducted events, it proves, beyond doubts, the in vain but visible devastating intentions of the Committee against foreign language- speaking populations of Macedonia [...] And I, your Excellency, totally disappointed [...] take myself out completely from the holy struggle and in short time I am leaving from here."

Lakis Pyrzas expressed early the bitterness and disappointment of the Grekoman Macedonians that collaborated with the mercenary forces and the stooges of the Patriarchate. He understood, but it was already too late. Subsequently, it was confirmed, in the worse possible way, the answer he got from the representative of the "Greek-Macedonian" Committee of Athens, in which there wasn't even a single Macedonian as a member: "We don't have the need of Macedonians, but of Macedonia".

THE CHARACTER OF THE BALKAN WARS

The motto "We don't have need of Macedonians, but of Macedonia!" was applied in practice after 1912. But, the very land of Macedonia had similar treatment by the Kingdom of Athens.

Greece agreed with Serbia and Bulgaria to hit the Ottomans and divide Macedonia in analogy on how much of its territory every state will succeed to occupy. If Greece considered that Macedonia belonged to its dominion on the grounds of historic rights, certainly it wouldn't have agreed to share it with others. It didn't encounter it as Northern Greece, not in the least. It encountered it as booty of war.

The royal decree of 31-10-1912 that defined the administration of the New Lands, writes: "having in mind the existing need of the speediest temporary organization of the administration of the lands occupied by the Greek Army, in Macedonia, [...] it is consigned to our Minister of Justice, K. Raktivan, to [...] arrange all concerning the temporary administration of the occupied lands".

The decree is signed, besides the king, also by the then prime minister Venizelos and all of the of the ministers' council. It was published five days after the occupation of Thessaloniki and characterized the southern part of Macedonia as "occupied lands". The term "liberated" that should have been put, if they believed that they had liberated them, they had not coined, yet.

After the victorious countries signed a peace treaty with the Ottomans, by which the previous Ottoman territories were ceded to them, the matter of their distribution arose. Greece and Serbia were considered as being favored by the development of events, since Bulgaria which had carried the biggest burden of the war, had missed the chance to acquire enough territories. Thus, Greece and Serbia made a Treaty of Alliance on the 19th of May 1913, so to protect their possessions. The terms of this treaty said:

"1st. The two contracting parties expressly agreed of mutual guaranty of their possessions...

2nd. On the distribution of the territories [...] they undertake the obligation as to not come to any particular agreement with Bulgaria [...] mutually supporting their claims on their territories.

3rd. considering that it is of vital interest for their Kingdoms that no other country will interpolate between their own possessions, west of Axios (Vardar) river, they declare that they will aid each other, Greece and Serbia, in order to acquire common border line.

This border line based on actual possessions [...] On the side of Bulgaria, Greek border line will grant Greece, on the left bank of Axios (Vardar), by the Greek and Serbian armies occupied territories [...] passing south of Kilis [...] will be directed [...] a little bit towards east of Eleftheron gulf...

7th. His Majesty the King of Greece undertakes the obligation that his government provides all the needed conveniences and guarantees for fifty years the complete freedom of imported and exported Serbian merchandise via the port of Thessaloniki..."

The words they use are: "possessions", "distribution of territories", "occupation", "occupied territories", "occupied lands". The word liberation is not used at all. Nowhere is mentioned neither is encountered Macedonia as Northern Greece. In later laws and decrees they mention it as "New Lands". The distribution of Macedonia led to the second Balkan war, which was the bloodiest.

PERSECUTIONS AND INJUSTICES AFTER 1912

During the Balkan wars, the Athens regime, alongside to the struggle that it did so to grab the largest part of Macedonia it could get, was also did a struggle of ethnic cleansing. It assassinated and terrorized Macedonians so they would abandon their homes and reduce them in numbers.

During the First Balkan war the persecutions were just a few as the war developed into a "sprint" competition for the occupation of as much territory as they could grab. Besides, the territories that it occupied were the ones in which in the period 1904-1908 it had performed the anti-Macedonian devastating struggle. Moreover, during the undertakings Macedonian guerrilla forces appeared that where fighting the Ottoman forces, under Tsakalarov and Popov. Karavitis mentions this action in his memoirs, but also does Matthiopoulos, commander of the 5th Division. In eastern Macedonia, the forces of Yane Sadansky developed intense activity. They, in fact, entered first Serres, Drama, Kavala and reached up to Thessaloniki. This seems to have been the main reason that Greece, in its agreement with Serbia, put the term "that no other country should intervene between the field possessions westbound of the river Axios (Vardar)..."

The Second Balkan war was most to ensure and expand of possessions. For this reason the Athens regime, parallel to the war against Bulgarian forces, undertook actions of ethnic-cleansing. The populations of the Kilis and Serres areas that were not Greek-speaking are targeted by the military undertakings.

Characteristic example is the bombardment of the civilian population of Kukush (Kilis), on 20-21 of June 1913. Those civilians, who survived from the bombardment, abandoned the city to save themselves. After the end of the war, their repatriation was forbidden. That's why today there are no indigenous people in Kilis (Kukush), while before 1912 they constituted the 85% of the population. Kukush is the city of birth of Gotse Deltsev, the most prominent of the leading members of V.M.R.O. (Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization) who was killed in Banitsa, Serres, on May 1903, fighting for the liberation of Macedonia. Its inhabitants were the most revolutionaries, they had joined the Catholic Church in 1859 (unites) and the Exarchy, in 1870.

Many more Macedonian villages had the same fate. The Greek army "liberated" the villages from their Macedonian residents and didn't allow their repatriation after the war, for the same reason that Turkey does not allow to uprooted Greek-Cypriots to return to their homes. Ethnic-cleansing is a bad thing when it's made against the Greeks: when they, the Greeks, perform it against others, it is a heroic act and national duty.

During the Balkan Wars of 1912-13, according to the official records, about 30.000 Macedonians were expatriated to Bulgaria and Serbia. During the First World War 20.000 were expatriated, mainly to Bulgaria. Serbia was an ally of Greece and didn't want in its territory a strong Macedonian presence.

Under the shadow of the treaties, in 1919 (Neuilly) with Bulgaria and 1932 (Lausanne) with

Turkey, Greece uprooted thousands of Macedonians as schismatic (Bulgarians, about 90.000) and Mohammedans (Turks, about 50.000). And it did this, because it feared it could suffer as did Bulgaria in 1878, that with the help of the Russians, it had occupied almost all of Macedonia but under pressure by the Great Powers it was forced to give it up. It had to alter the ethnological synthesis of the population. The excuses were many. And when there are none, they are invented or manufactured. They are the same as excuses by which the Nazis murdered in masses and destroyed the resistance villages. But this is bad only when others do it to us, not when we do it to others.

With the Neuilly treaty (27th November, 1919), Greece and Bulgaria agreed to make voluntary exchange of populations. They formed mixed committees in which also foreign observers participated. According to official records, the applications of immigration submitted weren't over eight hundred of which two hundred and fifty were by Macedonians. This perplexed the chauvinist authorities of Athens, which realized that by legitimate and voluntary exits, they did not get rid of the compact Macedonian populations of the New Lands. Thus, in Lausanne treaty (24th of July, 1923) instead of voluntary exchange, they put the term compulsory exchange. The very Macedonians no side asked them if they agree. Others decided for them, without their authorization.

The Lausanne treaty regarded, of course, exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey but under its legitimate-like shadow, Greece uprooted thousands of Macedonians against their own will. The western protectors turned a blind eye on their protectorate, as at the time they were hostile against the defeated Bulgarians and Turks. Thus, they tolerated the violence and the terrorism that Greece unleashed against the non greek-speaking populations. To achieve bigger expatriation of Macedonians, it spread lies that the exchanged populations will be reinstated in the places of settlement.

Bulgaria anything but as Bulgarians fronted the Macedonians refugees. At first they scattered them all over Bulgaria to break up their unity and didn't live them in the parts of Macedonia it had occupied. In Macedonia of Pirin there still existed a Macedonian autonomy movement of V.M.R.O., that's the reason why it didn't want there a compact Macedonian population. Many Macedonians were sent in the Burgas-Messimvria area, from where many Greek-speaking people had left. Obviously, it didn't settle them in their homes and properties, as should have done, but mainly around marshy areas. They were promised help, but this remained only in words.

The wretched conditions of life elevated the death toll in many Macedonian communities up to 65%. The journalist Lucien Cramer of *Revue Internationale de la Croix Rouge*, who visited the area, wrote characteristically: "When we saw the miserable conditions of the refugees in Bulgaria, we thought that we were in some places of Dante's hell." (#83, July 1925). Some of the disappointed refugees returned secretly to their homes.

The compulsory exchange with Turkey was proposed by Venizelos himself. He was serving the plans of the chauvinistic circle of Athens to alter the synthesis of the population in Macedonia, as Thrace was exempted from the relevant treaty. Their aim was to break up the unity of the compact Macedonian populations, by settling foreign populations among them. The new colonizers would've played, in a way, the role of policemen of the indigenous Macedonians.

Due to the Asian Minor catastrophe, the first refugees were settled mainly in urban areas. Rural populations had to be found so they could be settled in the rural areas of Macedonia. This idea was initiated by Ionas Dragoumis, in December of 1903, in a letter to his father. Besides of "Bulgaroctonia" (killing of Bulgarians), he had proposed "invasion of rural, Greek population in Macedonia".

Venizelos himself had expressed thoughts of moving populations at the end of 1914, after the start of the First World War. In a telegraph to the Greek ambassador in Bucharest, with a message for the prime minister Take Ionescu (historical archive E. Venizelos 1/35/1) he wrote, among other things: "we do not oppose, for that probable increase of Bulgaria in Thrace, against Turkey or in Macedonia with concession by the Serbian side [...] the ethnic bulk of the by name Bulgarians, is smaller than five million souls. The Greek ethnic bulk is larger by 70%. For this major ethnic bulk that, unfortunately, is destined to be gathered inside the borders of the free kingdom, we demand territory which won't be smaller than the Bulgarian".

Venizelos, in fact, confronted Macedonia as of common use land that has no owner and he

could bargain with his neighboring allies. He confronts the people as "bulk", namely as mass without will for which he alone could decide and his alike, without asking their opinion. Right after the occupation of Macedonia, he designed the moving of Roman-orthodox populations and their settling in it. Later, his policies were adapted in serving this purpose. He would use these populations as a chauvinistic tool. He uprooted the Macedonians so to make free space, where he would settle these populations, without asking their opinion and without counting them as human beings.

The exchange of populations was done with sole criterion the religion. From Macedonia 60.000 Muslims Macedonians were expelled, among them 14.000 Greek-speaking (Vaalades).

Up today, we heard many times that according to the Lausanne treaty the minority of Thrace was characterized Muslim and not Turkish, while the Christians of Turkey that came to Greece were characterized, except as Christian, also Greek. Thus, they claim that while the Turkish-speaking people of Western Thrace don't have the right to be characterized as ethnic minority, but, on the other hand, the Christian minority that came from Turkey can be characterized as ethnic. And they do this because they don't tell the people the whole truth. The only characterization of both minorities was religious. To be exact, the Pact on the exchange of populations, on 30-1-1923, that was ratified by the Lausanne treaty wrote that "the compulsory exchange ought to be done of the Turkish citizens of Greek orthodox religion..."

For the religious Christian minority the term "Rum" or "Greek" was inserted because Greece was recognized as protector of only the Roman-orthodox Patriarchate followers and not of all the Christians of Turkey. In Turkey there were also other orthodox that belonged to Exarchy or to the Armenian Patriarchate, who shouldn't have been included in the exchange. Therefore, the refugees that were settled in Greece belonged to the Rum Millet or Romaic Genus, which is religious. As from an ethnic point of view, they belong to the tens of peoples that lived in Asia Minor. Many of them were of Turkish-genus. Besides, they were Turkish-speaking, too.

By saying half truths to the people, they deceive them. The half truth they say equals a lie. Thus the refugees that have settled in Macedonia could be called Hait-ides or Murat- oglou but they made them believe that they are descendants of the ancient Hellenes. Today they scream about "their Macedonia" and refuse us even the right to be called Macedonians, although their ancestors didn't even know where Macedonia is on a map. Besides, they settled them on lands that rightfully should have been distributed to Macedonians. Thus, they also are captives of the inhuman role for which the chauvinists settled them mainly in Macedonia. Many of them played the role of guardians of the Macedonians and keep playing it still today. The attacks that MA.KI.B.E. suffered had revealed that role. During the Occupation, in fact, they played it in its most extreme aspect. They allied with the occupation forces and persecuted mainly the resistance Macedonian villages.

With the Lausanne accord a mixed committee was formed that would've estimated the properties of the uprooted refugees, whom the Turkish state would compensate. The committee couldn't function substantially due to disagreement and breaches of the treaty, by both sides. The first big breach was made by Greece that settled refugees in Western Thrace, in violation of the treaty, and indeed in Muslims properties. In reprisal, the Turks did the same in properties of Roman-orthodox in Constantinople.

The disagreement continued and the joint committee could not function. Thus, on 10th of June 1930, Venizelos government signed another agreement with Turkey, according to which the properties of the refugees were taken by the state, without any estimate and given compensations. Thus, Venizelos, except the pre-decided uprooting of the people of Asia Minor, donated also their properties to the Turkish state. As a consequence, it was he who owed, now, to compensate them.

Today only few of Asia Minor people say some half words about this criminal policy of Venizelos. The proclamation of this atrocious chauvinist as ethnarch, is one of many foolish things that occur in the "endless mad house of Greece", as ex prime minister Karamanlis (the elder) said. Most grotesque is that also many Macedonians honor him as ethnarch, while, in reality, he is the responsible for the uprooting of thousands of Macedonians and for the settling in Macedonia of the majority of colonists.

In Macedonia they settled about three times higher the number of refugees of the number of those expelled. More than half of Asia Minor (640.000) people, and mainly from the depths of

Anatolia, settled in Macedonia and almost all of the Thracians and Bulgarian refugees. But even those they didn't distribute evenly. In areas where compact Macedonian population existed, they settled supernumerarily colonizers. So, for instance, in the province of Almopia, at that period, Macedonian peasants were left with agrarian shares of five-ten acres. The refugees that were settled here, had almost three times as many shares, but still were very small. On the contrary, in the deep and fertile valley in the mouth of Vardar (Axios) River they settled just a few of colonists because there were not many Macedonians living there. These rich tracts of land they didn't distribute neither to the refugees nor to the Macedonians. Many of them had been granted by the last Ottoman Prefect of Thessaloniki, Donmes Hamti-Bey, to his Greek-speaking patriarchate collaborators of the region, with kitapia (granting documents). But even after 1912, the Ottomans sold to Peloponnesians entire manors on derisory prices. The Athenian state didn't expropriate, as it owed, these manors and didn't distribute them to the landless. Thus the new landowners enriched themselves selling them, later, in very expensive prices. Even today there are many manors in the area, on the mouth of Vardar (Axios) River, as in Sindos, Chalastra, Valmadas, Kymina, Malgara, Vrachias, like the Tzitzikostas manor (about 3.000 acres), Pantazou (about 3.000 acres), Hante' (over 2.000 acres), Grava (over 2.000 acres), Karagioz (over 2.500 acres). The same happened with manors of Naousa. On the contrary, in our areas there were not recognized by the state the property transaction contracts between Ottomans and Macedonians, for purchase of five, ten or twenty acres.

There exists one more category of Macedonian refugees for whom repatriation was forbidden. These are those that immigrated after the Ilinden uprising, in 1903. The Ottoman regime, after it subdued the revolt, unleashed pogroms against Macedonian population of the areas that revolted and destroyed a large part of its economy. Thus, tens of thousands of Macedonians were forced to immigrate, mainly to Australia, Canada, U.S.A. Dragoumis in his diary (3 March, 1904) writes: "In large numbers come the Christians from the villages in order to get passports to travel abroad". To them, in spite of having killed hundreds of Ottomans and committed many damages, the Ottoman regime granted general amnesty. The Athens state doesn't allow their repatriation not even to these immigrants. It punishes them, apparently, because they hit the Ottoman regime, so that Greece found it weakened and thus took half of Macedonia, making a "heroic" promenade.

Greece wants to present itself as more democratic and generous than Turkey. It didn't grant us amnesty, though, not even for the uprising against the Ottomans. Other thing is the words, other the reality.

Another similar category is the Macedonians who were forced to immigrate due to the economic pogrom that was unleashed against all those had remained in its dominion. It granted them passports that were valid only to exit the country, but after they were not valid anymore. A great number of Macedonians immigrated mainly during the war period of 1940-1949. Many of them, actually, left without passports due to the abnormal situation.

THE CIVIL AND RACIAL WAR 1946-49 IN POZAR

Every troubled period was an opportunity for the Athens state to uproot and get rid of some Macedonians. That's what it did also during the Civil War of 1946-1949. It is worth a glance at all that took place in my village because it is a characteristic example of all that's happened in the indigenous Macedonian villages.

The period of occupation by the Nazi forces was rather one of the quietest, for the village. Although about ten Pozarites had joined E.L.A.S. (Greek People's Liberation Army), there were no conflicts in the village and incidents of mistreatment were but a few. The Nazis killed two unarmed peasants as feeders of E.L.A.S. Resistance forces. They had spotted a warehouse of supplies, north east of the village and moved toward it. Some peasants perceived the move of the occupying forces and run to remove the provisions. The Nazis caught a villager, Christos Lypitkas, and asked him to

lead them to the warehouse. He, in order to buy some time, led them to a hut far away from the warehouse, pretending that he thought this was the storage room. Subsequently, he led them to the real warehouse but the others had already removed the provisions. The Nazis considered that the Pozarite purposely delayed them and executed him. They executed another one, Giorgos Gisis, because in his hut they found flour and considered unexplainable its existence there and regarded him as a collaborator of the partisans.

In Pozar a nucleus of E.A.M. (NOF- Ethnic Liberation Front) and A.F.Z. (Anti Fascist Women's Front) had been created. A partisan fighter of the 30th regiment, on the area of Paiko, was my father's older brother Alexos Pasois. He took part in the battle of Kilkis and in many other smaller scale undertakings, against the forces of occupation and their collaborators P.A.O.tzides (nationalist paramilitary group), in the valley of Gianista. With the start of the Civil War, he joined the D.S.E. (Greek Democratic Army), as a volunteer.

The Civil War begun in Pozar even before battles started in the area. In the adjacent village, Tressino (Orma), a small army unit was settled, headed by a compatriot of Anthimos (bishop of Thessaloniki, today), the Peloponnesian sub-lieutenant Kyriakakos. Since the spring of 1946, he started terrorizing the unarmed residents of the village, without any given reason. He chased them even in their fields and beat them without mercy. He kicked Christo Vanoulov to death, the moment he was going to wash himself in the small river that passes through the village. The fifteen years old Nikolas Yiatso, after they hazed him, made him run and they tried their marksmanship potentials by shooting at him as he run, leaving him dead. In possession of Trayanos Peikos they found four-five cans of milk he had taken from the American aid. They took him for questioning in Aridea as a suspect of supplying the partisans. Although nothing incriminatory did arise against him, they killed him. In a similar way they also killed Yorgos Katiris.

For the murders and beatings that Kyriakakos performed, the police took absolutely no action, whatsoever, although it should have. Pozarites for it weren't citizens and it had no duty to protect them.

In 1946, the army entered Ano Pozar and burned it. About 30 families were forced to abandon it and went to, then, Yugoslavia. They were of the first unarmed that were forced to abandon their homes. Before they crossed the border, they were stopped by the partisans that proposed to the men to join their forces. Not even one of them accepted.

I spoke to many Pozarites that lived through that unconcealed aggressiveness of the national army. All of them had concluded that their aim was to push them to the side of the partisan forces, where they could destroy them, having a legitimate-like excuse. I didn't find even one single person to tell me that the army treated us well, despite the fact that most of the ones that stayed in the village were, of course, the most loyal nationalists.

The 20th of January 1947, the partisans entered the village and recruited men. To become more convincing, they spoke about the revolutionary stands of K.K.E. (Communist party of Greece) against the persecution of Macedonians and promised a quick victory against monarch-fascism and the return to their homes. The recruit, of course, was compulsory and without political criterion. They took with them 92 people. In August of the same year, they made one more recruit, taking about 40 more Pozarites.

Some of the recruited, disappointed by the bad treatment they encountered by the leadership, abandoned the partisan struggle. They had every right to do so. Political struggles are a matter of personal choice and under no circumstances can be compulsory. One of the first to leave was Apostolos Nitsis. A few days later, the partisans burned his house. Afterwards, Christos Dosis and Demetrios Pleskas also left. As they reached home, they got information about the house arson of the previous fugitive and were afraid that their houses would have the same fate. Thus, they decided to return back to the partisans. There, they were arrested and tried by a partisan court. By synoptic proceedings, they were condemned to death sentence and were executed the next day. For the same reason, they tried and executed at least four more Pozarites: Pleskas Nikolaos of Ioannis, Pleskas Nikolaos of Zlatanis, Katiris Ioannis and Pritskas Nikolaos. I say at least four, because it's not known how several others were killed. They killed Demetrios Nouskas because he told confidentially to some other Macedonians to stay alert because very easily they execute Macedonians. My uncle Giorgos,

during a patrol with someone else, took bread from the bakery of a peasant woman, who reported it to the command. Some of their comrades informed them about the report of the peasant woman to the command, which of course knew who was patrolling at that hour. Thus, they got scared that they would be executed: they abandoned their unit and surrendered to the army.

The partisans killed six more unarmed peasants (Traianos Lysitskas, Maria Kaliosi, Yorgos Kaliosis, Demetrios Iskou, Ioannis Peikos, papa-Kostas Stolis). The main accusation was that they advised young Pozarites not to join the partisan's forces. This was their indefeasible right. It was the opinion of the prudent who estimated that it won't serve the interests of the village if they participated in the Civil strife and suggested neutrality. The local leadership of the partisans challenged the right of this choice. This was the choice that the Turkophone of West Thrace made and came off as gainers. Another category was the friendly relations some people had with party leaders of the Right. This was regarded as collaboration with the enemy. Most of the Pozarites pursued good relations with all sides. They welcomed both these and those. This right of theirs was challenged by the partisans' leadership.

Something that all those who participated in the partisan war agree, is that partisans command exhausted all its severity on the Macedonians. Very easily they condemned them to death, "as exemplary acts". The others, very seldom would be led to a partisan court and the sentences were lighter and very seldom were executed. Besides, the leadership was entirely in the hands of the others. Macedonians were good only for the battles and to work.

Macedonians were not put in the command but in the battle field they were put always in front and in the most dangerous missions. To the Pozarites, although they were been told that they would be employed in the battles fields in their nearby areas, subsequently they were sent in a very distant, unknown to them areas. A big part of them was sent to Roumeli. Yannis Risafis was killed in Artotina Nafpaktos, Christos Dodlis in Fournia Evritania, Apostolis Pleskas near Lamia, Demetrios Nouskas in Karpenisi. For Risafis is said that he was killed by the partisans. He got sick and was unable to follow the force, so he had to stop. Then, the platoon leader went back and shot him, so he won't fall into the hands of the enemy and be forced to give information.

They took also my father's brother, Alexos Pasois, to Karpenisi. He was actually of those that joined voluntarily both E.L.A.S. and D.S.E. There, he took part in many battles. One day, his team of five Macedonians got an order to cross Acheloos River and in order to create a bridgehead on the opposite river bank. The operation was of the kind that was characterized suicidal operations. They pointed out to the unit leader that it was something impossible to be done, but he insisted: "It's an order". Then, they asked him to lead them, by crossing first and the Macedonians would follow. He kept insisting with the order. Then, the Macedonians pulled out their handguns and tried to force him to go on first and lead them. A threat of confrontation was in sight, but was avoided due to the cancellation of the order. The unit leader, of course, reported the indiscipline of the unit to his superiors. The breach of discipline was punished by death, thus the five Macedonians, having no other choice, escaped during the night and my uncle without asking for any food nowhere, fearing of being arrested and executed for desertion, he walked for twelve days and came to our village. The next day, he left to the then Yugoslavia, with his family.

A similar event was described by the Pozarite partisan Christos Samantis. He was a soldier of the unit that was under the command of Macedonian captain Tanouris, from the neighboring village of Bachovo, of the area of Ostrovo. He got an order to carry out an operation with a platoon of Macedonians, of the kind "suicide operations". The Major said that it was unachievable with such a small force and the operation would lead to an aimless disaster. The Command insisted and Major Tanouris replied: "I know what's waiting for me but I refuse to sacrifice my men". They condemned him to death. Before the sentence was carried out, a Pozarite partisan visited him. The last thing he said was: "Christo, the first chance you all will get, just get up and leave. They, too, want to get rid of us". I had the opportunity to meet Tanouris daughters in Skopie and I felt their bitterness.

Such cases were described by many political refugees, but they avoided writing about them due to some respect they had toward K.K.E. and because they hoped for support by its side. If the statement of A. Papariga, and other K.K.E. members did not precede, on ethnic identity of Macedonians and its pathetic position in the refugee matter, not even I would have written about such events. Respect, though, can only exist when it's mutual. The irreverent and inconsistent don't

deserve any kind of respect.

The Pozarites that were recruited on January of 1947 were used in order to hit Gostolub (Konstantia), a refugee village, on the east of the prefecture. The operation took place just 20 days after their recruit (February 10th, 1947). Several of them, in fact, did not have weapons and were young boys, about 17 years old. Gostolub was, indeed, a seat of a Nazi-collaborators team. But, during the attack, many civilians were killed and houses of innocent peasants were burned. For this attack most of the recruited Pozarites were used. Obviously, this wasn't hard to be known. Thus, the leadership of the partisans, willingly or out of lack of responsibility, made of Pozar the target for the Greek army and T.E.A. members (regiment of national defense).

At the end of 1997, a researcher from the National Centre of Social Research, Maria Yianisopoulou, visited Konstantia that wrote, relating: "Up until today, everybody believes that "it was the natives that came to revenge against us (refugees), hidden behind the partisans of E.A.M."

After a little while the army, escorted by a strong team of T.E.A. members, invaded our village and gathered all of the residents in the village square. The fathers and brothers of all those that had been recruited by the partisans, were beaten so severely that many of them were crippled for life.

In this operation the army took T.E.A. members from the neighboring natives' villages Bachovo and Stroupino. Bachovo and Pozar were the largest Macedonian villages of the province. Deliberately, they took Bachovites national guardsmen in the operation to "sow" hate between the two Macedonian villages. From the neighboring refugees' villages, Piperia and Megaplatanos, they didn't take T.E.A. members, so not to expose them to dangers. Most of the Piperia and Megaloplatano residents moved to urban areas. Obviously, if they wanted to recruit them, they knew where to find them. Later on they put Pozarites T.E.A. members to guard Piperia. Thus, if partisans would attack it, they would have killed Pozarites Macedonians and not Piperia refugees. In Piperia the partisans, also, didn't make any compulsory recruitments. From the recruited Pozarites during the Civil War, more than 40 were killed.

The army made frequent raids against Pozar, which had become a target, hitting and murdering peasants, openly. In none of these raids, the partisans came to protect them, although they had exposed them to danger. The army, with the canons that were set a bit of outside of Aridaia, was shelling the village. From the air, also planes did the same. Thus, the villagers often were forced to hide inside shelters or flee to the mountains. Eventually, the frequent raids and bombardments forced the villagers to abandon the village in the autumn of 1948. Those who had partisans relatives left to Yugoslavia, while others who didn't, or had relatives in the army, went to Aridaia. The Two thirds left to the north, the other third left to the south.

After the end of Civil War, the ones that had gone south were the only ones that returned to the village.

These, although considered loyal nationalists, failed in the same regime of pressure and injustice that existed before the wars. The fact that they took the side of the army, did not count at all, nor the fact of their participation in the national resistance counted. Four Pozarites were killed in the Albanian front (Lazos Katiris, Christos Oulemanis, Kostas Iskos, Efsthathios Kovatsis). After the Civil War, many were forced to immigrate, not being able to withstand the illiberal regime.

Around 1957, three adolescent Pozarites, Yiorgos Ouzounis, Christos Adramanis and Petros Tsapas fled to Yugoslavia because they couldn't stand the oppression. Many evenings, they entertained themselves in the grocery-coffee shop of the village or on the school yard, singing Macedonian songs till late at night. Despite the orders of the police station of the neighboring village Tressino (Orma), not to sing Macedonian songs, they did not obey. One day, the policemen in order to punish them, they cut their hair to the bone. Another day they arrested them and took them to Tessino and put them in prison. There, they kept them the whole day, beating them and swearing at them. They let them go at night. Instead of going away, they stayed nearby and in the darkness started to sing, with all the power of their soul, Macedonian songs. The policemen wouldn't dare chase them in the darkness. They sung Macedonian songs to their chasers and returned to their homes. They knew that during the day there would be worse treatment waiting for them, thus they took bags on their shoulders with enough food and abandoned their village. They never could return back again.

EPILOGUE

Today the Macedonian political refugees and economic immigrants are the only ones in Europe that are deprived of the right of repatriation. Many of them are even deprived of the right of a simple visit in their homes. Instead, they've settled foreign populations in our land and help them to reinstate. This, according to the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities that also Greece has signed, within the European Council is illegal.

The Macedonians that live in Greece are the only ones that don't have the right of self determination and to create ethnic-political associations. The "Rainbow" party was recognized due to the intervention of the European Parliament but not only it is not fronted equally, but is persecuted and slandered. The Macedonian Movement of Balkan Prosperity (MA.KI.B.E.), that is the creator of Rainbow, has been recognized, informally, only by the Macedonians.

The Macedonians, although they are indigenous in Macedonia, have become last category citizens. Economically they have been surpassed by the illegally settled new colonists (Russian-Pontian). The new colonists, like the older, are helped by the authorities for the acquirement of houses, jobs, businesses, progress. They settled them in areas where there existed a majority of indigenous, as in our area, with the aim of making them majority. Thus, with "democratic ways", local administration will pass under their control. Besides, the formation of counties, boroughs, municipalities, in our area was made with criterion the majority of the colonists. Pozar is the only thermal spa in Greece that is not a municipality or a municipal seat.

The Macedonian language and Cyrillic scripture continue to be persecuted. Cyrillic writing, although being created in Macedonia, is unknown to most people. Unknown is also the Christian dogma of Bogomilism that developed in Macedonia more than any other area and is a basic element of its history. It represents the application of Christianity according the teaching of Christ and his pupils. It established free thought, common activity, solidarity, equality, democratic proceedings as elements of Christianity. Instead, the autarchic fanariote romaic-orthodox dogma has been imposed, which, although in practice has gone totally away from the principles of Christianity, characterizes itself as orthodox. It's the dogma that's been used more than any other for the imposition of autarchic power and even today participates to the secular rule of the country on the side of oligarchs. It's the dogma that brought back idolatry in the form of iconolatry and exploits it. It has reached a point of wandering remnants of corpses and icons from place to place to collect money through them. This extreme aspect of idolatry and persons-cult survives in such level only here, because the education provided to the citizens doesn't help cultivation of rational thought, something that was basic characteristic of ancient Hellenic spirit. The distortion of Christianity provokes the distortion also of Hellenism. The establishing of an official religion for the country is anti-democratic by itself and revokes principles of equality and freedom. The fact that in school the other dogmas are not taught as they really are is an element of lack of freedom. Even the fact that the separation of the Church from the State is still discussed indicates lack of democracy. This separation is considered as rather obvious in democratic societies.

Distortions are created by the use of the terms "Hellene" and "Hellenism". Hellenes, for many centuries now, are the participants in Hellenic education. Modern Greeks have a very little participation in Hellenic education. They simply speak a Greek dialect. Unfortunately, in the contemporary epoch the term "Hellene", as the term "Orthodox", is used for chauvinistic purposes and not for spiritual ones. Victims of this situation are us, the Macedonians, and this is the reason that I engaged with it. As a result of this abuse, many things are characterized as "Hellenic" that have no cultural content. Thus, we have, for instance: Hellenic beans, oil, meat, cheese, etc. while Slavic or Latin beans, oil, etc don't exist. Beans from Bulgaria, Serbia, are called Bulgarian, Serbian and not Slavic. Meat of Romania is called Romanian and not Latin. There are slavic and latin songs, dances, language, culture but not cheeses, or ouzo, etc. From there begins, of course, the distortion of history that neo-Greeks are taught today is resulting in whatever shines from the past, to be considered their very own. A direct consequence is the national self-complacency and narcissism which characterizes the majority of the neo-Greeks. It is the most characteristic, perhaps, contemporary case of manipulation of a population, by the use of ideological constructions like religion and history, for

chauvinistic purposes. Thus, although they are the greatest counterfeiters and abusers of history, accuse as counterfeiters all those that dispute their counterfeiting. This counterfeiting and abuse of history constitute a chauvinist ideology that does not exclude, in the future, to disrupt the peace in the region and develop unforeseeable situations. Nobody can exclude the possibility of the appearance of someone megalomaniac mass deceiver who may try the re-founding of the Byzantium or Macedonian Empire or the Hellenic colonization, under the Mussolini prototype, who attempted to revive the Roman Empire. The ideology constructs are ready and the people prepared for them. History teaches people but only when is taught correctly.

Today the Macedonians of Greece are deprived substantially of their rights to have relations with their expatriates in the Republic of Macedonia, even with the political refugees and the Macedonians of the Diaspora. They are characterized as "anti-Hellenic", therefore anyone that's related to them in any way or has contacts with them are also considered anti- Hellenes. This is one more consequence of the abuse of the term "Hellenes".

The Macedonians of Greece are forced to honor the persecutors and murderers of their ancestors and to participate in events in their honor. Their own heroic fighters not only they don't have the right to honor but they are obliged to curse them, or to tolerate those that do so. Of course, most of them don't know their history and the history of their land. They are not free to know it. They teach them the history of their persecutors, which obviously is a counterfeiting of real history. And this, they have to call it freedom. They must celebrate their liberation together with the oppressors of their freedom.

Today Macedonians aren't free to claim their rights and dignity. Although they were people that self-esteem (amour propre) and solidarity characterized them, they became submissive and envious. They came to a point not being supporting one another. These are characteristics of rajadism (servility, subjugated to the Sultan) to which others imposed on them and condemned them to. It is a characteristic of the rajades (servitude) to imitate their dynasts. They have the desire to express somehow their oppressed personality. Because they are unable to express it against their strong dynast, they express it against their weak co-nationals. Since they cannot antagonize socially the strong dynast, they antagonize their weak co-nationals. In order to gain the favoring of the dynast, they behave submissively to him. Thus, the Macedonian pride, altruism and self-esteem were replaced by submissiveness, introversion and envy. This is the greatest damage contemporary Macedonians suffered. They were forced to accept the guardianship of others upon their psychism. Getting rid of this guardianship, will help them find their real self again.

Macedonian self-esteem (amour propre) is not lost but has become a weakness. It gave to others the right to become guardians on all aspects of their identity. Ion Dragoumis, in 1906, wrote: "the Slavophones will be exploited like they are exploited by stronger tribes that are more political and agile than them; the Greeks, Bulgarians or Serbs. They are a mass soft and tepid which can be molded as you like". This is how they see us and treat us accordingly, even today. Of course, on this we have also responsibility. Anyway, Dragoumis admits that he consider us neither Greeks, nor Serbs, nor Bulgarians.

The terms "Hellenism" and "Orthodoxy" are used in our country as political and spiritual bonds. These bonds restrict many forms of freedoms and mainly the freedom of knowledge. As long as the country doesn't free itself of these bonds, the majority of the citizens will continue to be led and behave as spineless mass. The minority of the thinking and informed citizens will continue to be hostage of the enclosed and directed majority. Without the liberation of the meaning of the terms "Hellenism" and "Christianity" from their abusers, there cannot be free thinking and really free citizens. Only this kind of citizens will actually resist to the restriction of freedoms and rights of the Macedonians.

The reinstatement of the truth was one of the basic reasons of the creation of the Macedonian Movement of Balkan Prosperity, as were also its printed publications. It was persecuted by all those that base their power upon a lie. The enclosure of the people in their political and spiritual corrals allows, on one hand, their easier exploitation and, on the other hand, their use for chauvinistic aims. Only when the citizen will be liberate from these bonds, real freedom and continuous peace will exist. The struggle for this liberation is the basic goal of the creation of the Macedonian Movement of

CONTENTS

Prologue-Introduction	3
The creation of MA.KI.B.E. and the first reactions	9
Lies and hypocrisy	13
About Macedonian political refugees	14
The K.K.E. positions on the Macedonian matter	15
Racism based on laws	18
The Macedonian culture under persecution	25
The Greeks, the Latins and the Slavs	31
The formation of Macedonian language and the kingdom of Samuel	36
How idolatry was imposed as Orthodoxy	41
The Bogomile movement	45
Bogomiles and Macedonian Muslims of Moglena (Almopia)	49
The reappearance of anti-Bogomilism in Almopia	50
What was Byzantium	52
The Fanariotes and the “Greek Genus”	58
The Greek revolution and counter revolution	59
The “Hellenic Republic” of Regas Velestinles (Feraios)	61
Filiki Etairia (Friendly Society) and Fanariotes	63
The foreigners role in the creation of the Kingdom of Greece	66
Who revolted in 1821 in Macedonia	70
The real Macedonian Struggle	74
The Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (I.M.R.O.)	75
The role of Germanos Karavangelis	78
Ion Dragoumis	80
Who revolted in 1903 in Macedonia	82
Macedonian and anti-Macedonian Struggle	85
Who and why sent the mercenary forces in Macedonia	88
The anti-Macedonian action In Central Macedonia	91

Gonos, Kotas and Lakis Pyrzas	98
The character of the Balkan wars	99
Persecutions and injustices after 1912	100
The Civil and racial war 1946-49 in Pozar	103
Epilogue	107
Contents	109